



# AGORA

Cyber Charter School

**2017-18 SY**

**Student  
Handbook**

# WELCOME TO AGORA

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to another exciting school year at Agora! Our teachers and staff are dedicated to providing our students with a high-quality flexible learning option that serves thousands of students across Pennsylvania. We are continually adapting to the latest trends in online learning in order to best serve our students and families.

This Handbook will serve as a guide throughout the school year to make certain that our students are set up for success. We encourage families to reference the Handbook frequently as it can be a valuable resource for important information such as policies and procedures, and general school information such as attendance and IT support. For more detailed information, we also encourage you to reference the newly updated and ADA-compliant Agora website that contains our Academic Calendar: <https://agora.org/>

There have been a few adjustments to our education program this year so we are excited to introduce several new platforms and programs for our families that will prepare our students for a successful year!

Thank you for being a part of the Agora family,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Conti".

Dr. Michael J. Conti  
C.E.O.

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# MISSION and VISION

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Agora Cyber Charter School is to provide an innovative, intensive academic preparation that inspires and educates students to achieve the highest levels of academic knowledge and skills, and develop proficiency in the design and use of new computer technologies and scientific research. Agora embraces a collaborative partnership between teachers and parents in order to empower students to reach extraordinary heights. Extraordinary results require extraordinary efforts! Through commitment, hard work, consistency, and responsibility, every student will meet the challenge of mastering high expectations.



## Vision Statement

The vision of Agora Cyber Charter School is to prepare all students to achieve their highest potential through actively engaging in their own schooling, achieving their personal learning goals and being ready to reach post- secondary success as lifelong learners.

# K<sup>12</sup> CUSTOMER CARE and TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Support is provided by K<sup>12</sup> and is available for any technical problems you may have such as lost passwords, computer problems or malfunctions, or trouble accessing classes or grades.

For technical support issues, please call **855-412-3712**

|                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Monday - Friday   | 8:00 am – 11:59 pm (EST)   |
| Saturday & Sunday | 12:00 noon – 8:00 pm (EST) |

# OUR CORE VALUES

Nine core values are at the center of Agora Cyber Charter School. Our values guide how we behave and make decisions. They govern our approach to teaching and learning. By working to honor our values together, the entire Agora community excels.

**Personalization:** We provide an education customized to the abilities, interests and learning styles of our students, along with individual support that satisfies the needs of each student and family.

**Teamwork:** Everyone in the Agora community is part of a team, working together to accomplish tasks, find solutions, support one another, and provide opportunities for all.

**Respect:** Although others may be different from us, we accept them as equally important human beings, and we treat everyone the way we want to be treated.

**Compassion:** We speak and act with caring and kindness toward others, especially those who need our help because they are struggling with illness, injury, sadness or some other adversity.

**Responsibility:** We are trustworthy and conscientious so that everyone in the Agora community of students, families and staff can count on us to do what we say we will do.

**Empowerment:** We provide individuals and teams with the skills to take ownership of their goals and manage themselves as they work step-by-step toward goal achievement.

**Courage:** We face difficult situations and setbacks with strength, making tough decisions and taking bold actions to overcome adversity and keep driving toward our goals.

**Innovation:** We are pioneers who think creatively to solve problems and discover new possibilities that improve learning, advance student achievement and prepare young people to succeed in life.

**Integrity:** We are honest, fair, sincere and decent, doing the right thing at all times, even when no one is watching.



# INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

At Agora, it is our mission to provide students with the opportunity to engage in a personalized, innovative, intensive academic preparation that inspires and educates students to achieve the highest levels of academic knowledge and skills. We do this through a focused and intentional instructional model. The Agora Instructional Model is built around six key areas that range from the foundational level of establishing and organizing the school, to a high level of school excellence and continuous improvement.

The Agora Instructional Model focuses on organizing and structuring the school for success, through teachers and staff working collaboratively to design personalized learning experiences for every student. Student learning experiences reflect a focus on foundational, collaborative, personalized and conceptual learning experiences.

Using a blending of \*Synchronous and \*\*Asynchronous instruction, each student has the opportunity to work through their Individual Learning Plan with the support of a Family Coach, Learning Coach and a variety of instructional experts, such as teachers, specialists and support staff. Students engage daily in high levels of rigor and relevance through a collaborative and personalized learning experience. Students take part in daily custom learning time, during which they receive additional interventions, skill support, tutoring and acceleration and enrichment at their level of learning.

We believe in providing students with personalized learning experiences by organizing our students into small learning communities. In these learning communities, students work closely with a team of core content teachers and their Family Coach, who together ensure that students set short and long- term goals so that they can fulfill their Individual Learning Plan.

\***Synchronous learning environments** offer students and teachers multiple ways of interacting, sharing, and the ability to collaborate and ask questions in real-time through technology.

\*\***Asynchronous learning environments** offer students the ability to actively participate in their own learning through the use of online resources. Students work through their course content on their own, while also having opportunities to interact with their peers and reflect on the status of personal learning goals. In an Asynchronous environment, students and teachers are not always online at the same time. Students must complete an application process before being approved for asynchronous learning (criteria varies based on grade level).



## K12/FUELED CONTENT OVERVIEW

The K12™ content resource used by Agora is rooted in decades of education research and the science of learning but fueled by innovative technology. The K12™ content resource offers standards-based, Kindergarten through grade 12 courses with rich, interactive content and rigorous assessments designed and developed for online delivery from the outset.

All grade level courses include: English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and History/Social Studies as well as Art, Music, and World Language courses. Additional electives are also offered in grades 6-12.

### Grades K-5

The combination of interactive online lessons and offline materials cater to varied learning styles, allowing students the opportunity to master lesson objectives. Lessons are followed by assessments, so you can be sure that your child has mastered content.

### Grades 6 - 12

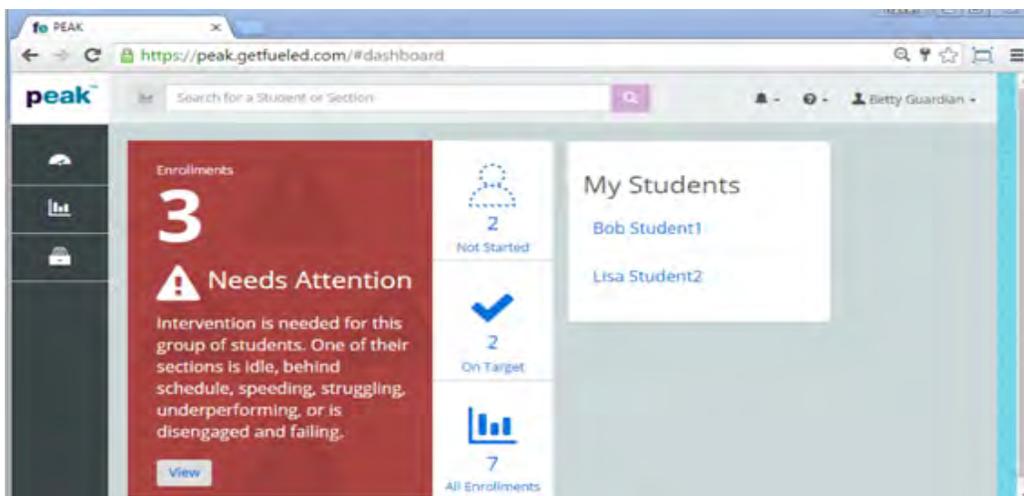
Courses are developed in alignment with the Common Core State Standards and feature a rich multimedia format that may include graphics, avatars, simulations, and videos to help keep students engaged and motivated to learn. Tutorials help illustrate complex concepts more clearly. The FuelEd™ unique avatars help to establish connections between topics and “real world” applications.

# peak™ DASHBOARD

The PEAK™ Dashboard is visible when a student logs in. Here, students can view all of their courses and access those courses by clicking on the individual course card.



The Learning Coach will have the ability to view all of their children's information in one place, regardless of grade level or platform. They will be able to view progress and course details and any alerts that need attention.



# RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS and PARENTS

All students, parents, administrators and staff share a responsibility to develop a safe learning environment.

## Responsibilities of Students

Students have the responsibility to:

- attend and participate in all scheduled and required, virtual sessions (see attendance policy)
- put forth a conscientious effort in all school assignments
- have knowledge of and abide by all school rules, regulations and applicable laws
- use appropriate speech, refraining from indecent, obscene or foul language
- report to a staff member incidents or activities that may threaten or disrupt the school
- remain in good communication with your family coach, teacher and guidance counselor

## Rights of Students

Students have the right to:

- a public school education, until 21 years of age or upon graduation; whichever occurs first
- not be excluded from public schools or from school privileges because the student is married, pregnant, has a disability, is eligible for special education services and programs or because of race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation (known or perceived) or national origin
- be afforded discipline procedures as outlined in this document
- request and receive interpretation and translation assistance for school-related matters if English is not their primary language

## Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Agora abides by the provisions of the Family Education Rights Privacy Act, Buckley Amendment, with respect to the rights of noncustodial parents. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to:

- ensure that his/her children enrolled in Agora attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- understand that if the child enrolls in school prior to the age of 8, the child becomes compulsory school age and must continue to attend school
- enroll his/her child in another school if he/she withdraws from Agora
- present to the school administration any concern or issue in a calm, reasonable manner
- work with his/her child daily to ensure that the student is completing assignments
- reinforce topics presented in live sessions by attending sessions with students in grades K-5 and reviewing concepts with students in grades 6-12
- know the rules set forth in this code and review the contents with his/her child(ren)
- ensure that his/her child complies with all required testing and assessment requirements, including but not limited to PSSA, Keystone, AIMSweb Plus, and CDT, scheduled by Agora
- provide transportation to required state testing, school assessments and events
- ensure that his/her child receives the periodic health examinations and immunizations that are required by law
- provide update address and required compliance documentation within 30 school days of any physical address move (Residency Policy)

### Rights of Parent/Guardian

Parents/guardians shall have the right to:

- receive regular official reports of his/her child's academic progress
- inspect, copy and challenge, according to the appropriate guidelines, any and all information contained in his/her child's records
- receive an explanation for the basis of any grade given by the teacher
- request a conference with the teacher and/or the principal
- receive translations and/or interpretations of any written or verbal communications regarding his/her child and his/her child's education
- appeal disciplinary action that results in expulsion
- receive reasonable accommodations for any disability hindering participation in his/her child's education, to the extent all parents are permitted to participate, upon request, for such accommodation and proof of medical necessity

## SCHOOL STUDENTS CODE of CONDUCT

The goal of Agora Cyber Charter School is to provide the best possible educational experience for each student. The instructional program, partnership of parents and teachers, clubs, outings and competitions help to increase student success. Coupled with the advantages of these educational opportunities is the need for students to assume personal responsibility for their behavior. Students share with the school community responsibility for developing Agora Cyber into a school that exemplifies high standards and excellence. Agora's Code of Student Conduct is based upon this responsibility.

Understanding the information that follows is an essential responsibility of each student. The Agora Student Code of Conduct applies to all school-supplied equipment and materials and in all school-sponsored environments, home and community and at any school location or event and on transportation leased/owned by Agora. Please see the [Agora Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services](#) and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities and Notification of Rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, as posted to the Agora website (<https://agora.org/>) for further safeguards and rights of students with special needs with regard to school discipline.

# NON-DISCRIMINATION EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Agora Cyber Charter School does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, limited English proficiency or any other legally protected classification. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodation, grievance procedure and the designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting the school.



# HOW AGORA IS STRUCTURED SO OUR STUDENTS SUCCEED



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## Orientation/Strong Start

All students are required to virtually attend and complete orientation during their first week of school and prior to beginning academic courses. Prior to the first day of school, families will receive a welcome email with instructions to set-up their Online School accounts, log into the Online School and join their mandatory orientation live sessions. During orientation, students learn how to effectively work in the online model, review school policies and procedures and complete daily assignments to gauge their comprehension of class instruction and lessons. By the end of orientation, students will have the knowledge and skills needed to successfully transition to academic courses.

## Family Coach: Opportunities for Personalized Support

When students enroll at Agora, they are assigned a Family Coach. The Family Coach serves as a mentor, guide and support for students. Family Coaches will schedule conferences with students regularly to develop their Individual Learning Plan, set short-and long-term goals within their Individual Learning Plan, check progress, grades, monitor attendance and ensure that students have access to resources so that they can achieve their greatest personal potential.

It is imperative that lines of communication remain open between the family, student, teacher(s), and Family Coach. Our team of highly trained Family Coaches will work collaboratively with families and other school staff, to expose students to a variety of career and learning opportunities that meet their personal and social needs. One of our Core Values at Agora is personalization, and our Family Coaches work diligently to ensure that each student receives a personalized learning experience!

## Learning Coach

Each student at Agora is required to have a Learning Coach who partners with the school to ensure that the student is attending school and completing assignments on time. This person may be a parent/legal guardian or someone the parent/legal guardian designates as a facilitator. In the event the parent/legal guardian or designated Learning Coach is unable to fulfill the responsibilities as outlined below, the parent/legal guardian is responsible for assigning a new Learning Coach and notifying school officials as soon as possible. The requirements for the Learning Coach vary with the age and motivation of the student, and involve a commitment that goes beyond a traditional public school. Learning Coaches should reinforce topics presented in live sessions by attending sessions with students in grades K-5 and reviewing concepts with students in grades 6-12. The parent (or other responsible adult), working in conjunction with the teacher and Family Coach, serves as a "Learning Coach" to your student, helping facilitate progress through the daily lessons and working to modify the pace and schedule according to your child's needs. Although parents play the role of

Learning Coach for their students in managing the schedule and ensuring the student is completing work at a reasonable pace, they are never alone in the education process.

The Learning Coach is an integral part of each student's success at Agora Cyber Charter School. With the full commitment of the Learning Coach at all grade levels, a student's academic success will increase. To review the full list of expectations and information available for learning coaches, please visit <https://agora.org/academics/orientation/learning-coach-orientation/>

### Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Upon enrolling at Agora and at the start of each academic year, students will complete a variety of surveys that will highlight their strengths and opportunities for growth. A Family Coach will be assigned to the student and will schedule a meeting with the student and Learning Coach.

Together as a learning team, the Family Coach, teacher(s), student and parents/guardians (who serve as the Learning Coach for their student) will have ongoing, collaborative discussions and will work together to determine the best learning plan for the success of the student. This is documented in the student's ILP.

This plan is unique to Agora and gets to the heart of our mission by providing a personalized educational plan for each student. Necessary supports are put in place to ensure that the student has all of the resources needed to be successful. In subsequent conferences, goals are revisited and the ILP is adjusted as needed.

### Counseling Opportunities

Adolescents today face a rapidly changing world with new technologies and opportunities and jobs, many of which do not even exist yet. This can create great excitement as well as heightened anxiety. To help students and their families navigate through the formative years of a student's life, and to be prepared to face many unique and diverse challenges that can impact a student's social and academic development, Agora maintains a strong school counseling program where students are given opportunities to flourish academically, personally, and socially to meet their present and future goals.

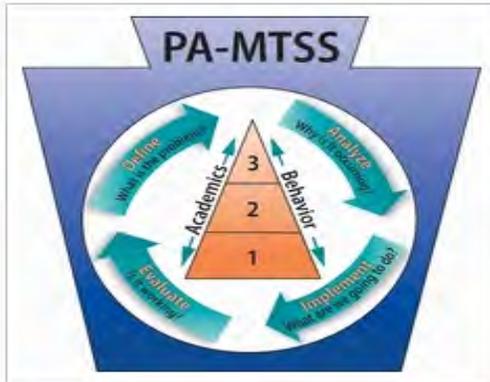
School Counselors will assist students in exploring and pursuing post-secondary goals, nurture a balanced mental health perspective which includes understanding and responding to challenges of adolescent development, and preparing students to reach their greatest potential. Some of the many services which our School Counselors provide include: post-secondary planning, college and career planning (including scholarship/financial-aid search process), coping strategies, multicultural and diversity awareness, individual student planning (academic plans) and responsive services such as individual and small group counseling, crisis intervention and referral process. For more information, please go to <https://agora.org/our-school/guidance/>. Both the high school and K-8 grade bands have their own dedicated pages.

### Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Agora Cyber Charter School is committed to helping all children succeed. We have many ways to help children who are struggling to learn and who need additional supports to be successful. We also have programs that can provide advanced learning for the students that need an additional academic challenge. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, or MTSS, is the framework that we use to determine the academic and/or behavior strengths and needs of each student and to provide the appropriate supports. At Agora, some of the components of MTSS that your child may receive include Personal Learning Time (PLT), math interventions, reading interventions, behavioral supports and interventions, and our advanced learner program. Our MTSS program is designed to align with the PA Department of Education guidelines.

In Pennsylvania, MTSS is the model for helping students to succeed. It is comprised of monitoring academics and behavior and putting interventions into place if students are not having success at the Tier 1 level. Tier 2 and Tier 3 gives students the interventions that they need to address either behavior or academic concerns.

Studies show that one of the most important behaviors for student success is daily attendance in school. As such, it is our goal to work with families to reduce chronic absenteeism, utilizing specific interventions based on research to support their needs. Additionally, class participation is an essential component to success in the cyber environment.



Please see additional information in the MTSS parent brochure on our website <https://agora.org/academics/mtss/> or ask your child's teacher for the specific supports that are in place for your child.

### Benchmark Assessments

All students, Kindergarten through 12th grade, will complete benchmark assessments as a part of our universal screening procedure. Universal screening is one of the first steps in our MTSS process, data that can be used to drive instruction and appropriate initial supports for each student. The initial assessment will be at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment. There will be two additional benchmark windows, one in the winter and one in the spring.

Students should NOT be provided any assistance when taking any benchmark assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to measure growth and to see what skills a student may need to learn. Any assistance that is given to help with the assessment may make the results invalid. The test is designed to get more difficult and there may be material on the assessments that the student has not yet learned. This is expected and benchmark assessments are not graded in the traditional manner as course assessments because they are designed to drive future instruction and measure growth.

Please encourage your student(s) in three ways during benchmark testing:

- Take their time on the assessment.
- Do the best that they can and guess if they need to.
- Don't Give Up!

The **Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT)** is an online assessment, divided by content areas (Literacy, Mathematics, and Science). Students in grades 3-12 will take this assessment. The CDT is fully integrated with the Standards Aligned System (SAS) and assists in identifying student academic strengths and areas in need of improvement. The CDT is an adaptive test; meaning that depending how a student responds to the first few items, the next set of items will adjust to the student's instructional level. Students receive approximately 48–60 items per test depending upon their response pattern. The CDT is an untimed test.

**AIMSweb Plus** is an online assessment, which will be used with our youngest learners (Kindergarten to 2nd grade). It is a universal screening and progress-monitoring tool. Assessments include Early Literacy, Reading, Early Numeracy, Mathematics, Spelling and Writing. AIMSweb Plus provides guidance for instruction and intervention.

At the end of each marking period (quarter), students will also take **common assessments** in their various courses. These assessments are aligned to content standards and the PA Core Standards to identify learning gaps in English Language Arts, Mathematics or reading and writing skills in Science and Social Studies.



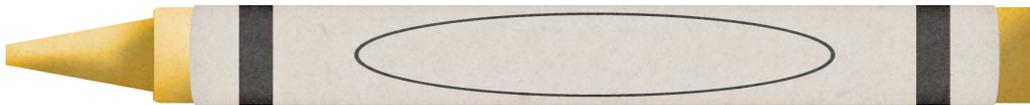
# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

## Kindergarten – Grade 5

### Introduction

The elementary program is grounded in the belief that all students can thrive in a cyber environment through a solid partnership between Learning Coaches and staff. In each grade level, students will be exposed to four core content classes: Math, History, Science, and English Language Arts.

Students also will have the opportunity to participate in Personal Learning Time and the following electives: Art, Health/PE and Music. Personal Learning Time is designed to meet the needs of each of our learners. Students will be placed into small groups to work on strengthening and refining specific skills. In grades K-2, students will be with one teacher for each core subject. However in grades 3-5, students will work among a team of teachers who each teach a specific core content. Agora staff will maintain contact and build relationships with students and families via live online sessions, telephone, face-to-face experiences, conferences and during standardized testing participation.



### Grading (Grades K-5)

Throughout the year, teachers will assign in-class assessments for students to take. These assessments, formal and informal, are required to be completed within the timeframe set by the teacher. Through completion of assessments and required assignments, teachers will be able to plan their lessons to personalize learning and best meet the needs of their students. Failure to complete assessments will result in disciplinary action and may escalate to an academic support plan. All students, asynchronous and synchronous, will be required to complete teacher assigned assessments, classwork and/or projects throughout the school year to measure academic progress and growth.

Standards-based grading will be used at the elementary level. Throughout the year, teachers will assess the progress of students on each standard through assessments, projects and classwork.

Agora staff may monitor assessments. In addition to standards-based grading, each quarter, students will receive a grade for K12/FuelEd curriculum progress and class participation. Teachers will monitor the completion of coursework throughout the quarter to determine this grade. Students are expected to complete all curriculum coursework that may be assigned during class or for homework outside of class. Students are expected to be actively engaged in live sessions. They will receive a score noting their level of participation each quarter. Students who fail to complete the curriculum coursework and lack participation in class will be placed on an escalation plan. (See Benchmark Assessments, page 14)

The following mastery scale will be used to score students:

|   |          |                               |         |
|---|----------|-------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Grading Scale</b><br>convert any teacher made<br>assessment scores to a mastery<br>level score | <b>3</b> | Mastery                       | 80-100% |
|   | <b>2</b> | Progressing<br>Toward Mastery | 50-79%  |
|   | <b>1</b> | Needs<br>Improvement          | 0-49%   |

## Sample Student Schedules

| Grades K-2 Student Schedule |  |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
|-----------------------------|--|---------|-------------------------------------|----------|--------|--------------------------------------|
|                             | Monday                                 | Tuesday | Wednesday                           | Thursday | Friday |                                      |
| <b>8:00-8:30am</b>          | Prepare for classes                    |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>8:30-8:50am</b>          | Homeroom                               |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>8:55-9:55am</b>          | Phonics & Reading                      |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>10:00-11:00am</b>        | Math                                   |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>11:05-11:50am</b>        | Personal Learning Time (PLT)           |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>11:50-12:10pm</b>        | Recess /<br>Teacher<br>Office<br>Hours | Recess  | Recess /<br>Teacher Office<br>Hours | Recess   | /      | Recess<br>Teacher<br>Hours<br>Office |
| <b>12:10-12:40pm</b>        | Lunch                                  |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>12:40-1:10pm</b>         | Writing                                |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>1:15-2:00pm</b>          | Science / Social Studies               |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |
| <b>2:00-4:00pm</b>          | OLS, ELECTIVES, ASSIGNMENTS            |         |                                     |          |        |                                      |

| 3-5 Sample Student Schedule |  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Time/<br>Period             | Monday   | Tuesday                           | Wednesday                         | Thursday                          | Friday                            |
| 8:00–<br>8:15               | Prepare for school day<br><i>**Office hours will be held on Wednesdays as needed**</i> |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 8:15 –<br>9:10              | ELA  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 9:15 -<br>10:10             | MATH   |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 10:10<br>-<br>10:30         | RECESS   |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 10:30<br>–<br>11:25         | SS   |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 11:30<br>-12:25             | SCIENCE  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 12:25<br>–<br>12:55         | LUNCH  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 1:00 –<br>1:45              | PLT  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 1:50 –<br>2:10              | HR   | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS | HR                                | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS | HR                                |
| 2:10 –<br>4:00              | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS  | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS | OLS,<br>ELECTIVES,<br>ASSIGNMENTS |

*\*Students in grades 3-5 may see a variation of this schedule based on the section they are in. All students will rotate to content teachers*

### Learning Modes: Synchronous and Asynchronous

Students will be identified as Asynchronous or Synchronous learners based upon their individual needs and discretion of Agora administration. After enrolling at Agora for at least a marking period, a student’s Learning Coach in conjunction with a student’s teacher(s) has the opportunity to recommend the asynchronous pathway for the student. Upon recommendation, the Learning Coach will complete a survey. A number of factors will be considered, including but not limited to student academic progress, engagement and attendance. Once a survey is submitted, the

Administrative Team will make an informed decision in conjunction with the Learning Coach. and will have final say in the decision of a student's learning mode. The Administrative Team will periodically review the growth of each Asynchronous student to ensure this pathway is successful for him/her. If a student does not maintain progress, assignment submissions. or appropriate grades he or she may be placed back in the Synchronous mode.

### Synchronous

Synchronous learning environments offer students and teachers multiple ways of interacting, sharing, and the ability to collaborate and ask questions in real-time through technology. Synchronous students are expected to attend all scheduled and required virtual sessions. During this time, teachers will have daily interaction with students in a classroom environment and small group sessions, to learn about the student's' strengths and challenges to ensure that the students have obtained the skill set to be effective online learners.

### Asynchronous

The Asynchronous pathway offers students the ability to actively participate in their own learning through the use of online resources. Asynchronous students have the ability to work through their course content on their own, however all students are encouraged and welcome to attend live sessions as well as watch classroom recordings. Students that are Asynchronous are required to log into and complete their curriculum coursework. They will also take quarterly assessments that align with the syllabus of each class. Students are expected to either keep up with the progress of the class or move ahead at their own pace using the pacing provided in each course syllabus. If an Asynchronous student is not showing adequate progress, the Administrative Team may revoke the Asynchronous privilege.

### Criteria

- Evidence of average or high engagement (attendance)
- Evidence of mastery of grade level standards
- Evidence of student performing at or above grade level on multiple assessments (benchmark, teacher-created, PSSA, etc.)
- Evidence of expected course progress
- Completion of all required assessments

### Process

In order to be considered for Asynchronous status parents should contact their teacher for further information on how to complete an application. Applications will be reviewed at the end of each marking period by the Administrative team. During the review of applications students will remain Synchronous until they are contacted by a member of the Administrative team.

### Requirements

1. Follow each course syllabus and pacing guide
  - a. Keep or exceed pace
2. Complete and master lessons and checkpoints in all curriculum coursework
3. Take quarterly assessment for each core class
4. Maintain average or above average engagement
  - a. Student attendance is tracked through daily login reports
  - b. Students are expected to log into their curriculum daily
5. Mastery of grade level standards
6. Evidence of student performing at or above grade level on multiple assessments (benchmark, teacher-created, PSSA, etc.)
7. Monitor email, newsletters, syllabi, etc., for any updated information or announcements

### Maintenance

In order to maintain Asynchronous status a student is expected to meet or exceed the requirements listed above. Asynchronous privilege can be revoked by the Administrative team at any time if a student is not making adequate progress, showing a lack of engagement, or otherwise is not meeting the requirements outlined above. After each marking period, the Administrative team will look at the current data and reserves the right to make adjustments to a student's Asynchronous status in an effort to provide the best educational fit for each student.

### Attendance

Attendance for Asynchronous students is captured through their daily login reports. While an Asynchronous student does not have to attend live sessions they are expected to login on a daily basis. Failure to log in daily will result in the student being marked absent. See **Attendance** section for requirements for absence notes, medical excuses and truancy as a result of unexcused absences. All Asynchronous students are encouraged and welcome to attend live sessions

### Students Working Above Grade Level

Asynchronous students who are working within the curriculum at a grade level higher than their grade of record will be required to take the quarterly assessment of their grade level of record.

As an Asynchronous student completes a course, he/she must notify his/her teacher(s) to order the next course. Students will have to master the grade level common assessment in order to proceed to the next course. If mastery is not shown, support will be provided before moving forward.

### Promotion and Retention

Throughout the school year, Pennsylvania grade level standards will be assessed through various measures, including benchmark assessments completed virtually as well as formative and diagnostic assessments.

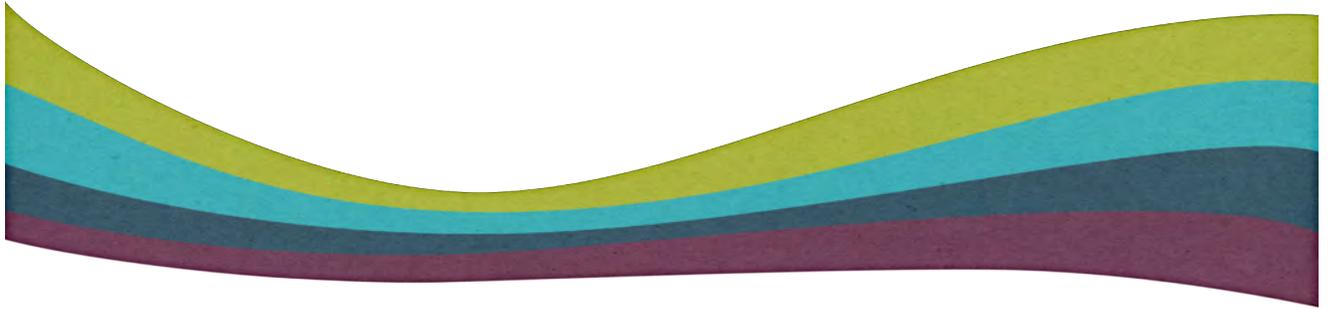
Students will receive a quarterly progress report that details their performance in regard to the grade level standards. For more information on Pennsylvania state standards please go to: <http://www.pdesas.org/Standard/PACore>

It is imperative that all students participate in all local assessments, including online assessments, and PSSA testing (if applicable). As their progress is monitored, students are expected to attend PLT sessions for additional instructional support, remediation and acceleration. Promotion or retention decisions will be determined as the cumulative results of the student's progress and achievement for the school year are analyzed at the end of the academic year through collaboration between teachers and the school Administrative Team. Students in danger of repeating a grade level will be provided a failure warning prior to this occurring. Agora's goal is not to make all children alike, but to foster individual strengths and help each child develop to his or her fullest potential.

Please note, if your child is receiving special education services, the learning goals that have been created and recorded on the student's IEP for him/her will supersede the list of grade level standards, however, assessment on grade level standards may still occur.

## Learning Coach Expectations

Each student at Agora is required to have a Learning Coach who partners with the school to ensure that the student is attending school and completing assignments on time. This person may be a parent/legal guardian or someone the parent/legal guardian designates as a facilitator. For more information about the role of a Learning Coach, please read pages 12-13 of this Student Handbook and on our website at <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/role-of-the-learning-coach/>.



# MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

## 6th – 8th Grades

### Introduction

The Middle School administrators, teachers, and staff are committed to creating a learning community where everyone is included, valued, and receives the support to grow. Ensuring that the transition from elementary to high school is challenging yet secure, teachers strive to foster an environment that sees mistakes and failures as temporary. It is through the successes and failures that come from taking risks, that students learn the important qualities of perseverance, grit and resiliency. To provide a challenging learning atmosphere, Agora Middle School attempts to meet the individual differences in student skills, interests, backgrounds, and rates of learning. Teachers have a variety of ways to work with the range of skill levels within a class. However, if you feel that your child is falling behind or needs to be challenged more, please contact your teacher(s). We believe that students succeed best when there is a strong partnership between home and school, a partnership that thrives on communication.



### Learning Modes: Synchronous and Asynchronous

In the Middle School program, students will be working in the K12/FuelEd curriculum using the Brightspace/D2L learning platform. The core courses offered for grades 6-8 are in the areas of Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. In addition, we offer electives such as Art and Music each semester along with Middle School specific clubs (see Student Clubs on our website at <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/student-clubs/>)

New students enrolled in the school will be Synchronous and can apply to be Asynchronous after the first marking period of school. If a student does not maintain progress, assignment submissions, or appropriate grades, he or she may be placed back in the Synchronous mode.

- Synchronous students are expected to attend all scheduled and required, virtual sessions. They will be required to follow all course requirements and deadlines as given by the teacher. Students may also be required to attend Personal Learning Time to receive instructional support using various interventions. Students will be required to participate in class using various modes of communication including: chat, microphone, whiteboard, polling tools, Google Docs, discussion board or other forms as indicated by the teacher. Students may receive a daily participation grade.
- Students working Asynchronously will be given access to a pacing guide to follow to ensure continuous progress is made throughout the year in each core course. Students will also be required to adhere to work assignment due dates. Asynchronous students are encouraged to attend Synchronous (real time/live) instructional sessions, if needed.

## Grading Policy

- a. Our goal as educators is to provide all students the best education available, anywhere, preparing every child to lead a rich and productive life.
- b. If a student has no chance to regain success after making mistakes, they will give up; often becoming discipline problems.
- c. If a student fails and we have not made every possible attempt to make that child successful, it is we, the educators, who have actually failed.
- d. Grading is not about a number, but is instead an assessment of what the student learned about the curriculum being taught.

Second-chance assessment opportunities shall be made available to students who have missed a summative assessment, to students who have failed a summative assessment, and to students who have earned below an 80% on a summative assessment. For students who missed a summative assessment for a legitimate reason (an excused absence or emergency), the highest possible score that may be earned on a reassessment is 100%. Students who must reassess because they missed an initial summative assessment for an unexcused reason, which must reassess because they failed an initial assessment, or who wish to reassess because they have earned below an 80%, may earn up to an 80% on the reassessment.

### Important Notes

1. If a student who fails with less than a 65% reassesses and earns a higher grade, the higher grade replaces the previously recorded lower grade (up to an 80).
2. Since a teacher should only require students to reassess on non-proficient skills or tasks, the reassessment grade should never result in a lower final grade on the assignment.
3. A teacher may require a student to complete all formative assessments that are directly correlated with the summative assessment before a reassessment for the summative is administered (if this step has not previously been taken).
4. A teacher may require students to complete a relearning plan (detailing the steps that a student will need to undertake to demonstrate proficiency on the summative) before a reassessment is administered.
5. A teacher may assign a reasonable timeline for a reassessment opportunity.
6. Reassessment opportunities for formative assessments are at the teacher's discretion.
7. Assessments may be monitored by Agora staff. (see Testing information on our website at <https://agora.org/academics/testing/>)

## Grading Scale

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| A = 90 - 100% | F = below 60%    |
| B = 80 - 89%  | S = Satisfactory |
| C = 70 - 79%  | P = Progressing  |
| D = 60 - 69%  | I = Incomplete   |

Graded activities in the Agora middle school-level courses will be assigned points. A student's final grade will reflect the actual points earned, compared to the total points possible. Teachers will use these points to assign letter grades, according to their grading policies. Families will have continuous access to their student's progress through the PEAK dashboard. Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled in the fall and early spring to discuss student grades and progress.

Report cards are sent out at the end of each quarter through the Sapphire Community Portal. Final grades are calculated at the end of each semester (2nd and 4th quarters respectively). For a year-long course, the cumulative final grade is the average of the first and second semester grades. The grades at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters are progress grades only.

### Honor Roll

The Honor Roll is published each semester and includes only students who have earned a "B" average letter grade (3.0) or better in all four (4) core subjects. Students who earn more than one A in a core subject will receive High Honors, and Distinguished Honors is given for students receiving A's in all four subjects.

### Middle School Due Date and Deadline Policy

All graded assignments - whether teacher- or electronically-scored - will be given a due date within the course and will be visible in the Class Plan and also in the PEAK dashboard. The consequences of submitting work after the due date are determined by each teacher. Teachers will post their late policy in the course and communicate and explain it to students at the beginning of the course.

### Late Work Policy

In the case of documented extenuating circumstances (i.e., technical/medical) where a student is not able to complete/submit work for an extended time (week or more), it is the responsibility of the student and/or learning coach to contact each individual teacher and develop a catch-up plan. In the event of the extenuating circumstance occurring in the final weeks of the quarter/semester, an extension may be requested but will require administration review and approval.

### Promotion Policy

Students are promoted to the next grade if they pass all academic subjects. Students who fail more than one core course must repeat the grade. A student may receive credit for subjects failed by satisfactorily completing an approved summer school program. This would allow the student to move to the next grade. The expense of summer school belongs to parents/guardians. Students with IEPs are promoted in accordance with mastery of their respective IEP Goals.

### National Junior Honor Society

The purpose of Agora's chapter of the National Junior Honor Society is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students of Agora Cyber Charter School. Membership in this chapter is an honor bestowed upon deserving students by the faculty, and will be based on the criteria of scholarship, service, leadership and character. Candidates eligible for election to this chapter must be members of the 7th, 8th or 9th grade class for the following school year with a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.25. Upon meeting the grade level, attendance and GPA standard requirements, candidates will be considered based on their service, leadership and character.

Candidates will complete the Student Activity Information Form to demonstrate service, leadership and character. Once selected and inducted, members are expected to maintain the standards by which they were selected and maintain all obligations of membership. These standards include: maintaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, attending monthly online meetings and participating in Agora-sponsored events and activities.

### Sample Student Schedule

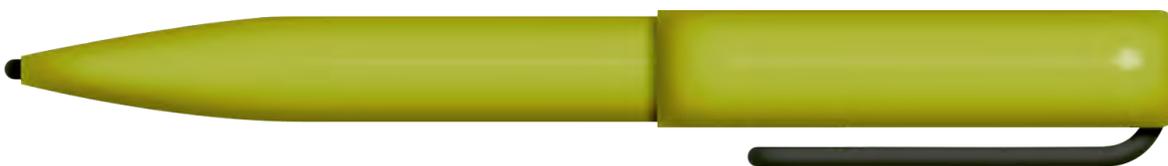
| 6-8 Synchronous Schedule | Monday              | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| 8:00-8:25                | Period 1 (Homeroom) |         |           |          |        |
| 8:30-9:25                | Period 2            |         |           |          |        |
| 9:30-10:25               | Period 3            |         |           |          |        |
| 10:30-11:15              | Period 4 (PLT)      |         |           |          |        |
| 11:20-12:15              | Period 5            |         |           |          |        |
| 12:15-12:45              | Lunch               |         |           |          |        |
| 12:45-1:40               | Period 6            |         |           |          |        |
| 1:45-2:40                | Period 7            |         |           |          |        |
| 2:40-4:00                | Office Hours        |         |           |          |        |

# HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

## 9th – 12th Grades

### Introduction

High school students have more options in course selection. Based upon academic performance and attendance, students also may have the opportunity to apply for Asynchronous status allowing for more flexibility in their learning. Agora utilizes the Desire 2 Learn platform to provide the High School online school campus and courses. The school site features school announcements, messages from the Administration, access to important documents, club and organization information, resources, and courses. The student calendar, which shows assignments and due dates for all courses in one easy-to-use tool, helps students to stay focused in every course. Courses consist of multiple units, lessons and activities. All of our courses are taught by highly qualified teachers who provide differentiated instruction, practice, exploration, and routinely assess student learning. Teachers post a syllabus in the course that includes important information related to the course such as late work policy, contact information and materials/resources needed for the course. Teachers will post weekly announcements indicating the lessons, activities and assessments to be completed each week.



### Learning Modes: Synchronous and Asynchronous

All new students begin the year as synchronous learners. After at least one full marking period, if a student maintains a 3.0 GPA with no failing grades, or requires special circumstances to become asynchronous, he or she may apply for this privilege through the Guidance Counselor. The Administrative team will have final say in the decision of a student's learning mode and will review the academic achievement of asynchronous students at the end of each marking period. If a student does not maintain progress, assignment submissions, or appropriate grades he or she may be placed back in the synchronous mode. All returning high school students begin the year in the same attendance mode as last school year's end and will be reviewed by administration quarterly.

**Synchronous:** All Synchronous students are required to attend daily live classrooms and complete assigned coursework.

**Asynchronous:** Asynchronous students are required to log into their courses and complete assigned coursework. These students are encouraged and welcomed to attend live sessions, as well as watch recordings.

## Academic Goals

- All students will take all state-mandated assessments (Keystone exams).
- All students will meet or exceed the state-mandated attendance requirements measured annually by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).
- Students will meet graduation requirements as set by PDE by
  - earning a minimum of 22 credits
  - demonstrating mastery of standards on the Keystone test aligned to Pennsylvania anchors
  - successfully completing a culminating activity.

## Class Schedule

Student schedules may vary from day to day, depending on the courses chosen. All general education courses are either semester- or year-long. Most core courses (such as World History, LAC I, Earth Science, Algebra I, etc.) meet every day. Other courses, including most elective courses meet either two or three days a week. This is why it is important that you have a copy of your course schedule and check your Class Connect every day. Below is a period schedule with their times:

|               |                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| 8:00 - 8:50   | Period 1                         |
| 9:00 - 9:50   | Period 2                         |
| 10:00 - 10:50 | Period 3                         |
| 11:00 - 11:50 | Period 4                         |
| 12:00 - 12:30 | LUNCH                            |
| 12:30 - 1:20  | Period 5                         |
| 1:30 - 2:20   | Period 6                         |
| 2:30 - 3:20   | Period 7                         |
| 3:30 - 4:00   | Office Hours /<br>Advisory Group |

## Graduation Requirements

Students must earn 22 credits in the following content areas, as aligned with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. Full year courses are worth 1.0 credit; semester-length courses are worth 0.5 credit.

| Content                    | Credits Required |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Mathematics                | 3                |
| English                    | 4                |
| History and Social Studies | 3                |
| Science                    | 3                |
| Humanities/World Languages | 2                |
| Electives                  | 5                |
| Physical Education         | 1.5              |
| Health                     | 0.5              |

## Graduation Project

The successful completion of a graduation project at Agora is a Pennsylvania state-mandated requirement for your graduation/diploma and is intended, at Agora, to be a project that consists of community service and/or job shadowing.

This project is meant to be an individualized learning experience used to represent the student's own area of interest. A successful project will benefit the future of the student and other students who view the final project presentation.

Once you have selected your location(s) for community service/job shadowing, you will have several main objectives to meet in order to successfully complete the Graduation Project expectations.

The requirements for the 2017-18SY Graduation Project are

1. Meeting with school counselor
2. Fall Survey
3. Completion of community service/job shadowing (20 hours total)
4. A Post-Graduation Plan essay
5. Senior Exit Survey
6. Additional requirements may be added to the course if deemed necessary

\*All parts of this project must be submitted in order to meet/pass the Graduation Project Requirement.

## Grading Policies

Graded activities in the Agora high school-level courses will be assigned points. A student's final grade will reflect the actual points earned, compared to the total points possible. Teachers will use these points to assign letter grades, according to their grading policies. Students and parents/ Learning Coaches can access the current grades for all courses from the PEAK dashboard at any time during the semester.

Graded activities may include: online or paper-based worksheets and practice sets, quizzes, exams (e.g., unit, semester, final), threaded discussions, essays, research papers, presentations and other writing assignments.

## Grading Scale

A = 90 - 100%

B = 80 - 89%

C = 70 - 79%

D = 60 - 69%

F = below 60%

## Credits

Grade placement is based solely upon credits earned. Therefore, at the beginning of each school year, all students will be placed in the corresponding grade using the scale below:

- 9th Grade = 0.00-4.99 Credits
- 10th Grade = 5.00-10.99 Credits
- 11th Grade = 11.00- 15.99 Credits
- 12th Grade = 16.00-22.00 Credits

## Awarding of Extra Credit

Extra credit is awarded at the discretion of the individual teacher. Teachers will post their extra credit policies and opportunities within their individual courses. Extra credit will not be awarded for completion of assigned work. Extra credit may be awarded for work above and beyond regularly assigned work and in the same content area of the course.

## Report Cards and Mid-Semester Progress Updates

Families will have continuous access to their student's progress through the PEAK dashboard. The Family Coach will meet with the student and Learning Coach to discuss the student progress.

Report cards are available electronically at the end of each quarter through the Sapphire Community Portal. Final grades are calculated at the end of each semester (2nd and 4th quarters respectively). For a year- long course, the cumulative final grade is the average of the first and second semester grades. The grades at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters are progress grades only.

## Late Work Policy

All graded assignments - whether teacher- or electronically-scored - will be given a due date within the course and will be visible in the Class Plan and also in the PEAK dashboard. The consequences of submitting work after the due date are determined by each teacher. Teachers will post their late policy in the course, and communicate and explain it to students at the beginning of the course.

In the case of documented extenuating circumstances (i.e., technical/medical) where a student is not able to complete/submit work for an extended time (week or more), it is the responsibility of the student and/or Learning Coach to contact each individual teacher and develop a catch-up plan. In the event of the extenuating circumstance occurring in the final weeks of the quarter/semester, an extension may be requested but will require administration review and approval.

## Honor Roll

The Agora Honor Roll is an opportunity to acknowledge student effort and hard work. It also provides students with the incentive to continue to work diligently. Honor Roll status will be determined at the end of each semester and will be identified on the report card.

## National Honor Society

The purpose of Agora's chapter of the National Honor Society is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students of our school. Membership in this chapter is an honor bestowed upon deserving students by our faculty, and will be based on the criteria of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Candidates eligible for election to this chapter must be members of the sophomore, junior or senior class for the following school year with a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.4. Upon meeting the grade level, attendance and GPA standard requirements, candidates will be considered based on their service, leadership, and character.

Candidates will complete the Student Activity Information Form to demonstrate service, leadership and character. Once selected and inducted, members are expected to maintain the standards by which they were selected and maintain all obligations of membership. These standards include: maintaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.4, attending monthly online meetings, and participating in Agora-sponsored events and activities.

## National Junior Honor Society

The purpose of Agora's chapter is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students of Agora. Membership in this chapter is an honor bestowed upon deserving students by the faculty, and will be based on the criteria of scholarship, service, leadership and character. Candidates eligible for election to this chapter must be members of the 7th, 8th or 9th grade class for the following school year with a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.25. Upon meeting the grade level, attendance and GPA standard requirements, candidates will be considered based on their service, leadership and character.

Candidates will complete the Student Activity Information Form to demonstrate service, leadership and character. Once selected and inducted, members are expected to maintain the standards by which they were selected and maintain all obligations of membership. These standards include: maintaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, attending monthly online meetings and participating in Agora-sponsored events and activities.

# SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## Introduction

Agora's Special Education program is robust and comprehensive. It includes supports and services for students who have a confirmed educational disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Specially designed instruction and a standards-based curriculum are delivered by qualified staff to meet the individual needs of all students. Individual Education Plans (IEP) are developed and implemented across all settings. Special Education programming and related services are provided to Agora students at no cost to the parents and guardians.



## Commitment To Serve Students

Agora is abundantly committed to the full implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and IDEA. Agora ensures that all enrolled students who are eligible for special education services have full access to curricular offerings. These curricular options are aligned to Pennsylvania state academic achievement standards.

## Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Special Education Services

According to Chapter 711 of Title 22 ("Chapter 711") of the Pennsylvania Code schools are required to publish and post a notice to parents regarding public awareness activities sufficient to inform parents of the school's available special education services and programs and how to request those services and programs as well, as of systematic screening activities that lead to the identification, location and evaluation of children with disabilities enrolled in the Charter School. Please go to our website <https://agora.org/our-school/special-education/> to review the Annual Public Notice for the current school year.

## IDEA Statement

It is mandated in the 2004 Amendments to IDEA that every school district in the country develop a system to identify children (from birth through age 21) with disabilities who live in that district. In accordance with all federal regulations and state standards, Agora will make a concerted effort to identify, locate, and evaluate children through 21 years of age who enroll in Agora and have a confirmed or suspected disability. It is required by law that procedural safeguards are provided to children with disabilities and their parents/guardians. This is required throughout the identification, evaluation, and placement process to ensure they have a free appropriate public education. Procedural Safeguards are a vital component of IDEA's requirements. They represent guarantees for parents and their child with disabilities, as well as offer both school and parents, a variety of options for resolving disagreements.

## Child Find

Child Find is an essential element of IDEA. It requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities from birth to age 21 as a means to implement early intervention or special education services. Our responsibility for our students is to help identify children who may have health, learning, or developmental needs as early as possible.

## Screening

Agora routinely screens and monitors students. This includes reviewing and analyzing educational data for any academic, behavioral, or functional difficulties that may impact student achievement. All data is considered prior to making a determination for a referral to the multidisciplinary evaluation

## Requests for Multidisciplinary Evaluation

Requests for evaluations may be submitted at any time. Upon receipt of a verbal or written request for a multidisciplinary evaluation, Agora will respond within ten (10) calendar days. The need for an evaluation is determined upon a thorough review of all data related to the concern and any impact on student learning and functional performance. Parent involvement is a required component throughout this process. For information on this process, please contact the Psychological Services Coordinator by calling 844-402-4672.

## Multidisciplinary Evaluation

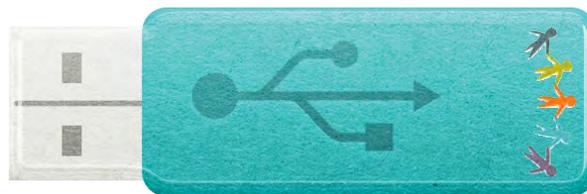
Pertinent information on the student's educational performance is collected from available records, input from parents, instructional staff, support staff, and qualified evaluators. All comprehensive information is utilized to develop an Evaluation Report (ER) and to determine whether a student presents with an educational disability and the need for specially-designed instruction. All information collected is confidential and is protected in accordance with state and federal laws and by the school's policy on confidentiality of student records. There are 13 categories of special education as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In order to qualify for special education, the IEP team must determine that a child presents with one of the following disabilities:

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech – Language Impairment
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment



## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Technical support and troubleshooting for the K<sup>12</sup> provided computer and printer is provided to all students through K<sup>12</sup>. They will be available for technical problems you may have, such as lost OLS passwords, computer problems, malfunctions or trouble accessing classes.



For K<sup>12</sup> related technical support issues, please call 855-412-3712

- K<sup>12</sup> customer care and technical support hour of operation
  - Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 11:59 p.m. EST
  - Saturday & Sunday 12:00 noon - 8:00 p.m. EST

Technical support and troubleshooting will be provided for the following items:

- K<sup>12</sup> provided laptop
- K<sup>12</sup> provided printer
- Applications and operating systems

A support technician will troubleshoot and attempt to resolve computer issues and will request parental approval to connect to the laptop for remote troubleshooting. In certain cases they may require a complete restore of the device. If an issue cannot be resolved, the technician may request a replacement device be sent to the student's home shipping address.

The malfunctioning laptop must be returned to K<sup>12</sup> within ten (10) business days, using the original laptop box. K<sup>12</sup> will provide the return shipping label. For more information or replacement return shipping labels please visit the K<sup>12</sup> website.

## ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For additional Agora provided technical support regarding the following:

- Google Apps for Education
- Sapphire Account Support
- Special Education Assistive Technology (AT) equipment

Please call Agora IT at 844-507-8233 or send an email to [AgoraSystemsSupport@agora.org](mailto:AgoraSystemsSupport@agora.org)

- Agora provided technical support hours of operation (\*except on designated holidays):
  - Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. EST

# AGORA TECHNOLOGY



## Google Apps for Education Partnership

Agora has gone Google! We are happy to partner with Google through the Google Apps for Education suite of products to increase collaboration between students and teachers. This partnership gives Agora's students and staff access to leading technology tools, along with the ability to customize tools to fit individual needs. Students and staff will have access to Google calendar, blogger, drive, docs, sheets, presentations and many other services.

## Email

As part of our K12 agreement, Agora will be using Microsoft as our email provider. All email addresses for students will be @agoracyber.net. Students will be able to use the web interface.

## Blackboard Collaborate

Blackboard Collaborate is Agora's virtual classroom allowing our teachers to have an online location to deliver instruction. Collaborate allows the teacher to share documents, presentations, and their screen, along with providing the ability to have face-to-face virtual discussions.

## Computer and Equipment Returns

If a student leaves Agora during the school year, the parent is responsible for returning all K<sup>12</sup> and Agora-issued computer equipment. Upon withdrawal families will be sent UPS stickers for returns, parents are responsible for safely packing equipment in the original boxes and taking them to a UPS shipping location. Parents will be billed for unreturned school materials.

Questions regarding the return of all other equipment and material should be directed to K<sup>12</sup> Customer Care and Technical Support at **855-412-3712**.

# STUDENT BEHAVIOR, INFRACTIONS and CONSEQUENCES



Disciplinary procedures are consistent with applicable requirements of the Pennsylvania Code and IDEA. Student offenses dictate the severity of the consequence Agora will impose. In addition to the specific offenses set forth below, Agora has the right to discipline any student who engages in conduct that threatens the health, safety or welfare of others or disrupts the learning environment. The appropriate consequences will be determined at the sole discretion of Agora in accordance with the law. A student has the right to certain disciplinary procedures as outlined in this Handbook.

| Rules and Infractions  | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|--|---|
| <b>Attendance at Required Classes</b>  |   |
| Students in a required session track shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attend all sessions</li> <li>• attend class on time</li> <li>• actively participate in online sessions</li> <li>• complete follow-up activities/assessments in a timely manner</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of participation points, which could lead to failure in the course</li> <li>• Implement academic action plan</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions  | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|--|---|
| <b>Interaction with Family Coach and Teacher</b>   |   |
| Students shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interact with Family Coaches and Teachers and keep lines of communication open</li> <li>• participate in home visit/face-to-face meetings as requested</li> <li>• communicate with Family Coach and teacher about course progress</li> <li>• reach out to Family Coach and/or Teacher with questions or concerns</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members</li> <li>• Non-compliance, lack of communication could ultimately lead to truancy; meeting with Parents/Guardians; student and staff to develop a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP); truancy reporting to the student's school district of residence; and removal from the roll of active students</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|---|---|
| <b>Disruption of School is Prohibited</b>   |   |
| <p>Students shall act in a courteous manner toward all members of the school and shall not disrupt any education or school-related program. Infractions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fails to obey directions</li> <li>• uses beepers, cell phones, or telephonic/music device during school function or in class</li> <li>• fails to attend class without a valid excuse</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges up to a maximum of ten (10) days</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> <li>• Failure to attend school without a valid excuse is also a truancy violation, as are outlined in the Attendance Policy</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|---|---|
| <b>Dress Code Compliance</b>  |   |
| <p>Students shall dress in accordance with the standards described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pants must be worn on the waist so no undergarments are showing</li> <li>• no halter tops, strapless garments, or garments revealing midriff may be worn to a school event</li> <li>• no garments that reveal undergarments or that are see-through may be worn to a school event</li> <li>• no hats, stocking caps, doo rags, or bandanas may be worn inside buildings or at school events</li> <li>• no clothing that has profanity, offensive slogans or encourages drug use may be worn to school events</li> </ul> <p>Note: This section is enforced for students when attending a school function such as testing, Agora Day Out events, orientations or other face-to-face events or at any time the Student is representing him/herself as an Agora student.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|---|---|
| <b>Offensive Language is Prohibited</b>   |   |
| <p>• Students shall not use offensive language. Violations of this rule include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cursing</li> <li>• using vulgar or obscene language</li> <li>• sending or forwarding offensive, sexually-oriented, or threatening messages, pictures or symbols of an offensive nature may violate Title IX and depending on degree and/or frequency, be subject to immediate recommendation for expulsion.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions  | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|--|---|
| <b>Academic Honesty Mandate</b>  |   |
| <p>Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their work. Violations of this rule include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• copying work from another person</li> <li>• plagiarizing work of another</li> <li>• using answer keys provided for Learning Coach</li> <li>• copying work from internet sources without proper citations</li> <li>• forging notes</li> <li>• sharing test questions and answers with others</li> </ul> | <p><b>First Incident</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express concerns and provide concrete examples of dishonesty.</li> <li>• <b>Kindergarten-9th Grade:</b> Allow students to redo assignment and resubmit for a grade.</li> <li>• <b>9th-12th Grades:</b> Assignment can be resubmitted. Citation submissions can be resubmitted. Notify Learning Coach and/or parent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Second Incident</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student and staff members.</li> <li>• Teacher and team discretion about redoing the assignment. All second incident assignments receive a zero (0) with no opportunity to make up.</li> </ul> <p><b>Third Incident</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hold a face-to-face disciplinary meeting to discuss ways to eliminate academically dishonest behaviors.</li> </ol> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention   |
|---|--|
| <b>Abuse of Computer or Internet Privileges</b>   |  |
| <p>Students shall respect the computer privileges granted to them.</p> <p>Violations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• giving his/her password to another individual or using another individual's account</li> <li>• illegally downloading or uploading copyrighted materials from the internet</li> <li>• visiting sites on the internet that contain sexually explicit material</li> <li>• harming or destroying data of another student or person, the internet or other networks</li> <li>• creating, downloading, or uploading computer viruses</li> <li>• violating any rule outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy (found on page 51)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student and staff</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above measures, students will be required to pay full restitution for acts of deliberate damage or graffiti. Costs for damage to school property will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• labor, materials, consulting fees</li> <li>• other costs associated with replacing or restoring the damaged property</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|---|---|
| <b>Fighting is Prohibited</b>   |   |
| <p>Students shall refrain from mutual confrontations involving physical contact with any members of the school community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff members</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions  | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|--|---|
| <b>Tobacco Products and Paraphernalia are Prohibited</b>   |   |
| <p>A student may not possess or use any tobacco product, cigarette lighters, e-cigarettes, matches, rolling papers, pipes or other such paraphernalia.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff and possibly make Student Assistance Program ("SAP") referral (see page 46)</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions  | Possible Consequence or Intervention  |
|--|---|
| <b>Possession of a Weapon is Prohibited</b>  |   |
| Students shall not possess any weapon as defined in this Handbook. A student violates this rule even if he/she did not intend to use such thing as a weapon. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in possession of a weapon will go to an expulsion hearing.</li> <li>• Local police authorities will be informed.</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention   |
|---|--|
| <b>Drugs or Alcohol for Personal Use are Prohibited</b>   |  |
| Students shall not have, use or be under the influence of any alcohol, drugs, or unauthorized prescription or nonprescription medication. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student, and staff</li> <li>• Refer to Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective</li> <li>• Follow up with the SAP Team to get intervention measures in place and may be made to law enforcement, depending on the nature and details of the offense.</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions   | Possible Consequence or Intervention   |
|---|--|
| <b>Harassment is Prohibited</b>   |  |
| Students shall not harass members of the school community. A student violates this by demanding sexual favors, threatening, intimidating or creating a hostile environment because of someone's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation (known or perceived), national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status and/or political beliefs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student and staff</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective and/or may be subject to recommendation for expulsion, depending on the facts of the situation.</li> </ul> |

| Rules and Infractions | Possible Consequence or Intervention |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Bullying and Serious Threats are Prohibited |  |
|---|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>A student shall not communicate, directly or indirectly, any threat to another member of the school community that places the person in fear of injury, pain or ridicule. Serious threats to life or safety are included in the Bullying/Cyber-Bullying Policy as well as the Anti-Harassment and Title IX Policies. Sending or forwarding offensive, sexually- oriented, or threatening messages, pictures or symbols of an offensive nature may violate Title IX and depending on degree and/or frequency, be subject to immediate recommendation for expulsion. Students shall not intimidate or bully members of the school community. A student violates this rule if he or she participates in the following behaviors directly or indirectly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical: hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, getting another person to hurt someone</li> <li>• verbal: racial slurs, name-calling, teasing, taunting, verbal sexual harassment, gossiping, spreading rumors</li> <li>• non-verbal: threatening, obscene gestures, isolation, exclusion, stalking, cyber bullying</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss incident with student</li> <li>• Hold a disciplinary meeting with parents/guardians, student and staff</li> <li>• Suspend student from school privileges</li> <li>• Suspend from school if above interventions are not effective. Expulsion is also possible when the nature of the incident is serious or repeated, or if the threat made to an individual's life or safety.</li> </ul> <p>Explicit threats may also be reported to local police authorities where the threat took place. Students may be required to provide documentation stating they are able to return to school and are not a risk to harm self or others.</p> |
|---|--|

| Rules and Infractions | Possible Consequence or Intervention |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Violation of Local, State, or Federal Law |  |
|---|--|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>An act in violation of a local, state or federal law, including but not limited to: assault, aggravated assault, arson, possession/sale of controlled substances, and/or pornography, hazing, theft, robbery, terroristic threats, whether written, verbal or cyber in nature.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension of up to ten (10) days and recommendation for expulsion at a formal hearing.</li> <li>• Report to appropriate law enforcement.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## Search and Seizure Policy

To maintain order and discipline at school functions and protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student's belongings or student automobiles in certain circumstances and may seize any illegal or unauthorized materials discovered during the search. More specifically, the CEO or his/her designee may inspect a student's storage space or automobile when there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that any are being improperly used for the storage of contraband, a substance or object the possession of which is illegal or any material which poses a hazard to the safety, sanitation and good order of the School community.

A student's person and possessions may be searched by the CEO and/or his representative provided that the individual has reasonable grounds to suspect that the search will turn up evidence that the student had violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the School.

Prior to a search of storage space or automobile, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. When school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the storage area or automobile contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of students in the school, these areas may be searched without prior warning.

Any illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary hearing or proceeding and may be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

## Social Media Code of Conduct for Students and Parents

Agora social media sites, such as the Agora Facebook FANs and Regional FANs groups are intended to connect Agora staff with Learning Coaches, enrolled students and active families across Pennsylvania and in their local, home regions. Utilizing a variety of additional social media channels (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest), we provide a safe place for families to network with one another, plan events, or seek general help on a variety of topics. These groups are not intended to replace your Family Coach, Teacher, Guidance Counselor or any other Agora staff members, nor are they meant to be a forum to file complaints. It is our hope that they will be a positive experience for all involved. If at any time you feel this is not the case, please contact a group Administrator or the PR and Social Media team at [myagora@agora.org](mailto:myagora@agora.org).

By joining these groups and/or posting to it, you agree to the following Code of Conduct:

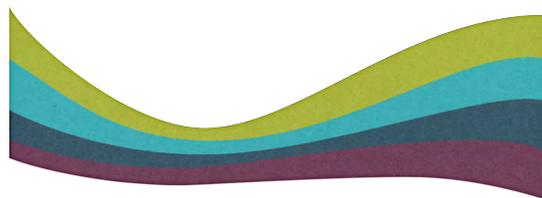
1. **Be Yourself:** Please use your real name and photograph when creating a Facebook page. Many of our social networks are "closed" groups and only open to active students and their families. Welcome new students and families to our school's digital community just as you would welcome a new friend into your home.
2. **Be Respectful:** Treat one another with civility and respect. Avoid personal attacks, slurs, and
  - a. profanity in your interactions. We understand that sometimes a topic can be very emotional. Please consider how others will view or react to your posts before clicking "Post."
3. **Be Social not Sales-y:** We ask that you refrain from posting unsolicited advertisements that do not pertain directly to the intended use of this group. These posts may be removed without notice. We also forbid parents to sell products, services or tickets to an event or other products. Additionally, the FANs pages are not for Kickstarter/GoFundMe solicitations. Agora parents/Learning Coaches are not responsible for any event that requires the collection of money. If an event requires an admission or tickets, each family must be responsible for their own payment.

4. Preview Then Post: Before posting links to outside websites and videos, please take a moment to scan the page and see if someone else has already posted a link to the same page/topic and/or video. We request that the similar or identical topical content not be reposted so we do not clutter the page up with duplicates. Be sure to preview the entire page/video you link to, ensuring that the link works. While the content might not be offensive, other links and advertisements on the page may be. As a courtesy to fellow group members, take a moment to summarize the content of the page or video you're linking to so they know what to expect when they open the link.
5. Stay on Topic: Please ensure that your comments are relevant to the subject at hand. It is normal for some topics to drift from the original stated subject. However, to ensure maximum benefit for everyone, we encourage you to keep your post as close to the subject as possible.
6. Be Brief: As a rule of thumb, please do not dominate the postings as it can become difficult to navigate the page.
  - a. A word of caution: Repeated postings of comments to public posts in a short period of time may cause Facebook to temporarily block your account from posting further comments. If this happens, a pop-up message will appear. This is a function of Facebook and is automatic - the page/group Administrators have no control over this and are not responsible for this action.
7. Confidentiality: NEVER post personal information about your student, family or friends that you wouldn't want broadcast to the world. Posting ANY information regarding children other than your own (without specific permission from their parent) will result in an immediate ban, and the possibility of further action. Do not post the names of Agora teachers, staff and/or Board of Trustees members. This is not the forum for such topics and violations of this rule could result in your removal and /or ban from the group. Please keep in mind that our communities, although private pages are still public spaces, so do not post anything that you don't want everyone in the group to see.

\*Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in comments made by those who participate on the regional Facebook pages are the personal opinions of the authors, not of Agora Cyber Charter School. Posts made to the Agora Facebook pages are subject to removal at any time, and membership in the group is subject to review and/or termination at any time, at the discretion of the Administrators and Operators.

| ACTION  | RESPONSIBILITY  | CONSEQUENCE   |
|---|---|---|
| Entry into an Agora Facebook FANs closed group  | Parent/Learning Coach requests to join a group. Email is sent to request name and grade of their student(s) currently enrolled at Agora, which is verified by Athena data/the Agora Student Information System. | Parent/Learning Coach joins the closed group and agrees to abide by the Agora Social Media Code of Conduct.   |
| Parent/Learning Coach posts a message to sell a product or service  | Agora Administrators may send a Message and ask the Parent/Learning Coach to voluntarily remove their sales message   | If Parent/Learning Coach does not remove message, an Agora Administrator of the group page will do so.  |
| Parent/Learning Coach posts a message that contains a personal attack or profanity  | Agora Administrators may/will send a Message and ask the Parent/Learning Coach to remove the offensive message, or it may be immediately removed.   | If Parent/Learning Coach does not remove message, an Agora Administrator of the group page will do so.  |
| Parent/Learning Coach posts a message that contains personal information, and/or identifies a student or staff member or Board of Trustee by name or position in a negative light | Agora Administrators will immediately remove the inappropriate message.   | Parent/Learning Coach is banned from the closed group and blocked so they are unable to post messages.  |
| Parent/Learning Coach has a message removed/deleted   | Agora Administrators will send a copy of the Agora Social Media Code of Conduct as a reminder of appropriate/ inappropriate postings to social media  | Parent/Learning Coaches who continue to violate the Agora Social Media Code of Conduct will be blocked and removed from the group(s)                          |
| Student withdraws from Agora  | Agora Administrators will immediately delete the Parent/Learning Coach from all closed groups   | Conversely, all Parents/ Learning Coaches will need to verify that their students are returning to Agora for the next school year to remain in a closed group |
| Parent/Learning Coach has been permanently blocked /banned from a closed group due to continued violation of the Agora Social Media Code of Conduct                               |   | Parent/Learning Coach may be able to re-join a closed group at the beginning of the next school year  |

# GENERAL INFORMATION



## Agora Days Out (ADOs) and Events

Family Coaches and other staff will arrange a variety of educational and social events for students and families. Attendance is optional. However, these events provide wonderful opportunities to meet staff, make new friends and talk with fellow parents about school. Parents are responsible for transportation and any other fees. The fees are often negotiated and reduced for our school.

All community-based events can be found on the calendar listed in the OLS under Announcements so that families can plan accordingly. Time spent on a field trip counts as attendance in school so it is necessary that all students will need to be marked present on the attendance sheets for this Agora Days Out activity so that their attendance will be correct for the day. Any assignments that are missed must be submitted as soon as possible, so the student does not fall behind in class. Any student may attend any outing he or she wishes by submitting an RSVP, if required, to the Agora personnel listed in the outing information. If you do not RSVP, there are no guarantees that a student/family will be able to attend. We do our very best to ensure that all students can join in all activities. However, events are often capped and we need to honor those who reserve spots with an RSVP. Parents, or adults they specify, are responsible for supervising children at all times during an outing. Siblings and friends are welcome to attend as well. All students are expected to adhere to the student code of conduct and follow the school dress code. All attending children are required to be signed in and acknowledge event permission, liability, and school conduct at all events. Family Coaches will communicate events in your area via email.

Students who are not properly immunized may be excluded from participating in these events.

## Student Activities and Clubs

There are many different activities for our students including clubs that run throughout the school year. Visit our website for a listing of activities and club leaders <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/student-clubs/>

Additionally, K12 offers national clubs to all of their schools to begin late September. Watch for an email from the leader with club details, and club sessions will appear on your Class Connect schedule. The following clubs will be offered to Agora students this year:

- World Interests
- Language Arts and History
- Math, Science, and Technology
- Hobbies
- Music, Art, and Dance
- Success Builders

In-year clubs are optional, one hour sessions, one or two times a month from September through May. We encourage students to select no more than four (4) of their most favorite clubs.

Synchronous students are expected to attend all scheduled and required, virtual sessions.

Attendance in a club is an additional privilege and is not an excuse for missing a required session.

## Flag Salute, Pledge Of Allegiance and Opening Exercises

A student may refuse to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or salute the flag based on the student's religious conviction or personal belief. A student who declines to participate in this exercise is expected to stand quietly and respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

## Internet Service Provider (ISP) Rebate Program

Internet Service Provider (ISP) rebate checks are issued per household. Each family will receive the actual cost of Internet up to, and not to exceed, \$35 per month for each month their student attends Agora. For additional information, visit our website at: <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/isp-rebate-program/>. The checks are mailed to the Legal Guardian twice per year:

- September through December will be mailed at the end of January
- January through June will be mailed at the end of June

The Legal Guardian is required to submit one entire Internet bill for any month during each period via the Community Web Portal. Information on how to submit your bill can be found on our website at: <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/isp-rebate-program/>. The following information is required on the Internet bill:

- Name
- Address
- Cost of internet service (individual or bundled)
- Service dates
  - Fall - One bill for any month from September through December, 2017
  - Spring - One bill for any month from January through June, 2018
- The September, October, November or December bill is due by January 5, 2018
- The January, February, March, April, May or June bill is due by June 5, 2018

## Health Requirements and Proof of Residency

Families are required to submit the following documents for each student within the household enrolled at Agora:

- 1) Up-to-date immunization record(s). Please read our Health Policy for additional information.
- 2) Results of yearly health screening(s). Please read our Health Policy for additional information.
- 3) Proof of residency and notification form(s) with the current address. If a change in physical address occurs Agora must be notified of the move and receive updated compliance documents within 30 school days of the actual move (Residency Policy). Failure to comply could result in the student's withdrawal from Agora.
- 4) The ISP checks of families who are asked to submit updated or missing information by either our Nursing Department, Enrollment Department, or Address Change Department will be placed on hold until the necessary information has been received and approved by the appropriate department. The ISP check will be issued the next scheduled mailing after the hold is removed by the appropriate department. Please see our website for the mailing schedule: <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/isp-rebate-program/>

## Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program (SAP), is administered by the PA Department of Education's Division of Student and Safe School Services in partnership with the PA Department of Health's Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs, and the PA Department of Public Welfare's Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. SAP is designed to assist school personnel in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and mental health issues, and issues arising from poverty or other obstacles that pose a barrier to a student's success.

SAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally-trained SAP team, including school staff and liaisons from community alcohol, drug and mental health agencies. SAP Team members are trained to identify problems, to determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP Team will assist the parent and student to access services within the community. SAP Team members do not diagnose, treat or refer children for treatment; however, they may make a referral for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

Parents have the right to be involved in the process and have full access to all school records under the applicable State and Federal laws and regulations. Involvement of parents in all phases of the Student Assistance Program is expected. This partnership is integral to the successful resolution of problems. Unaccompanied youth and students who are emancipated are eligible for SAP services.

SAP teams work in conjunction with the district's Homeless Liaison and Educational Liaison for Children in Foster Care to ensure obstacles and barriers are removed where possible and the educational placement of the student is maintained where needed.

For additional information, please contact your Family Coach.

## Title I Program

The primary goal of a school-wide Title I program is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on Pennsylvania academic achievement standards. The increase in student achievement is to result from improving the entire educational program of the school – what we call our School Improvement Plan. Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) approved Agora as a Title I School. As a school-wide program, math and reading specialists provide support to students in need of remediation in the areas of math and reading.

Under Title I, parents are to be involved in the school improvement process. Parents are encouraged to attend instructional events offered by the school. During Title I meetings, parents also have the right to help create or update the school's parent involvement policy and the home-school compact. Parents can contribute to their child's academic success by ensuring that the child attends school regularly, comes prepared to learn and completes all classwork and homework. We ask that parents plan to attend Title I meetings to obtain more information about school improvement activities and parent engagement opportunities.

## Title I Right To Know Notice

As a school that received Federal Title I funds to assist students in meeting state achievement standards, as required by The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)] and the Every Student Succeeds Act [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)], Agora Cyber Charter School will publish and post a right to know notice regarding information about this law and your child's education. Please go to our website <https://agora.org/about-agora/title-i/> to review the Title I documents and Right to Know Notice for the current school year.

## Focus School Notice

Based upon the criteria of overall school performance (defined by the School Performance Profile), graduation rate and achievement gap of historically low performing students, Agora Cyber Charter School has been designated as a Focus School. Each year Agora will publish and post a Focus School Notice explaining this designation and information about interventions used to address student academic achievement. Please go to our website <https://agora.org/about-agora/board-of-trustees/operating-documents/> to review the Annual Public Notice for the current school year.

## Parent/Student/School Compact

The purpose of this compact is to foster the development of a school-parent relationship to help all children achieve the State's high academic standards. It is the school's responsibility to provide a high-quality curriculum and instruction, in a supportive and effective environment, that enables children to meet the State's student performance standards. As part of that commitment, the school must address the importance of communication between parents and teachers on an ongoing basis through such efforts as annual parent teacher conferences in elementary schools; frequent reports to parents on their child's progress; and reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observations of classroom activities. The commitments requested in this compact are voluntary and in no way legally binding.

### As a PARENT I will encourage and support my child's learning by doing the following:

- Requiring regular school attendance
- Helping my child with weekly online learning sessions
- Attending parent/student instructional training sessions
- Setting an example for my child by being a lifelong learner myself
- Encouraging my child's efforts and be available for questions
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my children's education
- Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from Agora either received by email or by regular mail and responding, as appropriate

### As a STUDENT I will become an active partner in my own learning progress by doing the following:

- Attending school regularly
- Completing my assignments in a timely manner
- Participating in weekly online sessions
- Cooperating with parents and teachers
- Asking for help when needed

## As a SCHOOL we will encourage and support students' learning and parental involvement in this school by doing the following:

- Demonstrating care and concern for each student
- Respecting cultural, racial, and ethnic differences
- Providing explanations of the standards students are expected to meet to demonstrate learning progress
- Providing quality online and face-to-face supplementary materials and supplies that support instruction
- Making efficient use of academic learning time
- Providing parents with regular and accurate assessment of students' progress in meeting school achievement and performance requirements
- Providing an environment that allows for positive communications between the teacher, parent, and student
- Encouraging teachers to regularly provide supplementary assignments that will reinforce classroom instruction
- Providing opportunities for parents to be involved in the school and in their child's education

## Chapter 15/ Section 504 Service Agreement

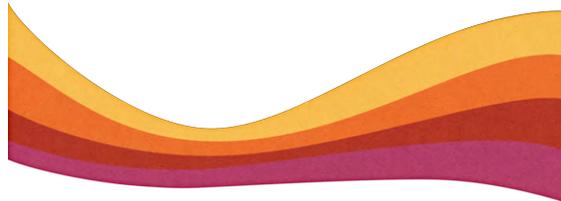
Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), some school-age children are entitled to protections, adaptations and accommodations if they have a documented mental or physical disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities or bodily functions. A Section 504 Service Agreement will be developed if these limitations prohibit the student's participation in, or access to, an aspect of the school program. The need for a Service Agreement is determined by review of all student data related to the documented disability or limitation as outlined above.

As outlined in ADAAA the following major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

As outlined in ADAAA major bodily functions include, but are not limited to: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

Parents are asked to contact their child's school counselor if they have questions concerning a 504 Service Agreement. Not all students will be granted a 504 Service Plan if it is requested: there is specific criteria that is considered.

# AGORA SCHOOL POLICIES



## Acceptable Use of School Property

Agora provides a computer, printer, books and other curricular supplies and materials. All provided materials are school property and must be kept in good condition. Parents are responsible for the repair or replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged school property. A list of property that must be returned is provided to parents. All property and equipment must be returned in good, working condition upon withdrawal from the program or as requested by the school. All printed materials are copyrighted. Unauthorized copying of these materials is a copyright infringement. Materials cannot be sold, transferred or distributed. Materials are to be used solely by the student in his or her studies while enrolled in the school. Parents are to comply with this policy and with all the terms and conditions of the Use of Instructional Property Agreement submitted with the enrollment materials.

Agora reserves the right to update or to alter this agreement at any time. Such revisions may substantially alter access to Agora instructional computing resources. Agora instructional computing resources include any computer, software or transmission system that is owned, operated or leased by Agora. Every parent or guardian of a student enrolled in Agora should be aware of the following guidelines and expectations. Any activity not listed here that constitutes a violation of Local, State or Federal laws is also considered a violation of Agora's Student Code of Conduct (refer to page 10) and Acceptable Use Guidelines.

Failure to follow these guidelines could result in:

- Removal of a student's access to Agora instructional computing resources, which could result in an inability to complete learning activities
- Suspension or expulsion of the student from Agora
- Involvement with law enforcement agencies and possible legal action

## Accountability

- Posting anonymous messages is not permitted on the Agora network unless authorized by the teacher of an online course. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited.
- Use only your own username and password, and do not share these with anyone.
- Students may not login to or send mail from the account assigned to their parent/guardian/ Learning Coach.
- Do not interfere with other users' ability to access Agora's Online School or virtual High School, disclose anyone's password to others or allow them to use another user's account. You are responsible for all activity that is associated with your username and password.
- Change your password(s) frequently, at least once per semester or course.
- Do not publicly post any messages that were sent to you privately.
- Do not download, transmit or post material that is intended for personal gain or profit, non-Agora commercial activities, non-Agora product advertising or political lobbying on an Agora-owned instructional computing resource.
- Do not use Agora instructional computing resources to sell or to purchase any illegal items or substances.

- Do not upload or post any software that is not specifically required and approved for your assignments through Agora's instructional computing resources.
- Do not post any MP3 files, compressed videos or other non-instructional files to any Agora server.
- Do not modify or change the system software, hardware, wiring, or take any action to violate any system's security.
- Do not install any unauthorized software onto a school-issued computer, or to modify any system settings without the prior approval of the Agora Technology Department.
- Do not attempt to defeat or bypass the school's Internet filtering by the use of proxies, https, special ports, software or any other means.
- Email accounts are primarily intended for school-related purposes. Students who send significant numbers of non-school-related emails may have their account restricted.

### Student Internet Safety

- Do not reveal on the Internet any personal information about yourself or other persons.
- Do not post your name, home address or telephone number.
- Do not display photographs of yourself or others to persons outside of Agora.
- Do not display photographs that would be an embarrassment to yourself or others because they can go viral beyond your control.
- Do not agree to meet in person anyone you have met only on the Internet and who is not affiliated with Agora.

### Social Media/Network Etiquette

- At Agora, parents and students are expected to follow the rules of network etiquette, or "netiquette." The word "netiquette" refers to common-sense guidelines for conversing with others online. Please abide by these standards:
- Avoid sarcasm, jargon and slang. Swear words are unacceptable.
- Never use derogatory comments, including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues.
- Focus your responses on the questions or issues being discussed, not on the individuals involved.
- Be constructive with your criticism, not hurtful.
- Review your messages before sending them. Remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for typos.
- Respect other people's privacy. Don't broadcast online discussions, and never reveal other people's email addresses.
- Emails within Outlook 365 should contain only the student's name, email address, and grade. Social media posts should **not** include any student or staff's names.

Although Agora takes precautions to protect students from inappropriate sites, ultimately it is the responsibility of the student and parents/guardians to ensure that the school computer is used for only appropriate school use.

Students who become aware of potential security issues should report them immediately to the Agora Technology Department.

## Academic Integrity

All work submitted is assumed to have been completed by each student. Students are responsible for observing the standards on plagiarism and properly crediting all sources relied upon in the composition of their work. Failure to abide by these standards will be reported to the appropriate administrative authorities and may result in loss of credit, revoked access to course(s) and suspension or expulsion from Agora.

### Use of Copyrighted Materials

All materials in courses are copyrighted and provided for exclusive use by enrolled students. Enrolled students may print or photocopy material from the website for their own use. Use by others, or distribution to others, is prohibited unless expressly approved. Unauthorized copying or distribution may result in revoked access to course(s). Students shall not use Agora computer resources to upload, download, transmit or post copyrighted software or copyrighted materials, materials protected by trade secrets or materials subject to other protections. This includes copyrighted graphics of cartoon characters or other materials that may appear to be non-copyright protected.

### Plagiarism

The definition of plagiarism is copying or imitating the language, ideas or thoughts of another writer and passing them off as your own original work. Specific examples of plagiarism that will not be tolerated are:

- copying or rephrasing another student's work
- having someone else write an assignment or rephrase any part of an assignment (not just proofread it)
- directly copying student aids (for example, Cliff's Notes), critical sources or reference materials in part or in whole without acknowledgment
- indirect reproduction of student aids, such as Cliff's Notes, Cole Notes, critical sources or reference materials by rephrasing ideas borrowed from them without acknowledgment

### Source Citation

Many courses require written work in which you will need to cite sources. Any direct quotations from your textbook can simply be cited as (author, page number). Any quotations from outside sources require full citations, including author, title, publisher, date of publication and page number. If you are citing information found on a website, provide the complete web page or site title, URL, author (if known), page number (if applicable) and publication date of the site (if available).

## Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic integrity is highly valued at Agora Cyber Charter School. Incidents involving plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses that warrant immediate administrative attention. Students are required to submit original work. They are obligated to cite the sources of all references they use. See also Student Rights and Responsibilities Behavior Guidelines for additional information regarding this policy. Please note: Agora uses an online resource to verify plagiarism within assignments.

### Non-Citation Infraction Consequences

1st incident — resubmit assignment and parent conference

2nd incident — parent, teacher and Family Coach conference, possible grade of zero on assignment and administrative review

## Citation Infraction Consequences

1st incident — counseling on correct use of citations and opportunity to re-do assignment, and parent conference

2nd incident — parent, teacher and Family Coach conference, grade of zero on assignment

3rd incident — parent, teacher, Family Coach and administrator conference, grade of zero on assignment and administrative review

Students are responsible for their own work on unit tests and final exams. Students are not allowed to use notes, quizzes or textbooks on unit tests and final exams, unless indicated in their IEP. Students are not allowed to share work with other students on unit tests or final exams. Unless otherwise noted, tests and quizzes are not “open-book” assignments. If a student does not complete his/her own work or shares work with others on unit tests and/or final exams, he/she will not receive credit for the work. He/she also faces the risk of suspension or expulsion from Agora.

## Academic Progress Policy

Agora expects that all students can and will achieve academic success and that consistent attendance and engagement in regular coursework is essential to that success. At Agora, attendance involves regular login to each course and attendance at all mandatory synchronous sessions. Engagement involves completion of assigned assessments and completion of assigned lessons, which include submission of assigned coursework.

## Appropriate Use of Technology

### Monitoring

Agora reserves the right to review any material transmitted using Agora instructional computing resources or posted to an Agora instructional computing resource to determine the appropriateness of such material. Agora may review this material at any time, with or without notice. Email, documents, pictures, videos, sound clips or any other form of information transmitted, received, stored and/or created via Agora instructional computing resources is not private and may be monitored. Any material found to be in violation of Agora’s policies, Local, State or Federal law may lead to action by Agora, including implementation of discipline policies and/or the involvement of law enforcement agencies.

### Agora Indemnification Provision

Agora assumes no responsibility for information obtained via the Internet, which may be illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or offensive. Agora assumes no responsibility for any claims, losses, damages, costs or other obligations arising from the use of instructional computing resources. Agora also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement accessible on the computer network or the Internet is understood to be the author’s individual point of view and not that of Agora, its affiliates or its employees. Agora assumes no responsibility for damages to the user’s computer system. Nothing in this policy negates any obligation the student and parent have to use the instructional computing resources as required in the Use of Instructional Property Agreement that the parent or guardian signed as part of the student’s enrollment packet. In the event that this Code conflicts with the Agreement, the terms of the Agreement shall prevail.

### Using Blackboard Collaborate

Blackboard Collaborate offers technical support at the following web address: [www.illuminate.com/support](http://www.illuminate.com/support). Using the Help Desk and the Technical Support features will provide answers to the more common computer setup issues. If you have searched the site and did not find the answer to your computer issue, please call Blackboard Collaborate tech support at 866-388-8674 and choose option 2.

### Blackboard Collaborate Conduct for Students and Parents

#### Students:

- Arrive promptly at the scheduled time for the session.
- If logging in using a participant link, student must use first and last name.
- Whiteboard and microphone privileges will be assigned at the discretion of the teacher.
- Direct messaging conversations should be limited to the content of the lesson.
- Respectful and courteous behavior toward others is expected at all times.
- Non-participation or stepping away without the teacher's approval will count as an absence.
- If there are multiple students in your home in Title I, each student needs to login to a session individually. Please bear in mind that individual teachers may have expectations that are specific to their classrooms.
- Keep comments and questions specific to the lesson.
- Some Blackboard sessions are routinely recorded.

#### Parents:

Acceptable reasons to remove your child from a session include:

- offensive behavior by others in the session
- illness (if you must remove your child from a Blackboard Collaborate session due to illness, please email or call the teacher to discuss the situation)
- concerns about content or questions of the lesson (please contact the teacher by phone, email or in person during office hours)

Because the lessons are student-centered, only students should be logged in and using the participant tools during the sessions.

Parents are asked to refrain from coaching their child during Blackboard Collaborate sessions. The goal of this instructional time is for the child to become an independent learner and critical thinker.

## Attendance Policy and Attendance System

**Procedure Provision** - Agora Cyber Charter School is responsible for enforcing the compulsory school attendance laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and for properly recording student attendance and maintaining student records. The Agora [Attendance](#) policy is designed to promote maximum achievement, develop time management skills and foster success in the online environment.

### Definitions

**Synchronous** Student Attendance - Teachers capture attendance in Student Information System period attendance for all grade levels.

**Asynchronous** Student Attendance – Systems capture student login.

### Procedures

All students are synchronous unless designated otherwise.

Synchronous students are expected to attend all scheduled and required, virtual sessions. During this time, teachers will have daily interaction with students in a classroom environment and small group sessions, to learn about the students' strengths and challenges to ensure that the students have obtained the skill set to be effective online learners.

Pennsylvania state code requires all students to receive educational instruction for:

| Grade Level                       | # Days | Hours per Day | Hours per Year |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------------|----------------|
| Kindergarten–5 <sup>th</sup>      | 180    | 5             | 900            |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> | 180    | 5.5           | 990            |

**Virtual Class Attendance** – To be marked present in a class, students are required to be in the virtual session for the entire class period.

**Daily Attendance** - Students will only be considered present for the day when they are counted as present for a minimum of two-thirds of all required virtual sessions. Asynchronous students are expected to log in to online course-work each school day before 11:59 PM. Asynchronous students are encouraged to attend virtual sessions daily.

**Process for Attendance Monitoring** - Students are required to follow the school calendar, which includes at least 180 school days. Attendance only occurs on “school days” as listed on the school calendar. A student will need to log in to sessions each school day to be counted present.

**Truancy/Notification to District** - A student will be considered truant after three (3) unexcused absences. (PA Code, Chapter 11, § 11.25). Agora is mandated to report all truancy cases to the student's home school district. Once notified, the local district maintains 100% discretion to pursue truancy fines or court action. A student who acquires ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences may be withdrawn from the school. Synchronous students are expected to attend all scheduled and required, virtual sessions. If students miss more than a third of their daily classes, they will be marked absent and will be subject to the attendance laws of Pennsylvania and Agora policies for truancy.

According to the Basic Education Circular under the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the school must notify the student's home school district when three (3) or more cumulative unexcused absences occur.

The Attendance Office creates these letters and sends them to the school districts.

Students who accumulate ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences can be withdrawn from Agora. Districts will be notified in writing of these withdrawals.

When a student is withdrawn for ten (10) consecutive days of absence, the Registrar's office will notify both the District and family of the student's withdrawal.

All absences are considered unexcused until a legal excuse has been received and processed by the attendance office.

Three (3) consecutive absences require a doctor's excuse to be excused.

After ten (10) total absences (excused and/or unexcused), a doctor's excuse or tech ticket number is required for all future absences.

**Note for Special Education students:** After five (5) consecutive unexcused absences, the legal guardian, special education staff and academic team will attend a meeting to determine if the absences are related to the student's disability.

It is up to the local district to refer the student to the local magistrate. They may do so without informing Agora.

**SAIP: School Attendance Improvement Plan** - The SAIP is designed to increase student attendance and engagement while outlining action steps, benefits and consequences of the plan.

- Family Coach will complete a draft SAIP within three (3) school days of the third unexcused absence.
- Family Coaches are required to conduct a comprehensive SAIP (School Attendance Improvement Plan) within ten (10) school days from the date of the third unexcused absence. The Legal Guardian may be required to attend a live interaction to complete this document.
- All contact attempts, successful or unsuccessful, will be documented.

### **Excuse Notes for Absence**

Attendance must be captured on the same day or it will be considered an absence and require a written excuse sent to the Attendance Office within three (3) days of the absence. Upon written request from a parent or legal guardian, the school appointed designee may excuse a student's absence from school for the following reasons only:

- Student Illness
- Quarantine
- Death in the Immediate Family
- Religious Holidays (24 hour advance request only)
- Educational Tour/Trip (Form submitted and approved by the Attendance Office five (5) days in advance)
- Technical issues (K12 Technical Support ticket numbers needed)

In order for an absence to be considered as excused, a parent or legal guardian must submit a written explanation or medical excuse to the Attendance Office through the Sapphire Community Web Portal. Visit our website for additional information: <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/attendance/excuse-notes/>

The excuse must state the student's name, the date of the absence, and the reason for the absence. The parent or guardian has three school days from the Notice of Absence to submit the excuse to the Attendance Office. If the Attendance Office does not receive an excuse within three (3) days of notification, the absence will be recorded as an unexcused absence.

A maximum of ten (10) days absences (excused) verified by parental notification may be permitted per school year. All absences beyond ten cumulative days require an excuse from a physician or ticket of technical difficulties for each additional absence in order to be marked as an excused absence (PA Code Chapter 11, Student Attendance, § 11.41).

**No Internet Access** or Power Outage or School-Issued Computer Technical Issues

- Students who are unable to login to school or have a power outage at home must have an alternative plan to go to a public library/public location with computer access to do their schoolwork.
- If a student does not have a backup plan and cannot go to the library, the student must notify the Family Coach and Attendance Office to detail the reason for the absence.
- Students who are absent due to school-issued computer technical issues must have documentation. Students who are absent due technical issues can be technically excused up to five (5) school days.

**Educational Leave** - Pupils may be excused for educational trips not sponsored by the school according to Section 11.26, Ch. 11 of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Regulations. Please understand that it shall be the applicant's responsibility to contact the Attendance Office to determine what obligations must be met as a result of this proposed absence. Further understand that:

- No more than ten (10) days of absence will be approved for the school year.
- Trip Requests for dates that occur within the last 10 days of the school year will require the Principal's approval.
- Experiences such as "Long Weekends" and "Vacations" will not justify any request.

It is the parent's responsibility to contact the student's teachers prior to discuss what steps should be taken to make up the work that will be missed during the trip. Request must contain information as discussed with the teachers for the request to be reviewed.

The Request must be submitted and approved by the Attendance Office 5 days prior to the trip using the Educational Request Form emailed to the Attendance Office.

Requests will not be approved for time off during the state testing window.

**Reinstatement** - Students who have been withdrawn previously have the ability to be reinstated as a student of Agora Cyber Charter School with the exception of students who have been expelled until period of expulsion is completed. Any student who voluntarily withdraws during the school year while in truancy proceedings will continue with plan that was in place prior to withdrawal.

- Family Initiated - Previously attended Agora and would like to return.
  - Contact 1-844-402-4672, select Enrollment #3
  - Provide updated compliancy documents
  - Attend face-to-face enrollment session

- **Compliance** - Student was previously withdrawn due to compliance issues including but not limited to residency, immunizations, PDE required documents.
  - Contact 1-844-402-4672, option #3
  - Provide updated compliance documents
  - Attend face-to-face reinstatement meeting
  - Unannounced home visit will be required for all residency concerns
  - Complete written reinstatement plan in collaboration with family and school staff
- **Truancy** - Student who have been withdrawn for 10 consecutive, unexcused absences.
  - Contact 1-844-402-4672
  - Provide updated compliance documents
  - Attend face-to-face reinstatement meeting
  - 1st Reinstatement Request - attend 1:1 meeting with Agora staff person at a mutually agreed upon location
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Reinstatement Request – attend 1:1 meeting with an administrator at a mutually agreed upon location
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Reinstatement Request - attend meeting at Agora’s main office with building principal and Chief Academic Officer (“CAO”) at a mutually agreed upon location
  - Unannounced home visit may be required
  - Complete written reinstatement plan in collaboration with family and school staff

## Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy

### Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying are Prohibited

Agora Cyber Charter School is committed to a safe and positive learning environment for all students, employees, volunteers and parents, free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. All forms of bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited. Anyone engaging in bullying or cyberbullying is in violation of the policy and will be subject to appropriate discipline.

**Bullying** means unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student/parent/staff member/employee by another student/parent when the intentional act:

- physically harms a student or damages the student’s property
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education
- places another in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm
- is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

**Cyberbullying** includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorizing another student/parent/staff member/employee by way of any technological tool. Cyber-bullying includes sending inappropriate or derogatory emails, instant messages, text messages, pictures, blogs or website postings, when the intentional act:

- is physically, emotionally or mentally harmful to a student/parent/staff member/employee
- substantially interferes with a student’s education
- places a student/parent/staff member/employee in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm
- is severe, persistent or pervasive to the extent that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

**All forms of bullying are unacceptable.** When such actions are disruptive to the educational process at Agora, offenders will be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which may result in administrative discipline or action. Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms, including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the education environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other school policies or by classroom, building or program rules.

Counseling, corrective discipline and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitute violations of this policy.

The school's administrators are authorized to direct the development and implementation of procedures addressing the elements of this policy, consistent with each complaint and investigation.

## Disciplinary Meetings and Action

Discipline referrals to the administration are reviewed individually, consistent with the Code of Student Conduct. Discipline problems are best resolved expediently and closest to their source by the parties most directly involved. Most discipline issues are resolved with minimal administrative intervention. In the best interests of the student and the school, several disciplinary options are available.

### Procedures for Suspensions of Three (3) Days or Less

Students shall be afforded a conference with the Administrator of the department before being suspended. During the conference, the student shall be:

- informed of the alleged violation and any of the surrounding circumstances examined
- given an opportunity to respond to accusations if he/she has not already done so
- informed of the recommended remedial measure
- informed of the consequences of future infractions

After the conference with the student, the administrator will implement the recommended remedial measure and send the parent a disciplinary letter to inform them of the student's violation, the length of the suspension and the day on which the student and parent/guardian are permitted to return to class.

### Procedure for Suspensions of More than Three (3) Days

Students who are suspended for more than three (3) days shall be afforded an informal hearing. A parent or guardian must be notified in writing and the notification must afford the parent enough notice to attend the hearing. When the suspension is related to the health, safety or welfare of other students, the student may be suspended immediately. The hearing allows the student to meet with the appropriate official to explain why he/she should not be suspended. During the hearing the student will be:

- informed of the alleged violation and any of the surrounding circumstances examined
- given an opportunity to respond to the accusations if he/she has not already done so
- informed of the recommended remedial measure
- informed of the consequences of future infractions

## Expulsion

Expulsion is any exclusion from school for a period of more than 10 days. Written notice must be sent to the student's parent or guardian describing the misconduct, detailing specific reference to the rules, and listing the time and place of the hearing. A formal hearing must be held and should be private unless requested to be public by the parent or guardian. The student:

- may be represented by an attorney
- has the right to have information on the prosecution's witnesses

## Engagement Code of Conduct — General Expectations

Students and their Learning Coaches are expected to take responsibility for attending all required virtual classes and completing assignments within the online school daily. Students should expect to spend at least five hours daily in their online school, including attending required virtual classes, completing assignments and responding to requests for extra academic engagement and family support provided by Agora. Attendance in required virtual classes is mandatory, unless special permission is obtained from administration. It is a serious infraction of our Code of Conduct for a student to be absent from class and online school, or for a student or Learning Coach to be unavailable or unresponsive to school staff.

## Expected Student Engagement

Each student is expected to engage in school each school day. Students who are identified as low engaged will be closely monitored. Low engaged students must participate in all actions and activities determined by their teachers and Family Coach. Students who fail to follow the plans and opportunities offered may be placed on a formal escalation plan.

If it is determined that a student is not being successful, the Academic Review Team will meet to problem solve issues involving the student and determine appropriate interventions. The Academic Review Team will consist of the student's Family Coach, appropriate teachers and the MTSS Coordinator. Together the team will determine the appropriate interventions based on the student's data, which includes academic performance, attendance, behavior and their tier for engagement. It is critical that the team work to identify the root cause for lack of student success and determine appropriate and targeted intervention. The plan of improvement will be shared with the student's parent/guardian, who will be kept apprised of the student's progress toward the goal. If the student is not successful with the plan that is developed, the interventions will be increased. Parents will be brought into the Academic Review Team meeting if a student moves from Tier 2 to Tier 3 or if the student is unsuccessful in Tier 3 and is being considered for additional services.

## Health Policy

The health and safety of our students is one of the highest priorities of Agora. We are a public school and must follow the regulations relating to immunizations and health assessments required by the provisions relating to Health Services in the Pennsylvania Code (28 Pa. Code, Chapter 23, Subchapter C). These policies have been updated to reflect the newest amendments to Chapter 23, Subchapter C, as set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Health with the approval of the Advisory Health Board, on March 4, 2017, effective as of August 1, 2017.

Under state law, the following regulations apply to students:

1. Children at any grade, Kindergarten through 12th grade, including all public, private, parochial or nonpublic school, vocational schools, intermediate units, special education and home education programs, cyber and charter schools, must show proof of immunization before they can attend school.

2. Any student, in Kindergarten through 12th grade, must have any single dose vaccine upon school entry, or risk exclusion. In the case of a multi-dose vaccine, a child is required to have at least one dose of each vaccine upon entry. If additional doses are required and medically appropriate within the first five (5) days of school, the child shall have either the final dose during that 5-day period, or shall have the next scheduled dose and shall also provide a medical certificate setting out the schedule for the remaining doses. If the child has at least one dose, but needs additional doses that are not medically appropriate during the first 5 days of school, the child may provide a medical certificate on or before the 5th school day scheduling all subsequent doses. The medical certificate shall be signed by a physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. If the child will be receiving immunizations from the Department of Health or a public health department, a public health official may sign the medical certificate. A child who meets these requirements may continue to attend school even if the child does not have all the required vaccinations, so long as the child complies with the vaccination schedule in the medical plan/certificate. School administrators or their designees are required to review that medical plan/certificate every 30 days to ensure that the child is in compliance. All subsequent immunizations shall be entered on the Certificate of Immunization or into the computer database program. If the requirements are not met, the school administrator shall undertake exclusion measures. These regulations also apply to all additional vaccine requirements for entry into 7th and 12th grades.

3. A child transferring into the school may be granted a 30-day period to provide complete immunization records.

4. Foreign exchange students or foreign students visiting Pennsylvania schools need at least one dose of each antigen and are then granted the same provisional enrollment as any student enrolling in a Pennsylvania school.

5. Waiver of these regulations is applied under the following specified conditions:

- Homeless status
- If a child is unable to locate records due to a disaster
- If there is a national vaccine shortage

6. Exemptions from the school laws for immunizations may be granted only for:

- Medical reasons
- Religious beliefs
- Strong moral or ethical convictions similar to a religious belief.

Medical exemptions must be submitted in writing and must be signed by the child's physician. Religious or moral exemptions must be submitted in writing and must be signed by a parent/ legal guardian. Immunization records must be delivered to the school prior to acceptance for enrollment.

Parents should request their child's health records from the previous school prior to starting school at Agora. If your child is exempt from immunizations, he or she may be removed from school events during a disease outbreak.

### Agora Health Requirements for Immunizations (Shots/Vaccines)

Pennsylvania law requires that students show proof of immunizations before they can attend school. Immunizations must be given on a specific schedule in order for them to be accepted by the state.

## **All Grades K-12**

4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis vaccine\* (1 dose on or after 4th birthday)

4 doses of polio vaccine (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose. If the 3rd dose meets these criteria, a 4th dose is not indicated.)

2 doses of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine \*\*

3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine

2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine or written evidence of immunity

\* Usually given as DTaP or DTP

\*\*Usually given as MMR

## **7th-12th Grade** ADDITIONAL immunization requirements for attendance:

1 dose of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccine (Tdap)

- Required upon entry into 7th grade, or in the school year that the student is 12 years of age

2 doses of meningitis vaccine (MCV4)

- First dose shall be given at 11-15 years of age and prior to entry into 7th grade
- Second dose is required at a minimum age of 16 and prior to entry into 12th grade.
- If only one dose was given but student was 16 years of age, or older, only one dose is required.

## **Health Screenings**

Pennsylvania law requires that all students have yearly health screenings. These screenings may be done by a school nurse at no cost to the family, or by a private or state health care provider. Health screenings can be done up to 4 months before the first day of school, and must be sent to the Agora Health Office on or before June 5th, if done by an outside provider. \*If the health screening is conducted by a member of the Agora pupil health team, no additional health screening documentation is required.

If health screening documentation is not received and approved on or before June 5th of the current school year, your Spring ISP check will be held.

Screenings are not the same as a yearly physical exam, but they can be done as part of the physical exam and may count for the yearly screenings if your regular health care provider does all of the following:

**Growth Screening** – Height, weight, and BMI (Body Mass Index) screening every year in grades K-12. If done by the school nurse, the results of the growth screening will be sent to the family, as required by law.

**Vision Screening** – Near and far vision screening every year in grades K-12. This screening is not a substitute for a complete eye exam by an eye care specialist.

**Hearing Screening** – Hearing screenings are done in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 7 and 11. This screening is not a substitute for a hearing exam by your healthcare provider.

**Scoliosis Screening** – This screening checks the shape of the spine and is done in grades 6 and 7.

If the school nurse gets screening results that are outside of the Department of Health guidelines, a referral form will be sent to the parent/guardian. Referral forms are to be completed by the family's private health care provider or health care specialist and returned to the Agora Health Office before the end of the school year.

Please contact the nursing department directly if you need assistance obtaining a health screening in your area.

### Health Exams

Pennsylvania law requires that all students in certain grades receive physical and/or dental exams. These exams can be done up to one year before the start of the school year and must be sent to the Health Office at Agora before the end of the school year.

A physical exam is required in Kindergarten or 1st Grade (when your child first starts school), and also in 6th and 11th grades. A physical exam is not the same as a health screening, but health screenings might be done by your regular health care provider as one part of the physical exam.

Dental exams are required for students in Kindergarten or 1st Grade (when your child first starts school), and also in grades 3 and 7.

Any signed and dated form from your healthcare provider will be accepted.

Upon parent or guardian request, Agora will assist in finding a free or reduced cost location in their area to obtain the required health exams. Agora will also notify families of physical or dental events arranged through the school via email and through the Agora Eagles website.

For more information, call the Agora nurses at 1-844-402-4672.

### Medication During Agora Gatherings

The Board recognizes that students attending Agora gatherings may require medication for various reasons. Parents and guardians are encouraged to administer medications outside the hours of school gatherings. Parents and guardians assume full responsibility for this part of their child's health care. When attending a school-sponsored event, such as but not limited to ADOs and state testing, it is recommended that a parent or guardian be present to administer any emergency, prescription, or over the counter medication that a child may need during this time. The school shall designate licensed or trained school personnel, as indicated by the applicable Federal and State laws, to administer medication, with use of corresponding medical equipment, if administration is included as part of a Student's 504 Plan, IEP, Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP), or Emergency Care Plan (ECP), and the school has the requisite health information and permission from student's medical provider and parent/guardian. Additionally, with requisite information and permission on file, a student may be permitted to carry and self-administer specific emergency medications, as regulated by The Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Education.

Students may be approved to carry and self-administer the following specific emergency medications:

- EpiPen®/EpiPen Jr® or other epinephrine auto injector
- rescue asthma inhalers including, but not limited to, Albuterol, Proventil, and Ventolin
- injectable and/or oral medications for diabetes such as insulin, glucose tablets, glucagon, and monogel

If a student self-administers medication during an Agora gathering, they must immediately notify a staff member or school nurse for school health record documentation.

All medication must be transported and received in the original container, with prescription label attached, if applicable.

Students may not carry or self-administer any other forms of medication, including prescribed or over the counter medications, homeopathic or herbal remedies, controlled substances, or research medications.

### **Objectionable Content Policy**

There may be times when a parent considers certain lessons, books or materials objectionable for various reasons. If a parent finds material objectionable, he or she should contact the Agora teacher via teacher's school email address. Teachers will work with parents to find alternative lessons to meet the lesson objectives. The assessment for the lesson must be completed to show that the objectives have been met.

### **School Parent Involvement Policy**

The policy below on Parent Involvement, has been developed jointly with, agreed upon with, and distributed to, parents of participating children at Agora Cyber Charter School. This policy reflects those requirements of Section 1118 of Title I Part A.

In accordance with Federal regulations section 200.34, Agora Cyber Charter School, as a recipient of Title I funds, will consult with parents and teachers of the children being served. Notification of the planning process, including solicitation of questions, comments, and input will be given at least two weeks prior to the planning meeting.

To meet the consultation requirements Agora Cyber Charter School shall design, implement and offer activities at various times to ensure that parents of children being served have an adequate opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the Agora's Title I plan. Agora parent activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Involve parents in the development of the Title I plan, the Parent Involvement Policy, and the process of school review and improvement.
  - a. Parents will be involved in the development of the plan through participation in school-wide planning committees and school improvement councils.
  - b. Parents will be involved in the process of school review and improvement through a parent survey administered in the fall, after the second semester, and the end-of-the-year.
  - c. Parents will be involved in the joint development of any school-wide program plan under section 1114(b)(2). [Section 1118(c)(3), ESEA.]
- B. Provide coordination, technical assistance, and support to the schools for effective parent involvement to improve student academic achievement and performance.
  - 1. Provide parents with the opportunity to maintain ongoing communication among parents, teachers, and administrators through our internal electronic system of communication (e-mail) as well as through USPS mail and School Messenger (a pre-recorded phone message).
  - 2. To the extent possible, provide information, programs, and activities for parents in a language and form they can understand through the online system (TransAct, as part of our ELL program).
  - 3. Provide materials and suggestions through calendars and newsletters to parents to help them promote the education of their children. Timely information about the program

also will be provided in the newsletter and will be posted to the school's website, <https://agora.org/>

4. The school's parent committee will assist with coordination of Title I Parent Involvement Plan and activities.

5. Involve parents in an Annual School-wide Title I meeting to discuss the Compact and school-wide programs that are needed.

6. School-wide parenting workshops will be presented in a variety of ways including online and face to face, including parent training recordings made available through email, newsletters and school website.

C. Build the school and parent capacity for strong parent involvement

1. Maintain strong communication between school and home through

- a. e-mail
- b. postal mail
- c. newsletters
- d. conference calls
- e. online sessions
- f. social media options

2. Establish parent involvement programs to mentor new families.

- a. Parent Mentors are identified by region and grade band; contact information is posted on the school website
- b. Parent Mentors assist in monitoring school Facebook groups to assist new and returning families with questions and concerns

3. Develop school-parent compacts and parent involvement policies with the parents of all children.

- a. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective home learning environment that enables children served to meet the State's student academic achievement standards.
- b. Describe the ways in which each parent or learning coach will be responsible for supporting their children's learning.
- c. Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis.
- d. Provide to parents the forms of academic assessment used to measure

4. Guide parents to understand state content standards and academic expectations by providing materials and training designed to help parents monitor and improve student achievement.

- a. workshops/online trainings
- b. templates, graphic organizers, study guides
- c. student schedules and report cards
- d. lesson recordings
- e. online resource literature
- f. technology and systems-training

5. Educate teachers, administrators, and other school staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value of parental involvement:
    - a. presentation at school-wide professional development
    - b. distribute research based materials to staff for ongoing understanding of the value of parental involvement
  6. To the extent possible, provide information, programs, and activities for parents in a language and form they can understand.
  7. Provide support for parental involvement activities as parents may request, such as paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in professional training sessions.
- D. Coordinate and integrate parent involvement under Title I with parental involvement programs through our family coaches, support staff and teachers:
- meet and greet sessions at various locations across the state
  - online parent workshops
- E. Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the Title I school:
- Utilize the End-of-Year Parent Evaluation to identify barriers to greater participation by parents
  - The End-of-Year Parent Evaluation will also be used to improve parent programs at the school the following school year.
- F. Involve parents in the activities of the schools.
1. Convene an annual fall meeting at each school at which the following items will be discussed. A flexible number of meetings will be offered.
    - a. Inform parents of their school's participation under Title I and to explain Title I, its requirements, and their right to be involved.
    - b. Parents have the right to consult in the design of the Title I plan and how the federal funds are allocated:
      - planning questionnaire
      - surveys
    - c. Parents have the right to consult in the design of the Title I plan and in the process of school review and improvement through surveys.
    - d. Parents' input will be solicited; observations and comments will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
    - e. Parents will be given a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

- f. Provisions for further activities will be offered and made available for all students.
  - 1) Copies of the proposed and final applications, needs assessment, budget, and evaluation, are available for review. Copies of the draft and final parent involvement policy will be distributed.
  - 2) Meetings will be held both virtually and on-site.
  - 3) Training programs for parents will be offered as needed.
  - 4) Other reasonable requests made by families will be considered.
2. Report to each child's parents on the child's progress by sending frequent reports home. Reports will include informal teacher newsletters, monthly newsletters and end of each semester reports.
3. Establish conferences between individual parents and teachers by scheduling at least one (1) conference with parents or guardians of children:
  - a. Provide to parents the school's performance profiles.
  - b. Provide to parents their child's individual student assessment results.
  - c. Provide parents with timely information about the Title I programs.

G. Adoption: This Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in programs at Agora Cyber Charter School.

## Standardized Testing

Pennsylvania Assessments including PSSAs and Keystones will be administered face-to-face at a variety of sites around the state. Efforts will be made to locate a testing site within an hour of the student's home. It is critical that families respond to site assignment communication to ensure a space is reserved for each student at their preferred location. In certain cases it may be necessary to travel longer than an hour. Attendance at state testing is mandatory.

PSSAs are given over a four - five day period, depending on the student's grade level. Keystone exams take one day for each exam. Specific testing dates and locations will be published no later than two weeks prior to the testing window. Visit the Agora website for additional details <https://agora.org/academics/testing/>

Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pa. Code (22 Pa. Code 4.4) provides for the right of any parent/guardian to excuse their child from the state assessment if, upon inspection of the testing materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is the only basis for a parent/ guardian to excuse his or her child from the statewide assessments. Requests to view the test materials should be sent to your Family Coach when the site assignment communications are sent out. After viewing the materials in a secure environment a parent/guardian must make the request for a religious exemption in writing.

## Testing Attendance Policy

As a Pennsylvania public school, Agora must follow the laws set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Absence from required Pennsylvania State Testing is considered an unexcused absence.

### Testing Requirements:

- Students who were not proficient in the spring Keystone may retest in the Spring.
- All public school students enrolled in grades 3 through 8 are required to participate in the ELA and Mathematics PSSA or the PASA.
- Students in grades 4 and 8 are also required to participate in the Science PSSA or the PASA.
- All students currently enrolled in a Keystone eligible course (Algebra I, Biology, and/or LACII/ Literature) must take the associated exam at the end of the course.
- Additionally, all students must participate in all Keystone exams by the end of their 11th grade year, even if they have not completed the associated course.

### Absence from Testing:

- If a student is absent from any of their days at their assigned testing site, they will be contacted by phone by site staff and marked absent.
- If the student is ill, the parent/guardian must follow normal attendance procedures and contact the attendance office to excuse the absence. The family should also work with the site staff to ensure that testing can be made up during their assigned week.
- After two missed days the student should reschedule for another testing site. If a student misses three days, a doctor's note must be provided to substantiate the absences.
- If a student has not submitted a valid excuse, each subsequent day that a student does not attend testing will be marked as an unexcused absence. After three cumulative unexcused absences, a student is considered truant. If the student is absent from all 5 days at their assigned site, they may be re-assigned to a different site the following week, which may be far less convenient for the family. Should a student have 10 consecutive unexcused absences, the student will be removed from the active school rolls consistent with Pennsylvania School Code.

## Student Records

Student records are maintained at the Agora Cyber Charter School main office located at 590 North Gulph Road, King of Prussia, PA, 19406. Agora provides parents with access to the academic records of their children. The access rights of parents consist of:

- the right to inspect and review the contents of educational records
- the right to obtain one copy of the education records at no charge
- the right to receive from school personnel an explanation and interpretation of the educational records
- the right to a hearing to challenge the contents of the educational records
- the right to bring an attorney or parent advocate to review educational records

A parent seeking access to the educational records may make a request by telephone or in person to the CEO or designee. However, prior to reviewing and inspecting the educational records, a parent must sign an official request form. Access to educational records is granted within 45 days of the receipt of the written request. After examining their child's educational record, parents may request a hearing to challenge the contents of the record. The purpose of the hearing is to establish the accuracy of the record. At an informal meeting between the parents and the Site Administrator or designee, an attempt is made to answer any questions raised by the parents. If

the questions are not resolved, a formal hearing is conducted in the office of the Head of School. In general, the school may not permit access to, nor release of, educational records to third parties without the consent of the child's parents or guardians. However, educational records may be released without the consent of parents to another public school system to which a pupil transfers.

Student directory information – which includes the pupil's name, address, date and place of birth, photographic likeness, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports – may be released without the consent of the parents unless the school is notified annually by the parents not to release the information without their prior written consent.

State law provides that the following additional conditions apply regarding the educational records of special needs students:

- If the parent has asked to see their child's records, the parent must be allowed to do so prior to a conference regarding an individualized education program and prior to a hearing regarding the identification, evaluation or placement of the child.
- Parents may designate another person to examine their child's records, if they wish to have further advice. Parents may ask for a list of the types and locations of the records kept about their child.
- Agora has a schedule for the destruction of Special Education records of students who have been out of the program for at least five (5) years. Parents will be sent a notice by mail at a time shortly before the student's records would be destroyed and advised of their right to obtain them for their own use or the student's use.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with their current address so that they will receive the notification. They should do so by sending their address, the student's name and birthdate to Agora. Parents/legal guardians may contact the office to obtain a copy of a student's records by emailing [Records@Agora.org](mailto:Records@Agora.org). For additional information on record requests, please visit our website at: <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/requesting-records/>

If parents/guardians change their address, telephone, email address, they are asked to notify Agora immediately (Residency Policy). See our website for additional assistance to change your address: <https://agora.org/pupil-parent-services/change-of-home-address/>

## Where To Go with Concerns

Agora staff recognizes that life at school does not always run smoothly. As problems arise, school personnel, students and parents must collaborate to seek solutions. Agora staff members also realize that parents and students do not always know what to do or where to seek answers. Parents often give up and become frustrated if problems remain unsolved. Please follow these procedures for general information or for assistance in resolving a problem:

**Step 1.** All concerns and issues should first be directed to the Family Coach. If an Agora family coach cannot resolve the issue (e.g., materials and computer issues), he or she will direct the parent/ guardian to the appropriate contact for assistance. Your Family Coach will monitor the concern to ensure resolution.

**Step 2.** If the issue or concern is about an Agora staff member, parents are advised to contact the appropriate staff member's supervisor.

**Step 3.** If the concern remains unresolved, parents/guardian are advised to contact the grade level Principal or Administrator.

### Informal Complaint Process

Anyone may use informal procedures to report and resolve complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Complaints will be appropriately investigated and handled consistent with due process requirements. Informal reports may be made to any staff member, although staff shall always inform complainants of their right to file a formal complaint, and the process for doing so. Staff shall also direct potential complaints to an appropriate staff member who can explain the informal and formal complaint process and what a complainant can expect.

Staff shall also inform an appropriate supervisor or designated staff person when they receive complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying, especially when the complaint is beyond their training to resolve or alleges serious misconduct. Informal remedies include an opportunity for the complainant(s) to explain to the alleged perpetrator that the conduct is unwelcome, disruptive or inappropriate, either in writing or face to face; a statement from a staff member to the alleged perpetrator that the alleged conduct is not appropriate and could lead to discipline if proven or repeated; or a general public statement from an administrator reviewing the school harassment, intimidation and bullying policy without identifying the complainant, or parent/guardian, or because Agora believes the complaint needs to be more thoroughly investigated.

### Formal Complaint Process

Anyone may initiate a formal complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying, even if the informal complaint process is being utilized. Complainant(s) cannot be promised confidentiality at the onset of an investigation. It cannot be predicted what will be discovered or what kind of hearing may result. Efforts will be made to increase the confidence and trust of the person making the complaint. Agora will fully implement the anti-retaliation provisions of this policy to protect complainant(s) and witness(es).

Student complainants and witnesses may have a parent or trusted adult with them, if requested, during any school-initiated investigatory activities. The Principals and/or Administrators or a designee may conclude that the school needs to conduct an investigation based on information in their possession, regardless of the complainant's interest in filing a formal complaint. The following process shall be followed:

- All formal complaints shall be in writing. Formal complaints shall set forth the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to have occurred that may constitute harassment, intimidation or bullying. The Compliance Officer may draft the complaint based on the report of the complainant, for the complainant to review and sign.
- Regardless of the complainant's interest in filing a formal complaint, administrators may conclude that Agora needs to draft a formal complaint based on the information in the school's possession.
- Agora shall investigate all formal, written complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying, along with other information in the Compliance Officer's possession that the Officer believes requires further investigation.
- When the investigation is completed, the Compliance Officer shall compile a full written report of the complaint and the result of the investigation. If the matter has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the school's CEO shall take further action on the report.
- The school's CEO or a designee who is not the Compliance Officer shall respond in writing to the complainant and the accused within 30 days, stating:
  - that Agora intends to take corrective action
  - that the investigation is incomplete to date and will be continuing
  - that Agora does not have adequate evidence to conclude that bullying, harassment or intimidation occurred.

- Corrective measures deemed necessary will be instituted as quickly as possible, but in no event more than 30 days after the school's CEO written response, unless the accused is appealing the imposition of discipline and the school is barred by due process considerations or a lawful order from imposing the discipline until the appeal process is concluded.
- If a student remains aggrieved by the school's CEO designee's response, the student may pursue the complaint as one of discrimination pursuant to the Agora Grievance Policy. Students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation or bullying, and their rights and responsibilities under this and other district policies and rules at student orientation sessions and on other appropriate occasions. These occasions may include parents. Parents shall be provided with copies of this policy and procedure and appropriate materials on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

## Withdrawal Policy and Procedures

### Legal Guardian Withdrawal

Agora may withdraw students from the active rolls upon request by the legal guardian. Legal guardians must notify their Family Coach or the Withdrawal Department of their intentions to complete the withdrawal process.

#### Procedure:

- 1) The Family Coach will notify school officials of the parent's decision.
- 2) The withdrawal date will be effective on the last attended day at Agora Cyber Charter School.
- 3) When withdrawal has been processed a notification will be sent to inform and arrange for the return of all school equipment and materials.
- 4) Failure to return all school equipment and materials in satisfactory condition may result in a collections action.
- 5) Agora will inform the student's home school district of the withdrawal within ten (10) days according to Pennsylvania School Code.
- 6) It is the responsibility of the family to enroll with another school immediately to ensure the child receives continuous educational services. Failure to do so may result in truancy charges, fines, or prosecution via the local school district of residence.

### School Withdrawal

Agora Cyber Charter School may withdraw students for the following reasons:

- School staff is unable to locate a family to determine residency or obtain satisfactory proof of residency documentation
- A student has accumulated ten (10) consecutive, unexcused absences
- A student does not attend state-mandated PSSA testing for 10 consecutive days
- Non-compliance with health regulations may result in withdrawal
- Student has reached the age of 21 by the end of the current school year

#### Procedure:

- 1) Staff notifies school officials
- 2) When withdrawal has been processed a notification will be sent to inform and arrange for the return of all school equipment and materials.
- 3) The withdrawal date will be effective on the last attended day at Agora Cyber Charter School.
- 4) Failure to return all school equipment and materials in satisfactory condition may

result in a collections action.

- 5) Agora Cyber Charter School will inform the student's home school district of the withdrawal within ten (10) days according to Pennsylvania School Code.
- 6) It is the responsibility of the family to enroll with another school immediately to ensure the child receives continuous educational services. Failure to do so may result in truancy charges, fines, or prosecution via your local school district of residence.

## **Students Attending Post-Secondary Institutions**

Students attending a postsecondary institution full-time prior to graduation from High School shall be dropped from Agora's membership roll at the time they stop attending Agora. (see: PA Code 11.4. Early Withdrawal for Post-secondary Institution Attendance for additional information.)

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

Agora maintains records concerning all children enrolled, including students with disabilities. Records containing personally identifiable information about or related to children with disabilities could include, but are not limited to, cumulative grade reports, discipline records, enrollment and attendance records, health records, individualized education programs, notices of recommended assignment, notices of intent to evaluate and to re-evaluate, comprehensive evaluation reports, other evaluation reports by public school staff and by outside evaluators, work samples, test data, data entered into Pennsylvania Department of Education data collection systems, correspondence between school staff and home, instructional support team documents, referral data, memoranda and other education-related documents. Records can be maintained electronically, on paper, microfiche, audio and videotape. Records can be located in the central administrative offices of Agora, electronic storage systems or in the secure possession of teachers, school administrators, specialists, psychologists, counselors and other school staff with a legitimate educational interest in the information. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality.

Records are maintained as long as they remain educationally relevant. The purposes of collecting and maintaining records are to:

- ensure that each child receives programs and services consistent with his or her IEP
- monitor the ongoing effectiveness of programming for the child
- document for the public school and the parents that the student is making meaningful progress
- satisfy the requirements of State and Federal agencies that have an interest in inspecting or reviewing documents concerning particular students or groups of students for purposes of compliance monitoring, complaint investigation and fiscal and program audits
- inform future programming for and evaluations of the child

When educational records, other than those required, are no longer educationally relevant, the public school shall notify parents in writing and may destroy records. Parents may request in writing that records be destroyed.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible student") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

- The right to inspect and to review the student's educational records within 45 days of the date Agora receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school administrator (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they

wish to inspect. The administrator or designee will arrange a records inspection for the parent or eligible student.

- The right to request amendment of a student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students (age 18 and above) may ask Agora to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If Agora decides to not amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, notice will be given to the parent or eligible student of the decision. Information will be given advising him or her of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be included to the parent or eligible student when they are notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosure of personal information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Agora Cyber Charter School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School's Board of Trustees; a person or company with whom Agora has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, Agora discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Agora to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605

Note: Directory information includes the following information relating to a student: the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and other similar information.

It is the policy of Agora Cyber Charter School to provide employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or handicap as required by Title VI, Title IX, and ADA.

## **Mandated Reporter**

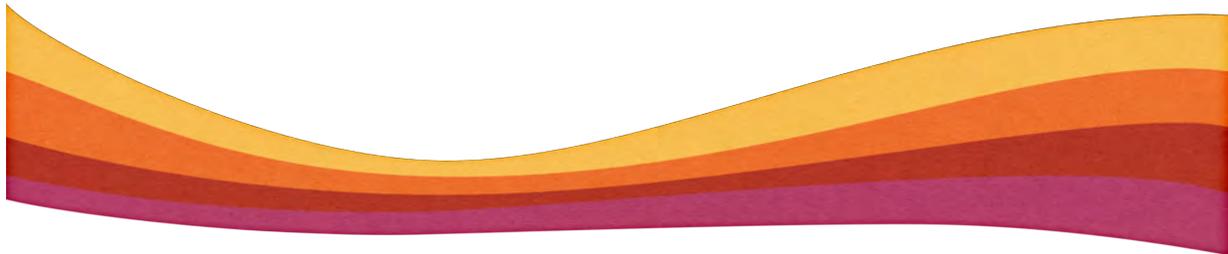
Under Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law (CPSL), all school employees have a legal obligation to report or cause a report to be made to the Department of Public Welfare and also to immediately notify their Principal or Director when they have reasonable cause to suspect, based on their professional or training experience, that a child coming before them is a victim of child abuse. It is not the responsibility of Agora school personnel to determine if there has been abuse or neglect. Agora Administrators may permit authorized personnel from the Department of Public Welfare or Child Protective Services to interview the student during school hours and/or at school testing or outing sites without prior parental consent if the suspected abuser is unknown or may be<sub>72</sub>

the parents. If the student has suffered injuries so severe that immediate medical attention is needed, an Administrator will call the police and/or paramedics to escort the child to the hospital.

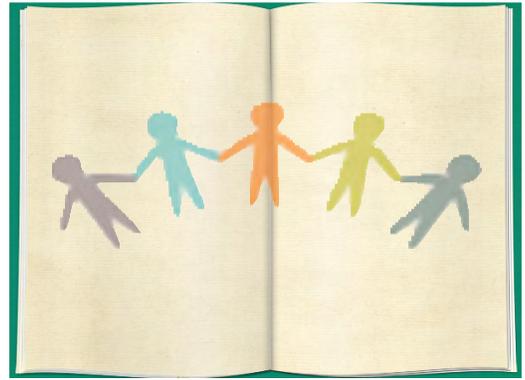
## Policies

The following policies are incorporated in this Handbook, and are available on Agora's website in their entirety for review:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Annual Child Find Notice
- Annual FERPA Notice
- Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Discipline of Special Education Students Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Title IX Policy
- Child Internet Protection Act Policy



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS



**Bullying** shall mean engaging in behavior that prevents or discourages another student from exercising his/her right to education. It is intentional, hurtful behavior perpetrated repeatedly over a period of time, in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of power (with regard to gender, physical or mental strength or social acceptance). Such prohibited behavior includes the use of threats, coercion, repeated harassment, abuse, oppression, intimidation against students, school personnel or school visitors or exclusion of anyone physically, psychologically or sexually.

**Cyber-Bullying** shall mean bullying that occurs by use of electronic devices through means of email, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, discussion threads, mobile phones, chat messaging, pagers and websites.

**Disability** shall mean a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual.

**Educational Disability** shall mean meeting criteria for one or more of the 13 disability categories under IDEA federal guidelines.

**Expulsion** shall mean the removal of a student from school for more than 10 days because the student has violated school policies.

**IEP** shall mean Individualized Education Plan to support a student with an educational disability who requires specifically designed instruction and related services.

**Manifestation Determination** shall mean a review of the special education student's program and disability to determine if misconduct is related to the disability.

**NOREP** shall mean a notice of recommended educational placement. This notice shall be presented to the parent/guardian of a child with a disability, and shall summarize the recommendations for the child's educational program.

**Possession** shall mean physical control over property (whether lost, found or stolen), such as clothing or bags and the contents contained therein.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP)** shall mean a state-mandated Kindergarten through 12th grade- support process. It allows for the identification, intervention and follow-up for students experiencing barriers to learning.

**Suspension** shall mean the involuntary removal of a student from class attendance or school attendance for 10 days or less.

**Weapon** shall mean any tool or instrument used to inflict serious bodily injury of another person.