



COLLEGE READY

CCAREER READY

WORLD READY

Junior High Student Handbook

eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc.
200 River Market Avenue, Ste. 225
Little Rock, AR 72201

eStem Downtown Jr. High
123 W. 3rd Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

eStem East Village Jr. High
400 Shall Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72202

Grades: 7 - 9

2023 - 2024 School Year

Student Guide to Success

- **Attend school regularly and be on time for all classes**
- **Come to school each day with the necessary supplies and tools for learning**
- **Complete and turn in all class assignments**
- **Observe regular study hours**
- **Conform to the rules of student conduct**
- **In your head and in your heart, be positive and be respectful**



Our Mission

The mission of eStem PCS is to develop students who are critical thinkers, problem solvers, and collaborative members of a learning community and society. We will encourage students to be risk takers and enthusiastic life-long learners who are versed in engineering, science, technology, economics, math and literacy.

Our Vision

We recognize that all learners require high-quality, individualized, differentiated instruction. We will provide all of our students with a rigorous, data-driven experience that holds all learners to high expectations. We will also create a learning environment where all students feel safe to take risks, collaborate, and problem solve.

At eStem, we believe in these values:



Humility
Enthusiasm
Authenticity
Reflection
Trust

Our Culture

What differentiates eStem PCS from other school districts is our HEART. Our values: Humility, Enthusiasm, Authenticity, Reflection, and Trust drive our decision making and have allowed us to build strong communities within our schools and across our organization. Our culture allows us to create a space where students, teachers, and staff strive to be the best versions of themselves. We foster communication, collaboration, cooperation, support, and mutual respect and we encourage our students and staff to use every opportunity as an opportunity for learning, growth, and development.

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Admissions

Admission

eStem admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. eStem does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, or handicap in administration of its educational policies or school administered programs. Unlike other public schools, a charter school is populated by students who have freely chosen to attend that school. Students who choose to accept the academic program of a charter school also assume the obligation imposed by the policies of the school.

A prospective student whose parents, legal guardians, persons having legal lawful control of the student, persons having lawful control of the student under order of a court, persons standing in loco parentis, or the prospective student who is 18 years of age or older if he/she maintains a residence separate and apart from his/her parents or guardians, who lives anywhere within the State of Arkansas, may apply for admission to the school, if the student will be entering into a grade level which is offered by the school.

The school shall provide the person(s) having legal responsibility for the prospective student, or the prospective student if 18 years of age or older and maintaining a residence separate and apart from such person(s) all forms necessary to apply for first-time admission to the school. The forms shall clearly set forth the information required, and the date by which the completed forms must be returned to the school.

Upon notification that the prospective student's application for enrollment has been approved for the upcoming school year, the person having legal responsibility for the prospective student, or the prospective student, as appropriate, shall promptly complete the school's admission and enrollment process.

The school will not:

- Use, display, release or print a student's social security number or any part of the number on any report, identification card, identification badge, or any document that will be made available or released to the public, to a student, or to a student's parent or guardian without the express written consent of the student's parent if the student is a minor or of the student if the student is (18) years of age or older.
- Make a student's social security number available by reading the magnetic strip or other encoded information on the student's identification card.

Admission - Documents

The documents required for a child to be admitted to a public school in Arkansas are determined by state law. Prior to a child's admission to an eStem school:

1. The parent/legal guardian shall furnish the child's social security number, or if requested, eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. will assign the child a nine-digit number designated by the Arkansas Department of Education.
2. The parent/legal guardian shall provide eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. with one of the following documents indicating the child's age:
 - Birth certificate;
 - Statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child's date of birth;
 - Attested baptismal certificate;
 - Passport;
 - Affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child's parent or guardian;
 - Previous school records; or
 - Military identification.
3. State law requires that the child be appropriately immunized against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis B, varicella and other diseases as designated by the Arkansas State Department of Health. Proof of immunization shall be by a certificate of a licensed physician, health department or the military service. Students will not be allowed to enroll in the school if they do not have the required documented proof of immunization.

A student must be enrolled in **good standing** at his/her present school before the student can be eligible for admission to an eStem school. The parent/legal guardian shall indicate on school registration forms whether the child has been expelled from school in any other school district, is a party to an expulsion proceeding, or is under short- or long-term suspension.

Application - Seventh Through Ninth Grade

Students seeking admission to eStem Public Charter School grades seven through nine may submit a preliminary application at any time during the school year. Because all seats at all schools currently are filled, each applicant will be assigned to a waiting list specific to the student's current grade level. If the student is not assigned a seat by the conclusion of the current school year, the student will be transferred automatically to the waiting list specific to the student's grade level for the following school year. *It will not be necessary to reapply.*

Transfer Students

Any student transferring from a school accredited by the Department to the school shall be placed into the same grade the student would have been in had the student remained at the former school.

Any student transferring from homeschool or a school that is not accredited by the Department shall be evaluated by the staff of the school to determine that student's proper placement. Among other means of assessment, the school shall utilize the test approved by the state board to assess the student and shall determine placement in the appropriate grade level as indicated by the test results.

The student's age will be a consideration regarding placement, but will not be the primary factor when considering placing a child who is transferring from a homeschool environment. Parents or guardians who disagree with the placement decision may appeal the director's decision to the superintendent in writing within 30 calendar days of receiving the director's decision. The superintendent will consult with the placement team and parents or guardians and will render a final decision within 10 business days.

Any home-schooled student who enrolls or re-enrolls in the school must attend classes for at least 9 months immediately before graduation before the student can become eligible to receive a high school diploma from the school.

A transferring student will be required to meet all graduation requirements outlined by the school.

If a student moves away or changes schools, the parent or guardian must obtain a withdrawal form from the registrar in the director's office.

Students who enter the school after the beginning of a semester generally do not have grades with them. The general grading procedure:

- If the student has been at the school less than 4 weeks or half of the grading period, no progress report will be given to her/him.
- If the student has been at the school 4 weeks or more, a progress report will be given based on the work completed at the school.
- If a student enters during the second or fourth 9 weeks period, the same procedure as outlined above will be followed. The grade given will be a 9 weeks grade and not a semester grade. The school must receive a transfer-in grade for the first 9 weeks or the third 9 weeks in order for the student to receive a semester grade.

Credits and letter grades from accredited private schools may be accepted.

Transferred courses from the private school that are in the school's core curriculum or in the state's listing of core curriculum courses will receive letter grades and credit.

Other courses will receive credit and "pass/no credit" grades.

The superintendent or his or her designated person will determine the appropriate grade level at which the transferring student will be placed.

When a question regarding accreditation of the private school is an issue, the superintendent will determine whether or not credits/grades will be granted.

Transfer Students-Military

"Military Students" means students of active duty military service members, as well as students of military service members who have been severely injured or died during active duty that were discharged or retired due to their injuries less than a year prior to transfer.

Records – The school shall accept official or unofficial education records from military students and use such records to ascertain the proper placement for the child. The school will work to obtain the student's official education record from a sending school if the student has only submitted unofficial records. The school shall rely on unofficial records until official records are obtained, and place the student in appropriate programs including gifted and talented or special education if needed.

Academics

Academic Integrity Policy

eStem's Academic Integrity Policy encompasses all school-related tests, quizzes, reports, class assignments, and projects, both in and out of class. The purpose of the Academic Integrity Policy is to prepare students for the world of college and beyond, where cheating and plagiarism have dire consequences. eStem schools expect all students to abide by ethical academic standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating or copying the work of another, using technology for illicit purposes, or any unauthorized communication between students to gain an advantage during an assignment or assessment—is strictly prohibited.

- **Plagiarism** is the intentional or unintentional representation of another person's work as one's own. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing another's work without appropriately acknowledging the source
 - Using another's content without acknowledging the source
 - Submitting another's work, purchased or otherwise obtained, as one's own
- **Cheating** includes, but is not limited to, copying or giving an assignment to a student to be copied (unless explicitly permitted by the teacher). Cheating also includes using, supplying, or communicating in any way unauthorized materials, including textbooks, notes, calculators, computers, or other unauthorized technology.
 - **Forgery or stealing** includes, but is not limited to, gaining unauthorized access to academic materials or answers to an exam, altering computer or grade-book records, or forging signatures for the purpose of academic advantage.
 - **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Knowingly allowing another student to use one's work or cheat from one's assignment and assessment. **Academic Collaboration** is to work together in a joint intellectual effort. Collaboration on assignments or assessments defined as independent work by the classroom teacher is **Academic Dishonesty**.

The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on specific evidence provided by the classroom teacher or other supervising professional employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from others. The Dean of Students or Assistant Director will make the final decision. Students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty shall be subject to disciplinary and academic penalties.

Disciplinary and Academic Penalties			
	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Plagiarism or Cheating on Assignments	Zero on assignment Parent notification	Referral to the Dean of Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Saturday School (zero or redo the assignment) 	In School Suspension/Contract (i.e., probation)
Academic Dishonesty Facilitating Academic Dishonesty	Referral to the Dean of Students and Parent Notification	Referral to the Dean of Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Saturday School 	Referral to the Dean of Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-School Suspension
Plagiarism or Cheating on Assessments Forgery/Stealing	Referral to the Dean of Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Saturday School (zero or redo) 	Referral to the Dean of Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-School Suspension (zero or redo) ● Contract (i.e., probation) 	Out of School Suspension, Zero, Contract (i.e., probation)
<p><i>*Student may also face dismissal from extracurricular activities, elected or appointed student offices, athletics, and/or senior privileges*</i></p>			

Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI)

eStem Public Charter Schools has been approved by the Arkansas Department of Education on behalf of the high school to participate in [Alternative Methods of Instruction](#). AMI provides school districts the option to forego a certain number of student attendance days for public school districts that have an alternative instruction plan. eStem has agreed to implement AMI during any exceptional or emergency circumstances. (i.e. Snow Days)

In order to appropriately execute our participation in AMI, eStem students will be asked to log into Google Classroom and complete lessons created by their classroom teachers. Again, this action would only be necessary in the event of an emergency school closing due to exceptional or emergency circumstances.

Grading - Seventh Through Ninth Grade

Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student. Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be requested by parents, guardians, teachers, or school administration. If the progress of a student is unsatisfactory in a subject, the teacher shall attempt to schedule a parent-teacher conference. In the conference, the teacher shall explain the reasons for difficulties and shall develop, cooperatively with the parent/guardian, a plan for remediation which may enhance the probability of the student succeeding. The school shall also send timely progress reports and issue grades for each of the four grading periods to keep parents/guardians informed of their student's progress. Student grade reports will also be posted to the Home Access Center to ensure consistent notification of parents regarding student academic progress.

The evaluation of each student's performance on a regular basis serves to give the parents/guardians, students, and the school necessary information to help affect academic improvement. Students' grades shall reflect only the extent to which a student has achieved the expressed educational objectives of the course.

Grades during each marking period are entered in the teacher's gradebooks using a weighted 70% assessment/30% assignment scale. Seventy percent of the student's grade will come from assessments which include: tests, quizzes, or anything that is used to assess knowledge or skill. Thirty percent of the student's grade will come from assignments that are considered practice, participation, group learning, homework or other work that is not considered an assessment.

The grading scale for all third through twelfth grade students in the district is as follows:

A = 100 - 90

B = 89 - 80

C = 79 - 70

D = 69 - 60

F = 59 and below

For the purpose of determining grade point averages, the numeric value of letter grades shall be:

A = 4 points

B = 3 points

C = 2 points

D = 1 point

F = 0 points

The grade point values for AP and approved honor courses shall be one point greater than for regular courses with the exception that an F shall still be worth 0 points.

Quality points for completing AP courses will be contingent upon the following criteria being met:

1. Documentation of teacher AP training is on file in the Director's office.
2. The student has successfully completed both semesters of the AP course and taken the appropriate AP test for the course (students will be notified of this requirement at the beginning of the school year).

Graduation Requirements/Smart Core

<https://5il.co/938p>

A minimum of 24 units is required for graduation based on the eStem curriculum. In addition to the Smart Core requirements listed below, students must earn the following credits in order to be awarded the full eStem diploma:

eStem focus – 2 units beyond Smart Core requirements selected from the courses offered in any of the fields of economics, science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

****English and math must be taken every school year, and the eStem science progression must include Physical Science (Physics OR Computer Science), Biology and a third science. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, seniors are not required to take a science course, provided they have already met the eStem diploma requirements. However, it is recommended that seniors take a science course, especially if they are pursuing a career in STEM.**

SMART CORE CURRICULUM

English – 4 units

- English 9th grade
- English 10th grade
- English 11th grade
- English 12th grade

Mathematics – 4 units (or 3 units of math and 1 unit of Computer Science*) At least one MATH unit must be taken in Grade 11 or Grade 12.**

- Algebra I (or Algebra A & Algebra B - Grades 7-8 or 8-9)
- Geometry (or Geometry A & Geometry B - Grades 8-9 or 9-10)
- Algebra II
- Fourth math - Advanced Topics and Modeling in Mathematics, Algebra III, Calculus, Linear Systems and Statistics, Transitional Math Ready, Mathematical Applications and Algorithms, Pre-Calculus, or an Advanced Placement mathematics - Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable OR Computer Science.

Science – 3 units with lab experience (or 2 units with lab experience and 1 unit of Computer Science*)

- Biology – 1 unit (All students must have 1 unit in Biology, IB Biology, ADE Biology, ADE Approved Biology Honors, PreAP Biology, or Concurrent Credit Biology.)
- Physical Science, Computer Science, OR Physics
- Third Science -1 unit

Social Studies – 3 units

- Civics - ½ unit
- Economics with Personal Finance - ½ unit
- World History - 1 unit
- U.S. History - 1 unit

Oral Communications – ½ unit

Physical Education – ½ unit

Health and Safety with CPR – ½ unit

Fine Arts – ½ unit

Computer Science - 1 unit

Career Focus – 6 units

***Computer Science** – A flex unit of Computer Science and Mathematics, Computer Science 1, Computer Science 2, Robotics, AP Computer Science A, AP Computer Science Principles, or IB Computer Science may replace the 4th math requirement or the 3rd science requirement. Two distinct units of the computer science courses listed above may replace the 4th math requirement and the 3rd science requirement. If the 4th math requirement and the 3rd science requirement have been met through other coursework, any of the computer science courses listed above may be used for career focus credit.

*Act 414 is an extension of Act 187 of 2015, which established the requirement that every high school must make a computer science course available to students. Pursuant to Act 414 and the rules passed by the SBE on February 10, 2022, beginning with the 9th grade class of 2022-2023, every student will be **required to earn one credit in a high school Computer Science or Computing Course for graduation.**

Beginning with the entering 9th grade class of the 2014 – 2015 school year, each high school student shall be required to take at least one digital learning course for credit to graduate. (Act 1280 of 2013) Students will meet the digital learning requirement through an eStem blended learning class, a Virtual Arkansas class, or by taking an online class offered through an ADE approved vendor.

Beginning with students enrolling on or after 7/19/2016, a student may not receive graduation credit for a course taken through an online vendor if that course is taught in-house at eStem. Exceptions may be approved if a student needs to take a course for credit recovery, or if a student is a senior and a graduation requirement will not otherwise fit into the student's schedule.

Beginning with the entering 9th grade class of 2017-2018, each high school student shall be required to take a course that includes specific personal finance standards in either grades 10,11, or 12. (Act 480 of 2017)

Beginning with the entering 12th grade class of 2018-2019, each high school student must pass the Arkansas Civics Exam with a score of 60% or higher to earn a diploma. (Act 478 of 2017)

Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, students in grades 9-12 shall be trained in CPR before graduation. (A.C.A § 6-16-143) CPR training shall take place in all health courses taught within eStem Public Charter Schools.

Homework

In junior high school, homework is considered an important part of our educational program and will be assigned on a regular basis. Homework assignments should be purposeful and continuations (or extensions) of the instructional program and an integral part of the total evaluation. Homework, appropriate to the student's development level, will be given for the purpose of review, practice, reinforcement, inquiry, application, and enrichment. Homework should help students become responsible, self- directed learners.

Honor Roll

All students are encouraged to earn academic honors. eStem's honor roll consists of the following awards:

- eSteemed List Students earning straight A's
- eHonorable List Students earning any combination of A's and B's

Students earning these honors will receive an official eStem certificate recognizing their hard work at the end of each semester.

Learning Compact

A child's education is a team effort involving the student, the student's teachers, the student's parents and the student's school administrators. Expectations for academic effort and behavior have been deliberately set high for students. For individual student academic growth to occur, all members of the team must be aligned to the same high standards. The Learning Compact defines eStem standards so that each member of the team knows what efforts are required for a student to succeed academically. The student, the student's parent/guardian, teacher and school administrator are required to sign and date the Learning Compact for each student.

Make-Up Work

All schoolwork missed because a student was absent must be completed. It is the *student's* responsibility to collect missed work. The time generally allowed for the

student to complete missed work will be the number of days the student was absent from school. For example, if a student was absent for two days, then the student will have two days to make-up the missed work. If a student fails to meet the time requirement for completing missed work, the student may receive a zero, and tutoring or other arrangements may be required to provide the student with extra academic assistance.

Promotion

eStem has high expectations for student academic achievement. It cannot be assumed that students automatically will be promoted from one grade to the next. Students must earn their promotion by demonstrating mastery of the essential knowledge and skills at their grade level.

Academic Standards – eStem Elementary School and eStem Junior High School

- Promotion to the next grade requires students to earn a final grade of D or above for each of their core classes which include Reading/Writing or Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
- Students earning grades lower than D in non-core classes will be promoted to the next grade only at the discretion of the Director of School.
- A student with excessive unexcused absences during the school year may not be promoted at the discretion of the Director of School.

Academic Standards – eStem High School

- For a student to be classified as a 10th grader, the student must have earned a minimum of 5.5 credits and have passed Algebra I, physical science, English 9, civics, and economics. Students are allowed to recover up to two of these credits in summer school, if necessary, to be allowed promotion to the high school. (This stipulation begins with the graduating c/0 2023.) Junior High Directors can waive one of the required courses for promotion (Algebra I, physical science, English 9, civics, and economics) for students who were unable to fit the course in their schedules due to their taking an AP course or doubling in a math or science.
- For a student to be classified as an 11th grader, the student must have earned a minimum of 12 credits.
- For a student to be classified as a 12th grader, the student must have earned a minimum of 19 credits.
- For a student to graduate from eStem High Public Charter School, the student must have earned a total of 24 credits as prescribed in school board policies.

Reporting Student Progress

Teachers provide students and their parents/guardians ongoing updates of academic performance through eSchool Home Access Center, frequent quizzes and tests, and student work that is sent home for a parent/guardian signature. Teachers also may contact a parent/guardian by telephone or email.

Progress Reports

Teachers prepare student progress reports (interim reports) once every five weeks. The report is designed to inform parents/guardians about their child's current academic progress and is not part of a student's academic record. A parent/guardian whose child is failing a course when a progress report is issued may be asked to meet with the child's teacher. Likewise, a parent/guardian may request a conference with the teacher. All progress reports must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the teacher who issued the report.

Report Cards

The school year is divided into four grading periods called quarters, each lasting approximately 9-10 weeks. A report card, containing a grade for each class a student is taking, is issued at the end of each quarter.

Grades are posted using the following scale:

A (90-100%)	The student demonstrates a deep mastery of the content and skills taught.
B (80-89%)	The student demonstrates a solid mastery of the content and skills.
C (70-79%)	The quality of the student's work meets minimum requirements.
D (60-69%)	The student has significant skill or content deficits.
F (59% and lower)	The student has major skill or content deficits requiring additional instruction and student effort. Warrants a parent conference and may result in retention.
S	The student's work in the subject area is satisfactory.
N	The student's work in the subject area needs improvement.

If student skills are below grade level, the student may require remedial instruction. A final grade for a class is the numerical average of the grades for the four quarters.

Retention/Credit Recovery

Each school in eStem Public Charter Schools shall notify, in writing, parents/guardians, and students within the first ten weeks of school of the criteria for promotion of students to the next grade. Parents or guardians shall be kept informed concerning the progress of their student(s) via regular Home Access Center postings and progress notes. Notice of a student's possible retention shall be included with the quarterly grades sent home to each parent/guardian or the student if 18 or older.

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be held as necessary in an effort to improve a student's academic success.

A disservice is done to students through social promotion. Promotion or retention of students shall be primarily based on their ability to succeed in the next grade. If there is doubt concerning the promotion or retention of a student, before a final decision is made, a conference between the parents/guardians, teacher(s), other pertinent personnel, and Director of School shall be held. The conference shall be held at a time and place that best accommodates those participating in the conference. The school shall document participation or non-participation in required conferences. If the conference attendees fail to agree concerning the student's placement, the final decision to promote or retain shall rest with the Director of School.

Promotion/retention or graduation of students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) shall be based on their successful attainment of the goals set forth in their IEP.

Credit Recovery

Students who do not successfully complete required courses towards graduation will be required to either have the course put back into their schedule the following school year (if it is still possible for the student to graduate on time), or students will be required to participate in the credit recovery program at the expense of the parent to recover the credit lost.

Schedule Change Policy

It is important for students and parents to carefully consider course selections and review the decisions prior to signing and returning the course selection worksheet. Schedule changes have serious effects both on the student's individual schedule and on the class size of the course into which he/she is transferring. Decisions about the number of sections per department are made in the spring based upon student's course selections during the registration process; therefore, schedule changes cannot be made after the course selection worksheets have been signed and

returned. Please carefully read the following important schedule guidelines as they will be strictly adhered to:

1. No schedule change requests for next year will be accepted after the course selection worksheet has been reviewed and signed by the parent. If the course selection worksheet is not returned signed by the final deadline, a final schedule will be generated by administration. All rights for schedule changes are forfeited.
2. No schedule changes are made before school starts except for the following:
 - A student fails a prerequisite course or required End of Course exam;
 - A senior is not scheduled in a class needed for graduation;
 - There is a conflict in the master schedule that requires a schedule change;
 - A schedule change is necessary due to changes in the master schedule.
3. Teachers cannot be selected, all teachers will work hard for the success of each student and students are expected to work hard to be successful with the schedule received. Students must always attend the classes on his/her schedule.

Smart Core Policies

Smart Core Curriculum and Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2010 and all classes thereafter:

All students are required to participate in the Smart Core curriculum unless their parents or guardians, or the students, if they are 18 years of age or older, waive in writing the student's right to participate. In such case of a written waiver, the student will be required to participate in the Core curriculum instead or meet the requirements of their IEP (when applicable) to be eligible for graduation. The signed Smart Core Waiver Form shall be attached to the student's permanent transcript. Informed Consent Forms are required to be signed prior to registering for seventh grade classes, or if enrolling in eStem Public Charter School for seventh through twelfth grade classes. Counseling by trained personnel shall be available to students and their parents or legal guardians prior to the time they are required to sign the consent forms.

While there are similarities between the two curriculums, following the Core curriculum may not qualify students for some scholarships and admission to certain colleges could be jeopardized. Students initially choosing the Core curriculum may subsequently change to the Smart Core curriculum providing they would be able to complete the required course of study by the end of their senior year. Students wishing to change their choice of curriculums must consult with their counselor to determine the feasibility of changing.

This policy, the Smart Core curriculum, and the courses necessary for graduation shall

be reviewed by staff, students, and parents at least every other year to determine if changes need to be made to better serve the needs of eStem Public Charter School's students. The Executive Director, or his/her designee, shall select the composition of the review panel. Sufficient information relating to Smart Core and eStem Public Charter School's graduation requirements shall be communicated to parents and students to ensure their informed understanding of each. This may be accomplished through any or all of the following means.

- Inclusion in the student handbook of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements;
- Discussion of the Smart Core curriculum and graduation requirements at the school's annual public meeting, or a meeting held specifically for the purpose of informing the public on this matter;
- Discussions held by the school's counselors with students and their parents; and/or
- Distribution of a newsletter(s) to parents or guardians of eStem Public Charter School's students.

Testing

Testing protocol for all Arkansas public schools is determined by the state. eStem PCS will uphold and enforce all state mandated requirements for public school assessments.

Textbooks

Textbooks primarily will be kept at school. When textbooks are distributed to students, it will be the student's responsibility to keep the textbooks in the condition in which they were received. Students will pay for books that are damaged or lost. Students must return books at the end of the school year.

Campus Information

Building Hours

Students are not allowed to be inside the school building or on school grounds before 7:20 a.m. or after 4:45 p.m. unless they are under the direct supervision of a school staff member. eStem students must be picked up by 4:45 p.m.

Closed Campus

Students at eStem schools are not allowed to exit the campus grounds during the school day unless it is part of a field trip sanctioned by the school.

Daily School Schedule

eStem Junior High Public Charter Schools

Earliest Arrival 7:20 a.m.

School Starts 7:45 a.m.

School Dismissal 3:30 p.m.

Minute of Silence

At 7:45 a.m. each day, the Director or designee shall conduct a one minute period of silence with the participation of all students and staff in the building. During the period of silence a student may, without interfering or distracting another student, reflect, pray, or engage in a silent activity. The teacher or staff member in charge of the classroom shall ensure that all students remain silent and do not interfere with or distract another student during the period of silence.

Office Information

The main Junior High School offices are staffed from 7:30a.m – 4:30p.m.
The contact information to the offices are:

- eStem Downtown Junior High - (501)748-9335
123 West Third Street, Little Rock, AR 72201
- eStem East Village Junior High - (501)214-6710
400 Shall Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72202
- All eStem schools use the website - www.estemschools.org

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance shall be recited in the morning of each school day during morning announcements. Students that wish to participate in the recitation of the pledge of allegiance shall face the flag with their right hand over their heart during its recitation, or if the student is in uniform displaying a proper salute. Students who choose not to participate may either stand or sit at their desks quietly.

Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is not mandatory for students, but those wishing not to participate shall not distract or disrupt those who are reciting the Pledge. Choosing not to recite the Pledge shall not result in any form of discipline, comments, or stigmatization from other students or faculty.

Discipline

Behavior

eStem schools hold high expectations for student performance and behavior. Students are expected to show respect for fellow students, staff members, volunteers and members of the community with whom they have contact during the school day and at school events. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own behavior and for working towards their academic goals. **Repeated violations of our policies, procedures, & expectations could result in removal from school. All rules will be strictly enforced.**

Offenses

Student behavioral offenses are categorized based on the severity of the action.

- **Category I Offenses: Failure to comply with faculty or administrative directives; failure to follow building policies and procedures; failure to comply with academic, dress code, food/drink/gum, cell phone expectations; excessive tardiness; failure to follow dismissal procedures**

Minimum consequence for Category I could include a Parent Conference and/or detention

Maximum Consequence for Category I could include Saturday Alternative School (SAS) or suspension for repeated violations.

- **Category II Offenses: Disruption of the classroom; defacement of school property or the property belonging to another person; insubordination; emotional abuse of others, including teasing and bullying; vulgar or profane language; inappropriate physical contact; sexual, racial, or religious harassment; plagiarism or cheating; truancy or skipping class; leaving a classroom or the school building without permission from classroom teacher or a school official; petty theft; repeated violations of cell phone or other electronic devices during school hours; possession of tobacco products.**

Minimum Consequence for Category II is Saturday Alternative School (SAS) or suspension.

Maximum Consequences for Category II could result in probationary status with suspension, removal, or expulsion.

In addition to the consequences issued, professional counseling from eStem staff or a third party may also be required and/or recommended.

- **Category III Offenses: Theft; destruction of private property; destruction of school property; possession, use or distribution of drugs, including**

alcohol; vandalism of school property; possession of a weapon; performance of any act leading to the endangerment of others; tampering with any safety device on school property; pulling, attempting to pull, or calling in a false fire alarm; physical or sexual assault; communication of threats; repeated violations of Category I or II offenses.

eStem maintains a zero-tolerance policy for fighting . Physical altercations are considered a Category III offense and will not be tolerated. If students choose to participate in a physical altercation with another student or student(s), the students will be immediately sent home, and the maximum consequence will be recommended for all students involved.

Minimum Consequence for Category III is suspension.

Maximum Consequences for Category III could result in probationary status with suspension, removal, or expulsion.

In addition to the consequences issued, professional counseling from eStem staff or a third party may also be required and/or recommended.

Administration reserves the right to use discretion when making decisions regarding all behavior infractions.

Bullying

eStem Public Charter School District strives to provide a positive learning environment, free of bullying and harassment, for all of its students.

eStem utilizes the BRIM anti-bullying app as a reporting resource for students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to anonymously report incidents of bullying. Each school's website includes a red, highly visible BRIM button on the front page, and anyone may submit a report by clicking on the button and answering questions about the incident.

Bullying is defined as "the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against any other student or public school employee,

- by written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated; and causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable
 - a. physical harm to a public school employee or student or to their

- property,
 - b. substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education;
 - c. a hostile educational environment for one or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act, or;
 - d. substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment.
- In other words, bullying is when someone repeatedly and systematically on purpose says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending themselves.

Cyberbullying is defined as bullying in the form of an electronic act. An electronic act includes written communication or images transmitted by using an electronic device such as a telephone, tablet, or computer.

Cyberbullying is prohibited even if the incident did not originate on school property or with school communication systems/tools. eStem Public Charter Schools prohibit bullying, meaning that it is not allowed in the following areas:

- in school,
- on school equipment or property,
- in school vehicles, at school bus stops,
- at school sponsored activities, or at school sanctioned events,
- or by an electronic act that results in the substantial disruption of the educational environment; does not matter whether the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment

If a staff member of the school has witnessed or has reliable information regarding an act of bullying as defined by the outlined definition of bullying, the staff is required to report the incident via BRIM or notify the Administration. Once the incident is reported, the director, assistant directors, deans, and/or counselors will be alerted.

When an incident of bullying is reported to the school either through BRIM or by notifying an Administrator, the school will follow the school's bullying investigative process which includes the following steps:

- An administrator will be assigned to investigate the report of bullying and will begin an investigation no later than 24 hours after a report is received. Parents of the students involved will be communicated to within this same

timeframe, regarding the alleged incident of bullying.

- The investigation shall be completed no later than 5 school days following the date of the initial report. The parents of the students involved will receive communication regarding the completion of the investigation and what follow up steps will be taken.
- Once an investigation is complete, the administrator assigned to the case will finish the report, including the findings from the investigation as well as any disciplinary action that was handed out. The report will also include any additional follow up actions that will be completed for the individual(s) involved.

Students found to be in violation of the bullying policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. The consequence for a student engaging in an act or bullying will vary depending on the age and grade of the student.

- In addition to any disciplinary actions that may be handed out, the school will take appropriate steps to remedy the effects of bullying that may have been incurred from those students and/or public school employees that were involved in the incident(s).

The student or staff member that files the complaint of bullying will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.

Discipline

All eStem students are expected to comply with school rules. However, a student may be subject to disciplinary action for any disorderly conduct not specifically listed in this Handbook. The Director of School will determine such disciplinary actions, where the offending student is enrolled. In addition, **the offending student may be permanently removed from the school for violations of the school's student conduct policies or repeated violations of the Learning Compact.** It is the policy of the eStem schools not to administer corporal punishment.

The following is a list of disciplinary actions (as applicable for the school campus and schedule) for students who fail to comply with school rules:

- **Minimum - Parent Conference:** A meeting involving the classroom teacher and parent/guardian to address specific concerns about a student's behavior. A student behavior contract will be signed to acknowledge that continued disruptive behavior would be grounds for further disciplinary action.
- **Lunch Detention:** A supervised detention conducted during the student's

lunch and/or recess.

- **Early Morning Detention:** Early Morning Detention is supervised detention conducted on weekdays (JHS 7:25-7:45 a.m.).
- **Saturday Alternative School (SAS):**
Junior High School: Saturday School will be held in one of the lobby classrooms from 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. every Saturday unless notice is given. Failure to appear without prior notice can result in an automatic 1-Day suspension.

Tardiness will not be permitted. If a student is tardy to SAS, he/she will not be permitted to serve for that day and will have to make up the detention at an alternate time.

When writing referrals for students, teachers will provide documentation of the pattern of misbehavior. Please remember that this discipline option is typically used for specific, recurring behavior.

- Skipping detention
- Recurring discipline issues (a pattern of a particular offense moderate in nature) First time severe offenses that do not warrant out of school suspensions, including truancies

Although this discipline option is typically used for specific, recurring behavior, it may also be used for first-time and/or isolated Category II Offenses.

Under state law, a student may be suspended from school for a period not to exceed 10 days. A student's parent/guardian will be notified immediately when the student has been suspended. At the conclusion of the suspension, the parent/guardian must accompany the student who is returning to school for a Re- entry conference. The parent/guardian must meet with a school administrator to ensure that the student's inappropriate behavior does not continue. A student will not be permitted to attend classes until the completion of the Re-entry Conference.

Emergency Send Home: Requires the student's immediate removal from school grounds while the administrative team deliberates to determine the appropriate consequence. The administration will notify the parent/guardian of the decision as soon as possible.

Maximum - Expulsion: A student who consistently disrupts an eStem school may be expelled for a period exceeding 10 days. In addition, state law requires that a student must be expelled for a minimum of one year for bringing a firearm onto the school campus. Law enforcement officials must be involved in this process.

Junior High Discipline Ladder

- **Step 1:** Redirection & Parent Contact

- **Step 2: Redirection Level 1 Detention:**

ONE supervised 30 minute detention conducted by an eStem staff member either before (7:25–7:55), during (Lunch Period), or after (3:50-4:20) school

Failure to attend detention within 48 hours of being issued without prior notice can result in Saturday School.

- **Step 3: Redirection and Level 2 Detention:**

THREE supervised 30 minute detentions conducted by an eStem staff member before (7:25–7:55), during (Lunch Period), or after (3:50-4:20) school (if offered by the school)

Failure to attend ALL detentions within 48 hours of being issued without prior notice can result in Saturday School.

An excessive amount of detentions issued in a single week will be transferred to Saturday school. A parent will be informed, and the Saturday school will take the place of any remaining detentions. After this change is made, further behavior infractions will continue up the discipline ladder to additional Saturday schools or possibly suspension.

- **Step 4: Redirection & Saturday School:**

Supervised 3 hour session conducted by an eStem staff member and held in a first floor classroom from 8:00 – 11:00 every Saturday unless otherwise informed of an alternative date/time.

- **Step 5: Redirection & Suspension:**

Step 5 will result in probationary status. It will also result in a meeting with the student, a parent/guardian, teacher(s), and building leadership. Further behavior infractions may result in removal or expulsion from eStem.

All eStem students are expected to comply with school rules. A student may be subject to disciplinary action for any disorderly conduct not specifically listed in the Handbook. Administration reserves the right to use discretion when making decisions regarding all behavior infractions.

Due Process Procedures

Due process for students will include, at a minimum, the following steps: 1) notice of charge; 2) opportunity for denial; 3) evidence against him/her (if denies); 4) opportunity to tell his/her side; 5) decision, timely notice, and an opportunity for a fair hearing. The degree of due process required is directly proportional to the degree of loss to the student. Any penalty that effectively denies a student's education will require the greatest degree of due process.

Expulsion

eStem Public Charter Schools may expel a student for a period longer than ten (10) school days for violation of the District's written discipline policies. The Chief Executive Officer may make a recommendation of expulsion to eStem Board of Directors for student conduct deemed to be of such gravity that suspension would be inappropriate, or where the student's continued attendance at school would disrupt the orderly learning environment or would pose an unreasonable danger to the welfare of other students or staff.

The Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee shall give written notice to the parents or legal guardians (mailed to the address reflected on the District's records) that he/she will recommend to the eStem Board of Directors that the student be expelled for the specified length of time and state the reasons for the recommendation to expel. The notice shall give the date, hour, and place where the eStem Board of Directors will consider and dispose of the recommendation.

The hearing shall be conducted not later than ten (10) school days following the date of the notice, except that representatives of eStem Public Charter Schools and the student may agree in writing to a date not conforming to this limitation.

The Board President of eStem or other designated Board member shall preside at the hearing. The student may choose to be represented by legal counsel. The hearing shall be conducted in open session of the eStem Board of Directors unless the parent, or student if age 18 or older, requests that the hearing be conducted in executive session. Any action taken by the eStem Board of Directors shall be in open session.

During the hearing, the Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee will present evidence, including the calling of witnesses, which gave rise to the recommendation of expulsion. The student, or his/her representative, may then present evidence including statements from persons with personal knowledge of the events or circumstances relevant to the charges against the student. Formal cross-examination will not be permitted. However, any member of the eStem Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, the student, or his/her representative may question anyone making a statement and/or the student. The presiding officer shall decide questions concerning the appropriateness or relevance of any questions asked during the hearing.

The Chief Executive Officer shall recommend the expulsion of any student for a period of not less than one (1) year for possession of any firearm or other weapon prohibited on school campus by law. The Chief Executive Officer shall, however, have the

discretion to modify the expulsion recommendation for a student on a case-by-case basis. Parents or legal guardians of a student enrolling from another school after the expiration of an expulsion period for a weapons policy violation shall be given a copy of the current laws regarding the possibility of parental responsibility for allowing a child to possess a weapon on school property. The parents or legal guardians shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understand said laws prior to the student being enrolled in school.

The Chief Executive Officer and the eStem Board of Directors shall complete the expulsion process of any student that was initiated because the student possessed a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property regardless of the enrollment status of the student.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-507

Gangs & Gang Activity

eStem is committed to ensuring a safe school environment conducive to promoting a learning environment where students and staff can excel. An orderly environment cannot exist where unlawful acts occur which cause fear, intimidation or physical harm to students or school staff. Gangs and their activities create such an atmosphere and shall not be allowed on school grounds or at school functions.

The following actions are prohibited on school property or at school functions:

- Wearing or possessing any clothing, bandanas, jewelry, symbol or other sign associated with membership in or representative of any gang;
- Engaging in any verbal or nonverbal act such as throwing signs, gestures, or handshakes representative of membership in any gang;
- Recruiting, soliciting, or encouraging any person through duress or intimidation to become or remain a member of any gang;
- Extort payment from any individual in return for protection from harm from any gang;
- Gang graffiti
- Social media posts depicting students displaying gang related posturing or affiliated clothing on eStem property or wearing eStem attire.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Students arrested for gang related activities occurring away from school grounds shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions as if they had occurred on school grounds.

Harassment

Harassment is any form of uninvited and unwanted physical, verbal or written behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for education. The eStem Public Charter Schools will not tolerate this type of behavior.

Harassment - Sexual

eStem recognizes that harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of law, school district policy and common courtesy. eStem is committed to providing a learning environment free from sexual harassment and will not tolerate such conduct on the part of employees, students, non-employees, vendors, board members or any others having business or contact with eStem students. Sexual harassment when perpetrated on any student by an employee or student will be treated as sexual harassment under this policy.

Sexual harassment of students consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests or demands for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's academic status or advancement;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for academic decisions affecting the student(s); or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.

Forms of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal harassment, including derogatory comments, jokes, requests, or other sexually oriented language;
- Uninvited letters, telephone calls, electronic communications or materials of a sexual nature;
- Physical harassment, including unnecessary or offensive touching, repeatedly brushing against another person's body, or impeding or blocking movement;
- Visual harassment, including offensive posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, or gestures; and
- Attempted or actual rape or sexual assault.

Harassment - Verbal

Verbal harassment includes threats, gestures, or verbal attacks on persons, including attacks directed at one's racial, ethnic, or religious background, sexual preference, physical or mental disability, appearance, as well as any form of

obscene language, swearing, slander, name-calling, or slur. eStem is a place where everyone must be comfortable and treated with due respect. Verbal harassment when perpetrated on any student by an employee or student will be treated as verbal harassment under this policy.

Harassment – Response

The eStem Public Charter Schools are committed to the equitable and swift resolution of harassment issues. Any student experiencing harassment should follow these measures:

1. Let the offender know you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and direct. Do not apologize.
2. If you are not comfortable confronting the offender alone, ask an adult to accompany you, or write a letter to the offender, keeping a copy.
3. Make a record of when, where and how you were mistreated; include any witnesses, direct quotes, and other evidence.
4. Make a Brim report
5. Notify a teacher. The Director of Schools will ensure that the student discipline policy is used for handling the case.
6. The offender may be required to attend counseling or classes in addition to any consequences given.

Verbal Abuse of Staff

State law specifically prohibits insults or verbal abuse directed to a school employee in the course of his or her duties. Those who violate this policy will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and may be banned from campus and all school related events.

Medical Information/Student Support Services

Counseling Services

The eStem schools employ full-time counselors who work closely with students. Students removed from class for behavioral issues, returning from suspensions, or who have been referred by the school administration may meet with the counselor on an informal basis. In addition, students may be referred by the school administration to the counselor for more regular one-on-one or group counseling.

Homeless Students

The term “homeless” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

Homeless children will have access to education and other services that help to ensure they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

The school is committed to providing the same educational opportunities to migrant, homeless, and highly mobile students as it provides to all students. A school employee will be selected to fill the role of the local educational liaison for homeless children. The children’s status as homeless shall not lead to their stigmatization or segregation from other students, and it is the responsibility of the liaison to ensure these and other policies prescribed by law are enforced.

If a homeless student is moved from the school contrary to the wishes of the student’s parent or guardian, the school must provide a written explanation of why the move is being enacted. That explanation must contain notice to the parents or guardians of a right to appeal.

Immunizations

In order to enroll at an eStem Public Charter School, every student must have an up-to-date age-appropriate immunization record. Students will be excluded from school until records are provided. Students are **required to have proof of immunizations** that are required by the Arkansas State Department of Health. Proof of immunization shall be by a certificate of a licensed physician, health department or the military service. Students will not be allowed to enroll in the school if they do not have the required documented proof of immunization.

Infection Control

The District shall follow the most current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) "Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Bloodborne Pathogens in Health-Care Settings."

As prescribed by CDC guidelines, training about techniques for preventing the spread of infectious diseases shall be comprehensive and shall be provided for students and staff. The Superintendent shall be responsible for the effective implementation of these training programs and procedures which shall be developed in collaboration with local or state health agencies and be a part of the District's safety program.

The facility shall be cleaned and decontaminated after any incident involving blood or other potentially infectious materials. All equipment and contaminated work surfaces shall be decontaminated immediately or as soon as feasible after any spill of blood or other potentially infectious materials. Contaminated sharps, such as needles, broken glass, knives, etc., shall be placed in a sharps container for disposal.

Medical Information

In the event of a medical emergency during the school day, eStem will notify the proper medical and emergency authorities, set aside an area where the injured student(s) can be taken, and notify the student's parent/guardian or the emergency contact identified on the student's school records. eStem will abide by the recommendations of medical and emergency authorities and will assist, if requested, in the transportation of the injured student to a designated medical facility. It is at the discretion of the nurse when a 911 call is deemed necessary if a student is in distress. It is up to the discretion of the building administration in the absence of a nurse. eStem will make every effort to provide support, assistance and resources to the injured student until medical attention is secured. Students who are suicidal, homicidal, experiencing hallucinations or delusions, or any other serious mental disturbances will be sent home for a safety/mental health evaluation. Before returning, the student must provide the school with a letter signed by a licensed physician or therapist stating that he or she is not a danger to themselves or anyone else.

Medical - Illness During School Hours

As a general rule, students will not be sent home for upset stomachs, common colds, sore throats without a fever, or headaches. If a child reports feeling ill or injured during the school day, the School Nurse will record the student's name, the time and the nature of the illness. If a child becomes ill or injured during the school day and is not well enough to stay in class, the parent/guardian will be called to pick-up the child. Students with fever 100 degrees F or higher or have

vomited more than once will be sent home. The student can return to school when they have been fever free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. It is necessary to have updated emergency contact numbers on file in the school office in case no one can be contacted at home. Students who are ill should be picked up within one hour of the phone call notification.

Medical-Medications

If a student requires medication during school hours, the administration of the medications will be supervised by the Coordinator of Medical Services/Nurse under the following guidelines, as required by state law:

- Medications should be given at home unless it is given more than three times a day or must be given at a specific time as indicated on the prescription bottle.
- Medications may be administered only when the critical health and well being of the student is at stake and will be documented when administered.
- Prescribed medications to be given at school should be delivered to the nurse by the parent/guardian and counted and documented by the nurse and the parent together.
- All prescribed and/or controlled medications must be supplied in the original pharmaceutical container/packaging and labeled with the following information: student's legal name, date the prescription was filled, ordering provider's name, pharmacy name, name of medication, dose, route, and frequency.
- All medications will be given according to labeling directions on the container. Deviations from label directions will require a written provider order.
- Over-the-counter medications that have been approved for use in the health room may be administered as needed at the nurse's discretion and with written permission from the parent. This written permission must be renewed annually. Administration of OTC medications will be documented and the parent informed.
- Over-the counter medications must be supplied in the original container and identified with the student name, parent name, and phone number.
- All prescribed/controlled medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the health room.

The School Nurse is the primary person designated and authorized to administer medication. In the event the school nurse is unavailable to administer medications, there will be designated school personnel to administer medications in accordance with the Arkansas State Board of Nursing and ADE rules. All medication must be placed in a locked box in the school's medical office. In order to administer any prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication to a student, a note from the student's physician must be on file with the school. Students are responsible for coming to the medical services office to receive their medication at the appropriate time.

Students are not allowed to have any medication, including over-the-counter medication, in their backpacks or in their possession. Students with prescribed emergency rescue medications (i.e. asthma inhalers, EpiPens, Glucagon) may be able to self-carry these medications with approval from the student's physician, the school nurse, and the parent. A signed self-carry form must be in the student's medical file in the school health room.

All medications shall be picked up by the parent/guardian of the student or they will be disposed of by the school nurse at the end of the school year. The school shall also dispose of outdated or expired medications after giving parents or guardians a 10 day notice of their intention to dispose of the medication.

Medical – Records

Students with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, severe allergies, diabetes, seizures, etc. that may have ongoing or urgent health needs while at school must have an Action Plan in their school medical file. This Action Plan can be obtained from the student's physician and must be renewed at least annually or when changes in the management plan are made by the physician.

In order to enroll at an eStem Public Charter School, every student must have an up-to-date age-appropriate immunization record. Students will be excluded from school until records are provided. Students will not be allowed to enroll in the school if they do not have the required documented proof of immunization. Also see Immunization

Medical - Screenings

The district conducts routine health screenings such as hearing, vision, and scoliosis due to the importance these health factors play in the ability of a student to succeed in school. The intent of the exams or screenings is to detect defects in hearing, vision, or other elements of health that would adversely affect the student's ability to achieve his/her full potential. The rights provided to

parents under this policy transfer to the student when he/she turns eighteen (18) years old. Except in instances where a student is suspected of having a contagious or infectious disease, parents shall have the right to opt their student out of the exams or screenings by using form 1F or by providing certification from a physician that he/she has recently examined the student.

NOTE: THIS IS YOUR NOTIFICATION OF HEALTH SCREENINGS. NO OTHER NOTICES WILL BE SENT HOME.

Arkansas public school mandates that students must be screened for the following items in grades noted below:

Vision and Hearing – Kindergarten, First, Second, Fourth, Sixth and Eighth grade

Scoliosis – Boys – Eighth grade, Girls – Sixth and Eighth grade

BMI – Kindergarten, Second, Fourth, Sixth, Eighth and Tenth grade

Pregnant Students

A pregnant student shall provide the Director of School a written statement from a licensed physician including recommendations concerning advisability of school attendance for the pregnant student. An additional statement from her physician shall be provided each 6 weeks, verifying that she is physically able to continue in school.

A pregnant student who chooses to remain in school during the semester in which she expects to deliver the child shall be governed by the same attendance policies, minimum course requirements, and rules and regulations as all other students. However, the physical education program shall be adapted to the special needs of the pregnant student. In no case shall a pregnant student be removed from school or failed solely because of her pregnancy. A student shall be readmitted after delivery, upon a statement from her physician recommending her readmission.

Legal References: US Cons. Amend XIV §1:20 USC §1681 et.seq; Ark Stat. Ann §§80-1656.

Self-Harm Policy

Any eStem staff member who is aware of a student engaging in or suspected to be at risk of engaging in self-harm will report this directly to building leadership. The parents of the student will be informed immediately and asked to report to the school. To ensure the safety of the student, he or she will leave the school building with his or her parent(s). Additionally, parents may be asked to provide documentation of professional counseling received by the child and/or family. To provide a safe and productive learning environment for all students, the school will collaborate with families and any outside professionals to determine when the student will return to school. In

the event that parents cannot be reached OR a parent is unable to report to the school building in a timely manner, a school representative will contact Arkansas Department of Health's Suicide Prevention Hotline.

Special Education

The district has the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the student is determined to be eligible, to (provide) access to appropriate educational services. The district ensures the establishment and implementation of due process procedural safeguards including the opportunity and encouragement for parent participation in meetings with respect to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and the provision of FAPE.

Areas of disability recognized and defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997, 2004 are:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-blindness
3. Hearing impairment
4. Emotional disturbance
5. Intellectual disability
6. Multiple disabilities
7. Orthopedic impairment
8. Other health impairment
9. Speech or language impairment
10. Specific learning disability
11. Traumatic brain injury
12. Visual impairment

No discrimination against any person with disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practice in the eStem Public Charter School District.

Parent Information

Accidents

The school must always have the correct home and place of employment contact information for parents/guardians in case the parent's/guardian's child becomes ill or is injured at school. The name and telephone number of a friend or relative of parent/guardian also is helpful in case the parent/guardian cannot be reached in an emergency. To update any contact information, contact the school's Registrar. It is at the discretion of the nurse when a 911 call is deemed necessary if a student is in distress. It is up to the discretion of the building administration in the absence of a nurse.

Attendance

eStem Public Charter Schools shall be open and free through the completion of the secondary program to all persons between the ages of five (5) and twenty one (21) years whose parents, legal guardians, or other persons having lawful control of the person under an order of a court reside within eStem Public Charter School and to all persons between those ages who have been legally transferred to eStem Public Charter School for educational purposes.

Attendance Records

A basic record, showing the daily attendance and absence of each student for the school year, shall be kept by each teacher who visually notes the physical presence or absence of each student on a daily basis.

The basic attendance records of the School shall be kept on file in electronic form by the School for a period of 3 years as required by the State Board of Education.

The official reporting period for attendance shall be quarterly with the actual number of days counted in each period to be no less than 40 days and no more than 50 days. Any and all attendance records are subject to inspection and review by the Department of Education.

Except for those circumstances otherwise allowed by rule, any student who is absent from daily attendance for more than 10 consecutive school days shall be dismissed or dropped from the attendance records of the school. Any student who fails to attend school by the tenth regular school day of the semester shall be retroactively dropped from the attendance records from the first day of the school semester.

The director is tasked with the monitoring and enforcement of this policy. All questions and concerns under this policy should be directed to the Director. In the event of a dispute under this policy, the parent, employee, or eligible student disputing the record shall make a written request for review by the superintendent. The superintendent shall review the information and provide a decision within 30 calendar days. A record of pupil attendance shall be kept by the School in the format prescribed by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Absences

If a student is unable to attend school, the parent/guardian must notify the school attendance office either by email or by phone by 7:45 a.m. on the day of the absence. Email is the preferred method of notification.

Downtown Junior High:

(501) 748 - 9335

Building Attendance Email: jhsattendance@estemschools.org

East Village Junior High:

(501) 214 - 6710

Building Attendance Email: evjattendance@estemschools.org

- It is the student's responsibility to collect and complete missed school work within 24 hours of returning to school.
- If any student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan conflicts with this policy, the requirements of the student's IEP or 504 Plan takes precedence.
- Good attendance is essential for student growth and success. eStem Public Charter School strives to promote maximum student attendance. Parents can monitor daily student attendance through Home Access Center (HAC). Parents will be notified of attendance policies through the student handbook.

Absences-Excused

Absences are excused when they are the direct result of a student participating in a sanctioned school activity or are a result of official school business

All foreseeable absences must first be cleared in writing through the Director to be counted as an excused absence. A Petition for Additional Absences form is available from the Director or the school attendance personnel.

Absences-Unexcused

Any absences falling outside of the scope covered in the Excused Absences policy will be considered unexcused. Students are permitted no more than **10** absences per year. Credit may be withheld from students who have accumulated 10 absences in any given course through the span of a single semester. Students may be denied promotion or graduation at the discretion of the school Director for excessive absences only after considering the causes; however, unexcused absences shall not be a basis for expulsion or dismissal of a student. Students with excessive absences due to illness, accident, or other unavoidable reasons will be given assistance in obtaining credit for courses. Providing written documentation at the time of the absence from the doctor, dentist, or other health care provider or from the appropriate government

agency stating the reason for the absence will aid the Director in determining the appropriate course of action.

- When a student has 4 absences, his/her parents, guardians, or persons in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification may be by first class mail or in the student's backpack.
- When a student reaches 8 absences his/her parents, guardians, or persons in loco parentis shall be notified. Notification may be by first class mail or in the student's backpack.
- Whenever a student reaches 10 absences, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or persons in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

Before a student accumulates 10 unexcused absences allowed in the attendance policy, the eligible student or the student's parent or guardian may petition the school Director for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences.

If special arrangements are granted by the Director, the arrangements will be formalized into a written agreement to include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the requirements of the agreement. The agreement shall be signed by the Director, the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

eStem Public Charter Schools has set forth a policy of no more than **10 absences allowable per year**. Whenever a student exceeds 10 absences, the District will file truancy paperwork to the prosecuting authority and the parent, guardian, or persons in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law. The student will also lose credit for the course for the semester.

eStem Public Charter School shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. The Department of Finance and Administration is required to suspend the former student's operator's license unless he/she meets certain requirements specified in the statute.

Except for those circumstances otherwise allowed by rule, any student who is absent from daily attendance for more than 10 consecutive school days shall be dismissed or dropped from the attendance records of the school. Any student who fails to attend school by the tenth regular school day of the semester shall be retroactively dropped from the attendance records from the first day of the school semester.

Change of Address/Phone Numbers

Parents must inform their child's eStem school office immediately if an address, phone number, or place of employment changes. The correct contact information must be on file in case of an emergency.

Check-Out Policy

eStem Public Charter School offers a welcoming and warm environment for our parents and children. However, we are also very committed to doing our job well – primarily, the educating of our students and keeping them secure while they are in our care. In order to do that, we have developed the following guidelines for checking out students. Adherence to these policies helps us maintain a safe learning environment. We would appreciate your commitment to the following times. **No exceptions will be made during these times.**

Check-Out for Grades 7-9

8:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

To prevent traffic flow issues during dismissal, afternoon check outs will not be allowed after 2:15pm.

Emergency Check Out: A student may be checked out of school in the case of an emergency. The parent/guardian should call/email the student's school office as soon as possible requesting an emergency check out. A parent/guardian should also notify the school office, in writing or by email, the reason for the emergency check out request. The student will be released from class when the parent/guardian arrives at the student's school office.

Early Check Out: If a child needs to be checked out of school to keep a doctor's or other appointment, this procedure will be followed:

- A parent/guardian must come into the building to check students out early.
- Parents must sign the check out log.

Child Custody and Court Orders

The school strives to be sensitive to all family structures. Parents or guardians who possess court documents for the care and custody of a student should present these documents to the building Director/Executive Director as soon as possible.

The school will keep on file any valid court orders, provided by a parent or guardian, regarding child custody, etc., and will strive to abide by them as is practicable. However, the school and its employees are not covered or bound by such orders. Disagreements between parents on custody, pick-up or drop-off at school, visiting at

school, etc. will not be decided by the school, and parents will be required to settle such matters without intervention or participation by School employees. In addition, inasmuch as such court orders are not directed at the school or its employees, the school is not charged with carrying them out and will not be liable for any lack of adherence to any court orders directed at parents. The Director may request a certified copy or other verification of any order which arouses suspicion as to its validity. Validity shall be determined by the presence of a written order, a judge's signature, a current effective date or time span indicating that the order has not expired, and a court file-mark or seal.

In absence of a valid order to the contrary, school employees shall provide any parent or guardian with information as to their student's academic performance and school activities, invite any parent to participate in parent-teacher conferences, allow any parent to attend school events or field trips, allow any parent to check their student in or out of school, and permit any parent to pick up their student from school. Parents and guardians are responsible for providing updated orders to the school as they arise.

Mailings and student information are directed to the custodial parent.

Classroom Visits/Birthday Parties

Classroom visits may be permitted depending on the situation and with approval from the Director. Visits must be pre-arranged for a day and time. Parents may only stay for 15 minutes and may not disrupt the learning environment. Parents are there to observe only their child.

eStem Public Charter School follows federal and state guidelines concerning classroom celebrations and food provided at school. Due to these guidelines, we cannot have any additional classroom parties and/or birthday parties. Building leadership may work in coordination with teachers to plan small classroom parties as incentives. Any snacks provided at these events must be store bought with ingredients listed on the package.

Dismissal

The instructional day for these students ends at 3:30 p.m. The student may be picked up at the assigned drop-off/pick-up door. No one is allowed to reenter the dismissal area after leaving campus.

Off Campus: If parents would like for their student to dismiss before car riders, they may elect to submit an off-campus dismissal application. Once approved, students

will be issued a walker's pass allowing them to walk from campus to the destination designated on the application. By submitting this application, parents/guardians acknowledge that their student will be released from eStem supervision during dismissal after leaving the school building. No one is allowed to re-enter the multipurpose room after leaving.

Students with approved walker's passes should not dismiss on the same block (*Louisiana or 3rd*) as the carpool lines surrounding the Downtown Junior High campus. This greatly interferes with traffic flow and slows down the dismissal process. If a walker is being picked up at any location that interferes with a dismissal carpool lane, they should be a car rider and wait with their peers in the Multipurpose room or discuss alternative walker's location with school officials.

The corners of 4th & Louisiana as well as 3rd & Louisiana are also unacceptable walker locations. This also causes major problems to the smooth flow of traffic during dismissal. Recommended walker locations are Capitol & Louisiana, Capitol & Main, or any other Rock Region Metro bus/trolley stop, The Central Arkansas Library, River Market, parent/guardian work locations, or any corner at or beyond a 2 block radius from the school buildings.

As a contributing member of the Downtown community, we have a responsibility to be good neighbors and respectful partners. We expect our students to represent eStem at the highest levels while in this community. If a student has recurring issues with local businesses or reporting to their designated walker location, a walker's pass may be temporarily or permanently revoked.

Downtown Campus Drop-Off & Pick-Up

- **Yellow – 3rd Street (Heading WEST towards Broadway) - Kindergarten & 1st Grade**

Approach from the EAST on 3rd Street. After drop-off/pick-up proceed west on 3rd Street. **You will not be able to turn right onto Louisiana Street.**

- **Blue – 3rd Street Alley - 4th, 5th, and 6th Grades**

Approach from the east on 3rd Street. Turn RIGHT into the alley behind the school. After drop-off/pick-up proceed through the alley to 2nd Street. Turn left onto 2nd Street, which is a one way street going west.

- **Green – Louisiana Street – 2nd & 3rd Grades**

Approach from the SOUTH on Louisiana Street. You are unable to turn left or right onto Louisiana Street from 3rd Street. You will

pick-up at the **Louisiana Street Playground Gate**. After drop-off/pick-up proceed north.

- **Orange – 3rd Street (heading east- Toward Main St): 7-9th Grades**

Approach from the WEST on 3rd Street. After drop-off/pick-up proceed east.

Elementary Siblings: Elementary students (K-6) with younger siblings will dismiss at the location of the youngest sibling.

Jr. High Siblings: eStem Jr. High car riders with siblings in grades K-3 will go to the dismissal location of the youngest sibling at the Elementary School. 4th - 6th grade car riders with siblings at the Junior High will dismiss Jr. High in the Junior High Multipurpose Room with their older siblings. Anyone picking up a student from the Junior High building should drive straight down 3rd street heading east. Vehicles will not be allowed to turn right or left off of Louisiana onto 3rd during arrival or dismissal.

Please remember you cannot park at the meters on Louisiana Street, directly in front of the school, from 7:00-9:00 a.m. and 3:00-5:00 p.m. We must have all of these spaces open for traffic flow. You will receive a ticket if you are parked in these areas during these times.

The Junior High building opens at 7:20 a.m. At 7:40, students are dismissed to their classrooms. Students who arrive at their first class after 8:00 a.m. will be counted tardy.

All students must be picked up no later than 4:45 p.m.

East Village Campus Drop-Off & Pick-Up

All students riding home in a car will be dismissed through the double doors leading to the driveway between the Elementary and Jr. High Schools.

- Junior High walkers will exit the door on Shall Avenue. All students will cross World Avenue and walk to the destination where you have instructed them to meet you.
- All students will be dismissed using the School Dismissal Manager app.
- Changes to a student's dismissal method must be made prior to 2:00 using the School Dismissal Manager app.

- The gates will not be opened until 2:50 each day.
- Checkouts will not be allowed after 2:15.
- All students must be picked up by 4:45 p.m. unless enrolled in an afterschool program.

Students will be dismissed following this schedule:

***Do not attempt to enter the queue before your scheduled time.**

2:50 Walkers: Elementary students will exit the door on World Avenue. All students will cross World Avenue and walk to the destination where you have instructed them to meet you.

3:00 Green: K-2 Students with No Siblings

3:05 Blue: 3-6 Students with No Siblings

3:10 Yellow: All Students with Siblings

3:15 Orange: K6 Walkers with Jr. High Siblings

3:35: All K6 students with Jr. High Siblings

Other Information:

- Do not get out of your car in the drop off area.
- There is **NO PARKING** next to eStem on World Avenue.
- If you would like to park in one of the public parking lots around the school and have your child walk to your car, please select that option using the school dismissal manager app. An eStem staff member will be helping students cross World Avenue.
- Please make sure you are not on your phone when in the arrival/dismissal line.
- Police officers will be issuing tickets to anyone who is not following the specified traffic pattern.
- Anyone picking a student up using the carpool line should be prepared to share the parent code from the School Dismissal Manager app.

eShare Program (Volunteerism)

The eStem Public Charter Schools rely on volunteer parents to assist with school activities

such as chaperoning field trips, helping in the school offices, and organizing special events. This volunteer effort is organized under the eShare program. eShare participation strongly encourages parents to complete 10 hours of volunteering.. Contact your child's school for more information. These hours count as an in-kind contribution for eStem schools.

Volunteers will be made aware of important policies and rules before volunteering on the school campus. Volunteers shall abide by the school's policies and rules. Any volunteer who creates a distraction, engages in inappropriate behavior, or violates school policy may be asked to leave school premises and may be removed from the volunteer program. Volunteers are invited to communicate with school administrators and offer ideas for the improvement of the school and the school's relationship with the community. Volunteers must undertake and pass a criminal and child maltreatment registry background check prior to providing volunteer services on any school property or at any school activity where children may be present. Volunteers are responsible for providing updated contact information to the school.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was enacted to protect the privacy of student and parent records. Parent(s) or guardian(s) may exercise their right to inspect and obtain a copy of their student's records. The school may charge a fee for copies, not to exceed the actual cost of materials.

Custodial and non-custodial parents or guardians have the right to access their student's records, however, if the custodial parent has presented a valid court order barring non-custodial access, the school will abide by that order.

The school will immediately disclose a student's educational records, without parental consent, to any requesting caseworker or other representative of a State child welfare agency when that agency demonstrates that it is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student. The school will also immediately disclose a student's educational records, without parental consent, upon receipt of a valid subpoena or court order calling for the release of such records.

When a student turns 18, all rights afforded to the parents under FERPA transfer to the student, and access to the student's records is denied to the parent(s) or guardian(s) unless the student permits. Students who are 18 years old are hereafter referred to as "eligible students."

Student records are defined as those documents which include personally identifiable information including but not limited to:

- GPA and final course grades, including full transcripts
- Admission materials
- Financial aid records
- Disciplinary records
- Attendance records
- Academic counseling records
- Student health records

Subject to the limited exceptions listed within this policy, no disclosures will be made unless there is express written consent from the parents or eligible students. Among these exceptions are access granted to school officials with legitimate educational interests, schools receiving a transferring student's records, audit or evaluation officials, financial aid parties, studies for or on behalf of the school, emergency personnel in the course of protecting the student's health or safety, and authority figures in the juvenile justice system.

Eligible students or parents or guardians of students under 18 may request information in the student's record be amended or deleted if they find that it is inaccurate. Requests for amendment are to be submitted in writing to the Director of the school, and will be reviewed and accepted or rejected by the Director in writing within 30 days of receiving the written request.

Notice of parents' rights under this policy will be distributed each year in the student handbook.

Free-Reduced Lunch: Confidentiality & Online Procedures

Children need healthy meals to learn. eStem Public Charter Schools offer healthy, nutritious meals every school day. Many children in the school district may qualify for free meals or for reduced priced meals based on household size and income criteria. eStem Public Charter Schools are committed to following the guidelines from the United States Department of Agriculture and the State of Arkansas in processing free and reduced price meal forms.

During the school enrollment process, parents will be notified of the procedures for how to apply, either online or via printed forms. The use of online meal applications and acceptance of electronic submissions requires the same level of compliance as the printed forms with regard to security issues surrounding student and parent confidentiality and data protection, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and personally identifiable information (PII, such as social security numbers). The on-line meal applications are developed/purchased from by a third party vendor

and are legally binding. eStem Public Charter Schools will ensure that the third party vendor has adequate security measures for the backup and disposal of online documents and that all security measures are followed for online processing regarding scanned documents and data storage and disposal of original documents containing

FERPA and PII data. The district shall submit to the State of Arkansas Child Nutrition Program procedures for "Security and Disposal Plan for Online Documents" which ensures maintenance of support documentation for distribution of federal and state funds. The district will also provide proof of our ability to provide a digital signature system in compliance with Level 2 Authenticity Security as required by the United State Department of Agriculture and National Institute of Standards and Technology.

In all free and reduced meal eligibility forms processing, the following procedures will be followed for both obtaining and releasing eligibility information.

Obtaining Eligibility Information

A fundamental underpinning of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (Programs) is that in their implementation, there will be no physical segregation of, discrimination against, or overt identification of children who are eligible for the Program's benefits. While the requirements of the Programs are defined in much greater detail in federal statutes and pertinent Code of Federal Regulations, this policy is designed to help employees understand prohibitions on how the student information is obtained and/or released through the Programs. Employees with the greatest responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Programs will be provided the training necessary to become fully aware of their responsibilities.

The District is required to inform households with children enrolled in District schools of the availability of the Programs and of how the household may apply for Program benefits. However, the District and anyone employed by the district is strictly forbidden from requiring any household or student within a household from submitting an application to participate in the program. There are NO exceptions to this prohibition and it would apply, for example, to the offer of incentives for completed forms, or disincentives or negative consequences for failing to submit or complete an application.

In addition to potential federal criminal penalties that may be filed against a staff member who violates this prohibition, the employee shall be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Releasing Eligibility Information

As part of the district's participation in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, the district collects eligibility data from its students. Names of the children and eligibility status shall not be published, posted or announced in any manner. The data's confidentiality is very important and is governed by federal law. The district has made the determination to release student eligibility status or information as permitted by law. Federal law governs how eligibility data may be released and to whom. The district will take the following steps to ensure its confidentiality:

Some data may be released to government agencies or programs authorized by law to receive such data without parental consent, while other data may only be released after obtaining parental consent. In both instances, allowable information shall only be released on a need to know basis to individuals authorized to receive the data. The recipients shall sign an agreement with the district specifying the names or titles of the persons who may have access to the eligibility information. The agreement shall further specify the specific purpose(s) for which the data will be used and how the recipient(s) shall protect the data from further, unauthorized disclosures.

The superintendent shall designate the staff member(s) responsible for making eligibility determinations. Release of eligibility information to other district staff shall be limited to as few individuals as possible who shall have a specific need to know such information to perform their job responsibilities. Principals, counselors, teachers, and administrators shall not have routine access to eligibility information or status.

Each staff person with access to individual eligibility information shall be notified of their personal liability for its unauthorized disclosure and shall receive appropriate training on the laws governing the restrictions of such information.

Legal References: Commissioner's Memos IA-05-018, FIN 09-041, IA 99-011, and FIN 13-018, and FIN-13- 070

ADE Eligibility Manual for School Meals Revised July 2008 2012 7 CFR 210.1 – 210.31 7 CFR 220.1 – 220.22 7 CFR 245.5, 245.6, 245.842 USC 1758(b)(6)

Adopted 6/20/2017

Law Enforcement's Access to Students

Students will be subjected to questioning by non-school personnel only if a court

order directing the questioning is presented, the student's parent or guardian (or eligible student) gives permission, or if responding to a legally issued arrest warrant or subpoena.

If the school makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct, grants a law enforcement officer (other than the school resource officer acting in the normal course of his or her duties) access to a student, or knows a student has been taken into custody by law enforcement personnel while under school supervision, the school shall make a reasonable good faith effort to notify the student's parents or guardians.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items will be kept in a central location. Unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization. Parents will receive advance notice of donation dates. Please mark all personal items with the child's name.

Meal Program

Breakfasts and lunches are provided by Elicor and served daily. Breakfast is available from 7:20 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Menus and nutritional information can be found on the eStem website (www.estemschools.org) under 'Campus Life'.

Meal prices are listed on our website www.estemschools.org under [Campus Dining Information](#). Prices are set by the meal service provider.

Meal Prices

These meal benefits do not include a la carte items and/or 2nd meals sold in the cafeteria. If students wish to purchase items a la carte and/or 2nd meals, they will need to have money for those purchases. Based on a new Arkansas law (ACT 656), families who qualify for reduced price meals will receive free meals at school.

Microwave Use

At eStem Public Charter Schools, we want all of our students to enjoy a filling lunch. Our lunch schedule is compact in order to feed all students in the building from 10:35 a.m. to 1:10 p.m. Kindergarten through 9th grade will not have access to microwaves at our schools. The microwaves take up too much of the students' lunch time and can pose a safety hazard in our buildings.

Payment Methods

Parents who wish to have their student(s) eat meals at school have the following payment options:

- Deposit funds to your students MySchoolBucks account via www.MySchoolBucks.com
- Submit cash/check payment to the school office
- Pay by mail by sending a check to *eStem Public Charter Schools Attn: Food Service Department, 200 River Market Ave, Suite 225, Little Rock, AR 72201*. Checks should be made payable to 'eStem Public Charter Schools'. Be sure to include your student's name/student ID/school when submitting your payment via mail. You will receive a confirmation from the district office once your payment has been processed.

Refunds may be requested at any time by completing the [Meal Account Refund Request Form](#) online or by emailing stacy.awbrey@estemschools.org.

Students that become inactive by leaving the district or graduating may request any positive balances to be transferred to another student account, refunded, or transferred into the general lunch fund for use by students that are unable to pay. Any positive balance that is left in an inactive account must be claimed within 60 days of the students last day otherwise the funds will be subject to transfer to the general lunch fund.

Meal Charges

Students who are unable to pay for their meals at the time of meal service are allowed to charge. Students charging breakfast and/or lunch will receive a regular meal tray. The meal will be charged to the students account and the parents/guardians will be responsible for payment. Families wishing to avoid these charges on their students account must send a meal to school with the student. At no point can a student charge 2nd meals and/or a la carte items.

Any account that has a negative balance greater than \$5.00, will receive weekly balance reminder emails. Any account that reaches a negative balance greater than \$25.00 will be subject to additional communication via printed notifications, email and/or phone. Failure to make payments towards your students negative account balance will result in direct communication from the school Director and possible actions that may be taken. Each household may request a repayment plan that will include payment levels and due dates appropriate to a household's particular circumstances. Please contact your school office to discuss repayment plan options.

Payment of unpaid meal charges is the responsibility of the parent/guardian, regardless of the meal benefit eligibility. Families who have unpaid meal charges prior to being approved for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program are responsible for remitting payment for the charges accrued prior to eligibility determination.

Free and Reduced Meal Application

Parents who wish to participate in the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program must complete a federal free/reduced meal application. You can access these forms at the beginning of the school year online through our school website (www.estemschools.org) or paper forms are available at the school office. We encourage the online application process as this is the quickest way to apply for meal benefits. Once the application has been processed, you will receive a letter in the mail regarding the status of your application and the appropriate information will be entered into the eStem meal payment system. You can complete the application even if your child will not be eating a school breakfast/lunch every day.

If you are the parent/guardian of a student who currently participates in the free/reduced meal program, you **must reapply at the beginning of every school year**. The prior year's application is only valid for the first 30 days of school. After 30 days, all students pending approval for free/reduced meals are required to pay full price. Meals may be packed and brought from home or a deposit to the student's lunch account to cover meals while your application is being processed. Students not participating in the free/reduced meal program last year will be charged full price for meals until their application has been processed and their eligibility has been determined. Families are responsible for all charges until application approval.

If your circumstances change, you may apply/reapply at any time during the school year for financial consideration. Looking for additional information regarding the Free/Reduced meal program? Visit www.estemschools.org under 'Campus Life'.

Non-Discrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g.

Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov <<mailto:program.intake@usda.gov>> .

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Messages

eStem schools do not accept telephone messages for students. Parents who want a message delivered to their child during the school day must deliver that message in person at the school office. The eStem schools make no guarantee and assume no responsibility for delivery of non-emergency messages from parents to their child.

Students may use the school phone only in the case of an emergency or in a situation that requires the child to go home for the day.

Parent Concerns

Parents/guardians with a concern about school policy, their child's academic grades, a discipline decision, or any other issue related to their child's eStem education may address that issue with their child's teacher or school administrator. The following procedure will be used:

1. Parent/guardian must make the child's teacher aware of their concern. Where possible, parents/guardians should suggest a solution.
2. The teacher or staff member contacted will discuss the concern with the parent/guardian as soon as is practical and work toward creating a solution.
3. Parents/guardians who are dissatisfied with the response of the teacher or staff

member may forward their concern to the Assistant Director. The Assistant Director will respond to the parent/guardian as soon as practical.

4. If the parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the response of the Assistant Director, the parent/guardian may forward the concern to the Director of Schools who will respond as soon as practical.

5. If a resolution has not been met, the parent/guardian may forward the concern to the Executive Directors who will respond as soon as practical.

6. If a resolution has not been met, the parent/guardian may then forward the concern to the Chief Executive Officer. The decision of the Chief Executive Officer of eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. will be the final resolution.

Parent Conduct

Parent conduct on campus, any eStem event off campus and written and verbal communication will remain respectful and professional at all times. Parents using inappropriate language or causing a disturbance will be asked to leave campus or the event and may be banned from campus. Any repeated or severe disturbances may result in law enforcement being contacted.

Parent/Teacher State Required Conferences

There are two Parent/Teacher Conferences throughout the school year, one per semester. During these conferences, parents/guardians have an opportunity to discuss the progress of their child with their child's teacher(s). Parents/guardians and teachers also will discuss strategies to improve the academic performance of their child.

Parents/guardians are required to attend Parent/Teacher Conferences; the child can attend the conference as well.

Parent/Teacher/Student Meetings

Teachers may request individual conferences with a student's parent/guardian to discuss academic or character-related issues. The request may require the student's attendance. Likewise, parents may request an individual conference with their child's teacher(s) to discuss student-related issues. To request a meeting with a teacher, the

parent must contact the teacher by telephone or email. If a parent comes to school to meet with a teacher without first setting an appointment, there is no guarantee that the parent will be able to meet with the teacher at that time.

Parents can have very strong feelings about issues concerning their child. Progress for a student can be achieved only if all parties deal with issues calmly and with mutual respect.

School Supplies

Students are expected to supply their own basic school supplies every day. Those supplies include pencils and pens, flash drive, loose-leaf notebook paper and binders. For a specialized list of school supplies, parents should contact their child's teacher. A school supplies list by grade level also is posted on the eStem web page at www.estemschools.org and distributed at Open House.

Student Records

The school will maintain a permanent record of all students enrolled in its school(s). The permanent record will be made available for inspection and copying upon the request of a parent or eligible student. The school may charge a reasonable fee for copies, which may not exceed the actual cost of the materials and may not include the cost of time and labor. A general student permanent record must contain:

- The student's birth certificate number, social security number, name, address, and telephone number
- The parent(s) or guardian(s) name, address, telephone number (if different), occupation, workplace, and telephone number at their place of work
- Siblings' names
- Emergency contact person and telephone number
- Health record including a record of immunization, indication of disability or chronic illness, allergies, regularly prescribed medications, hospital and doctor preference, and a copy of any written accident report for accidents occurring at school
- Longitudinal record of standardized test scores

- Permanent record of grades
- Academic skills development plan for students in grades 3, 6 and 8 who fail to achieve mastery on the basic competency tests
- Enrollment information including entry date, exit date, reason for leaving, transfer location (if applicable), graduation date (if graduated), age of student and reason for dropping out (if applicable)
- Attendance record
- Any objective comments which can be validated with documentation including information obtained by the mandatory interview conducted by a counselor when a student transfers or drops out
- The school will continue this responsibility until the student receives a high school diploma or its equivalent, or until the student is older than 18.

A copy of the student's permanent record shall be provided to any receiving school upon the transfer of a student within 10 days of receiving a request from the school to which the student transferred, or wishes to transfer.

Tardy Policy

Students and families commit to coming to school every day on time. A student who arrives after 8:00 will be marked tardy. It is extremely important that students arrive at school on time. If a student has a scheduled doctor's appointment, which causes him/her to be late for school, he/she must bring a note from the doctor to have the tardy excused. The appointment must be for the student, and not for the parent, sibling, or relative. Excessive, unexcused tardies may result in disciplinary action and/or a meeting with parents/guardians and school administration.

Transfer Requests

The School Registrar processes all requests for student transfers after the School Director and/or Director of Admissions has given approval. Transfers will be issued only after the parent/guardian fills out and signs a transfer request form. All obligations including the payment of school fees and the return of school materials must be met before a transfer can be processed. Once a transfer is granted, a student who wishes to re-enroll at eStem must fill out a new application.

Transcripts

“Electronic transcript” means a student transcript that is formatted and transmitted electronically in the uniform method prescribed by the Department of Higher Education and the Department of Education for use by public schools and institutions of higher education in this state.

All transcript requests must be made in writing to the registrar and allow 3 business days for processing. There is a \$5.00 processing fee for all official, final transcripts. There is no charge for electronic transcripts.

Transportation - Students

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school; however, eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. will pay for a monthly bus pass for eStem students using the Rock Region METRO bus system. METRO student pass application forms are available at the main office for each school.

Parents must send a note with their child if they would like the child to go home in a way that is not the child’s normal mode of transportation.

Skateboards are a safety hazard and are not considered to be an acceptable form of transportation to and from school either before or after the normal school day. We want to be good neighbors to the local downtown businesses; therefore, the use of skateboards on or around the school campus is prohibited.

Visitors

The eStem Public Charter Schools are learning organizations that value the presence of observers and guests. Visitors must sign in at the security desk and wear a name tag identifying them as a visitor while touring the school.

Student Shadowing Policy

All guests who wish to shadow a student at any of the eStem schools must obtain prior approval from the main office. Additionally, shadowing guests must be a potential student on the waiting list with a sincere interest in attending eStem Public Charter Schools. If parents are shadowing with a child, they must present a valid state or government issued ID.

Withdrawal Process

The Registrar processes all requests for student transfer to another school district once a

withdrawal form has been submitted. All obligations including the payment of school fees, lunch charges, and the return of school materials must be met before a transfer can be processed. Once a transfer is granted, a student who wishes to re-enroll at eStem must fill out a new application.

Student Information

Dress Code

Students shall be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and that shall not be disruptive or a safety hazard to themselves or others. The eStem schools prohibit any clothing or grooming that, in the administrator's judgment, may reasonably be expected to cause disruption of normal operations. **The administration has final authority on all matters relating to the dress code.**

Dress Code – Clothing Choices

Bottoms:

Khaki or Navy (**Shorts, pants, skirts, skorts, and dresses are permitted**)

- Must be hemmed or cuffed
- Length must be to the fingertips or longer
- Sweat pants and warm-ups are not permitted
- Leggings of any kind are not permitted

In addition to the options listed above, junior high students may also choose to wear basic blue denim jeans ONLY. Bottoms with holes, rips, and/or patches OR pajama pants are NOT permitted.

Tops:

Any shade of solid blue, yellow, white, or gray

- Collared shirts (golf or oxford) OR eStem t-shirts are permitted. **(ALL eStem t-shirts MUST be purchased from the school.)**
- Collared shirts may NOT have logos except for the official eStem logo
- Undershirts must adhere to the same guidelines (no camisoles)
- Students must wear eStem tops on Fridays or participate in Cash for Casual.
- ALL shirts and blouses must have sleeves.
- Clothing with low-cut necklines are NOT permitted.
- Clothing that exposes the midriff when arms are raised are NOT permitted.
- Clothing that fully exposes the shoulders and neckline are NOT permitted.
- Camisoles, spaghetti strapped blouses, tank tops, or halter tops are NOT permitted.

- Clothing with offensive or suggestive slogans or advertisements are NOT permitted.
- Shirts and blouses with holes and torn or patched clothing of any kind are not permitted if the student's skin is visible through the open area.

Footwear:

- Any closed toe shoes.
- Students may NOT wear any open toe shoes.
The following shoes are NOT allowed: open toe shoes of any kind, cros, slippers/house shoes, shoes that resemble house shoes, or shoes with wheels, slides.

Jackets/Hoodies/Sweatshirts:

- Any shade of solid blue, yellow, white, or gray
- If worn inside the school, they MUST adhere to the color and logo guidelines for tops.

Dress Code – Specific Guidelines

1. The school prohibits pictures, emblems, writing, or any logos (other than the approved eStem logo) on clothing. Clothing with offensive or suggestive slogans or advertisements is not permitted.
2. Torn or patched clothing of any kind is not permitted.
3. Clothing such as shirts and blouses are required to have sleeves.
4. Multiple earrings in one ear, piercings other than ears, or any earrings or jewelry that are inappropriate or cause safety concerns are not allowed. Tongue rings and other visible body piercings are not allowed.
5. Tattoos and body art shall not be visible. Hairstyles and hair colors that are disruptive to the learning environment are not allowed.
6. Baggy clothing and clothes that sag or fall below the waistline shall not be allowed.
7. Clothing with low-cut necklines and clothing that exposes the midriff shall not be worn.
8. Hats, hoods, or other headgear, sunglasses, and pins may not be worn inside the building.

Dress Code Violations

The dress code will be strictly enforced, and the Director of School has final authority on all matters relating to the dress code. All students violating the dress

code will be given a school uniform to change into, if available, and their other clothes will be kept in the office. At the end of the day, they will be allowed to change back into their original clothes. If a school uniform is not available, the school will contact the parents to bring a change of clothes. Repeated violations of the dress code may result in detention, loss of privileges, or suspension. If a student misses class due to a dress code violation, the student will be responsible for making up any missed work.

Vendor Options

Short sleeve t-shirts, long sleeve t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, and jackets may be purchased from the school in the main office or online at www.myschoolbucks.com. Additional items with the official eStem logo may be purchased locally at The Toggery (Pleasant Ridge Town Center on Cantrell Rd) <https://toggerykids.com/>

Cash for Casual

Every Friday, students will have the option of paying \$1 to dress out of uniform. We also have the option for parents to pay for the entire year (rather than paying \$1 every Friday). Clothing should be appropriate and dress code guidelines should still be followed.

Driving Permit Application

Every application for an instructional permit license shall be made in writing to the Student Records Coordinator. To get a driver's permit for license the student must:

1. You must be at least 14 years old.
2. You must have at least a 2.0 GPA for the previous SEMESTER (not 9 weeks).
3. You must have no more than 10 absences in any one-class period for the current semester.
4. This form is valid through the current semester. If a knowledge exam is not passed by the end of the current semester the student will be required to submit a new school form after January 10th or June 10th, when the new semester grades are calculated.
5. You must STUDY the manual before sitting for the exam.

If you do not meet all 5 requirements listed above, please do not request the Driver's Attendance Form.

Food and Drinks From Off Campus

No outside food or drinks are allowed in the school building without the approval of the

school director. Water can be carried to class in bottles with a sealed top. Water is not allowed in open containers in any classroom. Teachers may have specific classroom rules regarding when that water can or cannot be consumed during instructional time. Gum is not allowed to be chewed in the building. It often ends up on the bottom of desks, tables, or chairs, and we want to keep our building and furniture clean. Failure to comply with these expectations is a Category 1 Offense and may result in disciplinary action. Students with a medical condition that may require frequent drinks or snacks must provide supporting medical documentation to the Director for approval.

Personal Belongings

Students are not allowed to bring excessive amounts of cash, food or drink (unless water or food is in their lunch box). Any personal items causing a disruption to the learning environment will be confiscated and may be retrieved by the parent from the office at the end of the school day. Additional restrictions apply to certain electronic items.

Student Rights

Freedom of Religion

Students have the right to be absent from school for observance of the holy days of their religion. Parents/guardians must notify the school office in writing prior to absence. An absence for religious reasons counts as an excused absence from school.

Right to Equal Education

eStem students cannot be prevented or discouraged from participating in any school activity because of race, gender, sexual preference, religion, national origin, or handicap.

Search and Seizure

Any searches of student belongings will be conducted solely for the safety and well being of the eStem community. A mass search of student belongings is permitted when the Director of a school or designee deems that a theft of property or threat to the safety of the school exists. Ownership of storage space is maintained by eStem and student use is subject to the right of the school administration to have access to the storage space at any time for cleaning or to search for illegal or dangerous materials.

Violation of Rights

Students are encouraged to talk to teachers, the Director of School, or someone else in the eStem administration. Any member of the school community who believes he/she has been subject to or bears witness to discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, or handicap may file a written complaint with the Director of School. The Director of School will make a determination in the matter. If that determination is unsatisfactory, the member of the school community can request a hearing before the Chief Executive Officer.

School Safety

Bomb Threat

A bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to the integrity of school property. Any bomb threat will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and will be treated accordingly.

A map detailing the required building evacuation plan is posted in every room. Students must follow the instructions of their teacher, stay with their class, and must not make any stops during evacuation unless instructed to do so by their teacher. Students must proceed directly to their designated location outside the building without talking until given further instruction. A student violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of other students and may face disciplinary action, which could include suspension.

Crisis Intervention Training (Handle with Care)

Designated personnel are certified as practitioners to practice the transportation and personal safety techniques and procedures incorporated in the Handle with Care program. This training teaches a wide range of nonphysical and verbal strategies for the prevention of crisis situations and de-escalating techniques.

Drugs & Alcohol

An orderly and safe school environment that is conducive to promoting student achievement requires a student population that is free from the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs. Their use is illegal, disruptive to the educational environment and diminishes the capacity of students to learn and function properly in school. State law

prohibits smoking or use of tobacco, e-cigarettes or products containing tobacco in any form in or on any property owned or leased by eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. The illegal manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illegal drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances on school premises or during school-sponsored activities is strictly prohibited for both students and all school personnel. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, local law enforcement will be contacted.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion, and may be subject to criminal prosecution. Satisfactory completion of a rehabilitation program may be substituted for part or all of the proposed disciplinary measures at the discretion of the superintendent. The school may not require that a student seek treatment as a condition of return, whether through an administrator or Board, nor will the school be financially responsible for any portion of treatment or rehabilitation. Such expenses are the responsibility of the parent or student. The decision to seek treatment or rehabilitation shall be the sole decision of the affected student, of the affected student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Emergency Lock-Down

Each school will work with local law enforcement to determine the best safety plan for that campus.

The school building will be placed in emergency lock-down when the threat of danger from outside the building is imminent. Students, teachers, and staff will be notified when an emergency lock-down is in effect via a broadcast over the school public address system.

Schools may institute a non-emergency lock down if necessary. During this time, students will be kept in the classroom and instruction will continue as normal.

False Alarms

The act of pulling or attempting to pull or calling in an alarm of a fire, bomb threat or other emergency without a lawful purpose is prohibited. The act of communicating a false alarm to or about a school, at a school-sponsored or related activity or any public facility is a Class D Felony. According to our school's discipline policies, this is a category III offense and may result in suspension, removal, or expulsion.

Firearms & Weapons

In accordance with federal and state law, any student who brings or possesses a firearm on school property or at any school activity will be referred to the appropriate legal authorities and will be expelled from school for a period of no less than one year. The expulsion shall be noted on the student's permanent school record. The expulsion may be modified on a case-by-case basis upon recommendation of the Director of Schools and the approval of the Chief Executive Officer of eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc.

The director of each school shall report within a week to the department the name, current address, and social security number of any student who is expelled for possessing a firearm or other prohibited weapon on school property or for committing other acts of violence.

The possession of a knife, box cutter, dirk, brass knuckle, martial arts implement, razor, ice pick, BB gun, pellet gun, pump gun, stun gun, blackjack, unauthorized tools, sword, spear in a cane, billy club, sap, facsimile weapon or any other instrument that is specifically designed, made or adapted, or is capable of inflicting physical injury to another person, is prohibited at school or at any school-related activity. The act of using a weapon or a firearm to cause injury or to threaten injury to another person is prohibited. Expulsion for a full calendar year is required by law.

Fire Evacuation

A map detailing the required building evacuation plan is posted in every room. Students must follow the instructions of their teacher, stay with their class, and must not make any stops during evacuation unless instructed to do so by their teacher. Students must proceed directly to their designated location outside the building without talking until given further instruction. A student violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of other students and may face disciplinary action which could include suspension.

Searches

Each student's privacy rights are of high value to the school, and as such, the school shall ensure that arbitrary searches are not conducted by school officials. However, in order to maintain a safe, and positive educational environment, and to protect the health and well-being of the entire student body, the school recognizes its right to reasonably inspect, search, and seize evidence pertaining to violations of law or rules of the school.

Students are advised that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in most school areas, including lockers, and that searching school property generally does not constitute a search for purposes of the 4th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The school does recognize a reasonable expectation of privacy in restrooms, dressing rooms, or other areas in which an expectation of privacy has been traditionally recognized. The school may also search the student's person or personal property upon establishing reasonable grounds to believe evidence of a violation will be found in the areas to be searched. Upon finding evidence of a violation, the school may seize it and discipline the student accordingly. If the evidence found is illegal according to state or federal law, the appropriate authorities shall be notified.

Included in "school property" are lockers, desks, and parking lots on school grounds. Personal effects of students left in these areas may also be considered part of school property, and subject to search. Student vehicles parked on school grounds do not enjoy an expectation of privacy. Items in plain sight that violate school rules or that are illegal may warrant an intrusion into student vehicles. Search of a vehicle is also warranted if there is probable cause that evidence of a violation will be found. If school personnel decide a search is necessary, an attempt to notify the student shall be made, and the student shall be permitted to be present with an adult witness. However, neither notice nor student assent are requirements for the School to conduct a search.

No searches of a student's person shall occur unless there is a reasonable suspicion that an infraction has or is occurring. Reasonable searches shall be conducted by a School employee of the same sex as the student, and observed by an adult witness. Searches shall not be overly intrusive. The intrusiveness of a search should be determined by balancing the nature of the infraction against the sex and age of the student.

At the discretion of the superintendent or his or her designee, law enforcement officials may be consulted to help administer searches. Law enforcement officials may utilize trained dogs to assist in the search of school property.

Security

The superintendent, directors, teachers and staff are responsible, within limits imposed by available resources, for taking precautions for the health and safety of school personnel and students, in compliance with applicable local, state and federal rules, regulations and laws governing school health and safety.

The eStem school building is protected during the day and during non-school hours by a security surveillance video system and an alarm system. Access to the building is restricted during school hours. All visitors must register at the security desk.

Terroristic Threatening

A person commits the offense of terroristic threatening in the first degree if the purpose of terrorizing another person, the person threatens to cause physical injury or property damage to a teacher or other school employee acting in the line of duty. (A.C.A 5-13-301). Terroristic threatening in the first degree is a class D felony.

A person commits battery in the second degree if the person intentionally or knowingly, without legal justification, causes physical injury to a person he or she knows to be a teacher or other school employee while acting in the course of employment. (A.C.A 5-13-202). Battery in the second degree is a class D felony.

Tobacco/Vaping

State law prohibits smoking or use of tobacco, e-cigarettes or products containing tobacco in any form in or on any property owned or leased by eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. or at school events. Personnel, students, and visitors are also not permitted to use tobacco and tobacco products while they are involved in an activity representing the school.

Tornado/Severe Weather Conditions

In the event of severe weather conditions during the school day, teachers will relocate

students to the designated safe areas and will ensure that all students are accounted for. While moving to a safe location, students must refrain from talking. All students and staff will remain in their locations until the all clear is sounded. A student violating this procedure is jeopardizing the safety of other students and may face disciplinary action which could include suspension.

eStem Public Charter School shall provide annual training for all employees and students, to the extent practicable, in preventing and responding to acts of violence, terrorism, and natural disaster, including without limitation: tornado safety drills, implementation of emergency plans for terrorist attacks, and annual active shooter drills and school safety assessments in collaboration with local law enforcement and emergency management personnel for all schools. The superintendent shall designate personnel for training under the Safe Schools Initiative annually.

The designated personnel who receive Safe School Initiative training shall train other school employees and students and may assist in developing strategies and crisis management plans for the school.

During a tornado or severe weather warning, any parents on campus will follow the school's safety procedures until the warning expires.

Technology

Cell Phones/Smart Watches/Tablets/Other Electronic Items

Students must keep cell phones/smart watches/tablets powered off and out of sight (either in a locker or a backpack) if they are carried to school. An eStem staff member will confiscate any cell phone that is on, visible, or emits an audible signal. The parent/guardian of a student whose cell phone was confiscated must pick up the item in the Dean's office of the school.

Parents concerned about their child's cell phone becoming lost or stolen should not allow the child to bring the phone to school. eStem cannot guarantee that any cell phone or other electronic equipment will be safe. eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. is not responsible for lost or stolen items. eStem staff members will not be held personally responsible either.

Students with cell phones often send text messages to each other and/or login to social media accounts while at school. Along with texting and social media there are other explicit acts that are conducted with cell phones that are considered to be inappropriate. We do not allow cell phones or tablets to be in use during school hours. This includes texting and social media. Cell phones/tablets should be out of sight and turned off during the regular school day. Administration reserves the right to use discretion in disciplining for violating the cell phone policy.

Cell phone usage will be allowed in the multipurpose room before and after school only. If a student has a cell phone out at an inappropriate time or location, the cell phone will be confiscated and held in the Dean's office. The cell phone will be locked in the Dean's office until a parent comes to claim it.

Cell phone use for educational purposes is at the discretion of the Director.

Electronic Devices: Nooks, Kindles, iPads, eReaders, or Laptops will be allowed for educational purposes only. If a student is using these devices for other purposes, such as gaming, chatting, social media, etc., it will be confiscated and taken to the Dean's office. It will be locked in the Dean's office until a parent comes to claim it.

A Bring Your Own Device Registration Form must be completed in order for a student to use their device on the eStem Internet. These forms can be found on the eStem Website or in the school office.

Computer/Internet Use

The eStem Public Charter School District has policies in place that address all CIPA and FERPA laws.

Guidelines regulating the use of the District's network--Acceptable Use Policy--also include policies and consequences for violation of policies posted on the eStem website and printed in the student handbook. These guidelines apply to all minors, anyone under the age of 17, and employees. Students, parents, employees and users must sign this agreement if they are to use the District's network. The student handbook is posted on the website and is issued to every student at registration and upon entering the school district. New employees are issued the agreement upon employment.

This policy governs the acceptable use of district technology by all users. User access is a privilege with no entitlement guaranteed and access may be revoked at any time at the discretion of eStem administrators. As an administrative authority for the eStem Public Charter School District, the Board is authorized to make CIPA certifications. This policy may be revised at any time by a majority vote of the Board or as state and federal law dictates.

Purpose

The Internet and its vast access to information provide an enormous resource for education and assistance in our goal to increase student achievement and professional development. The computer, computer related devices and software are valuable tools in the efforts of a successful educational process. This, combined with the need of creating and maintaining a safe educational environment requires the need for an adequate acceptable use policy for the eStem Public Charter School District.

eStem Public Charter School District Responsibilities

eStem Public Charter School District will take the following steps to assure proper use of the computer network:

- Teachers and/or support staff will supervise Internet sessions while in the classroom or computer lab.
- Filtering and network management software will be used to limit the risk of inappropriate material being accessed by students and other users. These programs monitor 'HTTP' traffic and block inappropriate content based on an expanding database of sites and information related to trends in best practices, known information, and constant system monitoring.
- Teachers will be provided with training and resources to understand the current trends and policies of Internet usage and safety practices.
- Staff will be required to instruct students on the proper use of Internet resources enabling them to make appropriate choices for appropriate content and its use
- Current virus protection and anti-Spyware software will be used as an added layer of protection for users against malicious software that may otherwise expose students and other users to inappropriate or harmful material.

Definitions

Internet: A network of computer networks. Networks on the internet are connected so they can communicate with each other regardless of their manufacturer.

Mobile Devices: Portable handheld computing device that mimics desktop computers in their function. These devices include Wi-Fi capability and may or may not have a touch screen, keyboard or cellular data connections. Users may access Internet content, email stream video and have access to take and or post electronic photos/videos. Devices include, but are not limited to, tablet devices, smartphone and e-readers.

Asynchronous Communication: A type of communication protocol that allows an amount of time to pass between communications. This communication includes, but is not limited to, emails, discussion forums, weblogs (blogs) and social networking sites (any Social media)

Synchronous Communication: A type of communication protocol that allows users to communicate instantly in real time. This communication includes, but is not limited to, chat rooms, instant messages, voice over IP and certain 3D environments.

Users

- A. Users are defined as authorized personnel as defined by the district to operate computers, computer-related devices and other technology related equipment within the boundary of use of the District.
- B. Users are described, but not limited to, administrators, teachers, students, substitutes, long-term substitutes, parents, support staff and district-authorized guests who are defined as vendors and presenters.
- C. The amount of access to the district equipment and network for each of these uses will be determined by function and need by the appropriate technology personnel.
- D. Any user under the age of 17 is considered a minor as determined by state and federal law.

Social Networks: Websites that are “virtual communities” of people with common

interest who are invited to share likes and dislikes on any particular subject, cause and/or theme or to just have an online meeting place for extemporaneous discussion. Members create accounts that consist of biographical information including, but not limited to, birthdays, gender, photos, occupation and email addresses. Communication consists of both synchronous and asynchronous communication such as chat, voice over IP, blogs, discussion forums, and video.

Mobile Apps (Mobile Applications): Programs specifically designed to run on mobile devices that at times mimic desktop computer programs. These applications may or may not need Internet access. These programs range from games to productivity applications.

Malware: Various types of computer programs that use various techniques to duplicate themselves and travel between computers which can cause serious damage to computers such as erasing important data or disrupting a system or network. These programs may collect personal information about the user for exploitation which may or may not be for financial gain.

CIPA-Children's Internet Protection Act

Under CIPA, schools and libraries subject to CIPA do not receive the discounts offered by the "E-Rate" program (discounts that make access to the Internet affordable to schools and libraries) unless they certify that they have certain Internet safety measures in place. These include measures to block or filter pictures that: (a) are obscene, (b) contain child pornography, or (c) when computers with Internet access are used by minors, are harmful to minors.

Schools subject to CIPA are required to adopt a policy to monitor online activities of minors.

Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt a policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them. CIPA does not require the tracking of Internet use by minors or adults.

FERPA- Family Educational Rights Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) passed in 1998 to protect software copyright holders, as well as owners of other digital media, from illegal copying of their products. Among other things, the DMCA prohibits circumventing commercial software's anti-copying or anti-piracy measures; prohibits the "manufacture, sale or distribution" of programs or devices used to circumvent software's anti-piracy measures, except when these items or programs are used to test anti-piracy measures or to conduct research on encryption; allows nonprofit libraries, archives and educational institutions to make copies of software that is otherwise protected by anti-piracy measures; requires Internet service providers to remove software programs posted to users' websites if the programs appear to be posted in violation of copyright. The fair use provisions of the Copyright Act are still available to individuals charged with copyright infringement under the DMCA.

Fair Use: One of the rights accorded to the owner of copyright is the right to reproduce or to authorize others to reproduce the work in copies of phone records. This right is subject to certain limitations found in sections 107 through 118 of the copyright law (title 17, US Code). One of the more important limitations is the doctrine of "fair use". The doctrine of fair use has developed through a substantial number of court decisions over the years and has been codified in section 107 of the copyright law.

Section 107 contains a list of the various purposes for which the reproduction of a particular work may be considered fair use for the purpose of researching and teaching.

Illegal Behavior: Defined as use that violates all applicable laws, municipal ordinances, state and federal law which includes but are not limited to gaining unauthorized access to district computers, systems and networks or attempting to gain unauthorized access, copyright violations, distribution of pornography or obscene material, the creation and distribution of malicious code (malware) and theft either of district or personal devices while on district property. Other types of illegal violations include, but are not limited to:

Flaming: To send an e-mail message that is abusive or that offends. Typing in all capital letters is considered shouting and may be offensive.

Spamming: To send an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people. An example might be a chain letter asking a user to forward the message to x number of people.

Virus: A computer program that uses various techniques to duplicate itself and travel between computers. Viruses can cause serious damage to computers such as erasing important data or crashing a system.

Spyware: This is a program designed to collect personal information about the user for exploitation which may or may not be for financial gain.

Cyber bullying: The intentional act of posting, transmitting or the displaying of embarrassing, defaming and/or untrue information about a particular person or persons for the purpose of causing intimidation, ridicule, threat, harassment, embarrassment and/or an act of violence toward a student or public school employee. This behavior substantially disrupts the educational process within the classroom, overall school climate and the orderly operation of the school and the educational environment. The information is communicated through all forms of electronic communication including but not limited to text messaging, weblogs, podcast and social networking sites such as but not limited to Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube.

General Requirements

1. Mobile devices, computers, computer related devices, telephonic and

other communication devices, and networks are provided for conducting school business and for the educational development of students and staff. They are not intended for private or personal use. Internet and other network communications are being monitored for effective use and resource management. Users and their immediate supervisors may be notified of suspected abuse of network resources.

2. Users of the network are responsible for following local, state, federal and international laws. This includes copyright laws.
3. Users are responsible for the use of their own account, including security and proper use. Users are not to allow others to use their username and password. Access to other user profiles is reserved for authorized network administrators. Users assigned user names and passwords are responsible for safeguarding this information, and will be held accountable for the consequences of intentional or negligent disclosure of this information. This includes posting account/passwords and access codes in public view or giving unauthorized users such as but not limited to students, parents or vendors access to the district network resources. Users in violation will be held accountable for the consequences of intentional or negligent disclosure of this information.
4. Users are responsible for respecting the policies of other networks, which they access, and for adhering to those policies.
5. Users may not deliberately damage or disrupt a network, computer or computer related device, telephonic or other communication device, and/or removable media that they have been given authorized use. System components such as hardware, software, or other property will not be removed, destroyed, modified, or abused. Examples of activities that are prohibited: altering security codes or passwords and introducing computer viruses and/or malware, removing memory chips, hard drives and other hardware components.
6. No eStem network, phone, or computer system will be used to terrorize, intimidate, threaten, or harass.
7. Users will not use the district network for financial or commercial gain or to advertise, promote or endorse products or personal services.
8. The district will not be responsible for financial obligations or legal infractions arising from unauthorized use of the system.
9. Network resources, information, Internet and intranet traffic, folders, drives,

mobile devices and district provided removable media and electronic mail have no expectation of privacy. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to the discovery that a violation of a law or regulation has occurred. If there is reasonable suspicion that a law or regulation has been violated, an investigation will be conducted, and items seized and searched. Any suspected illegal activity in the district which may or may not be computer or network related in nature may result in the search of said resources.

10. Long-term substitutes may be granted network privileges at the request of the director. If granted, the long-term substitute must sign the Employee Use Agreement.
11. Users may not store student or employee personal data on their personal computing, mobile or storage device.
12. Users are restricted from viewing, downloading or sharing pornographic, sexually explicit, obscene and/or inappropriate content using personal mobile devices in the presence of other users, on school district property and/or while performing school district business.
13. Users may not gain unauthorized access or attempt to gain unauthorized access to other users' accounts, computers or devices.

Hardware

1. Only authorized individuals will install, service, or maintain district-owned hardware.
2. All personal hardware such as media players of any kind and their content are subject to eStem policies that refer to electronic communication devices.

Software

1. Only software that is authorized by the district may be installed on computer hardware.
2. Only authorized individuals will install software on district equipment. The District reserves the right to remove any software that violates district software policy, software that is deemed illegal or inappropriate, or degrades network performance.
3. Authorized users of student and employee data will take proper care to guard the privacy of such information. Any violation of privacy to such information should be reported to authorities immediately.
4. Mobile Apps that are to be purchased for use in the classroom must be

submitted for software approval before purchase.

Internet

1. The primary purpose of providing Internet access to employees is for conducting official business. The purpose of providing Internet access to students is for educational benefit only.
2. Students are not allowed to access the Internet, until both the student and parent sign the Student Use Agreement. Students and parents will sign the AUP each time a student enrolls at a new campus.
3. Email accounts will be issued to district employees. Elementary students will be issued individual email accounts through eStem Google Apps for Education. These email accounts are used only within the LRSTEM domain unless specifically requested by a director.
4. Users will not post personal contact information about themselves or other people.
5. Users are not allowed to intentionally transmit or receive obscene, pornographic, or inappropriately suggestive content or language in the form of images, files or multimedia files types through any synchronous or asynchronous communication device or software used in the district network. Use of the system to access, store or distribute obscene, pornographic, or inappropriately suggestive material is prohibited.
6. All users should observe network etiquette. Users are expected to be polite and use appropriate language. Using vulgar or profane language is not appropriate. Engaging in flaming or spamming is not appropriate. Students are prohibited from using chat rooms and instant messenger services. Participation in cyber bullying (original, secondary, or distributed), is prohibited.
7. Use of the system to access, store, or distribute obscene, pornographic, or inappropriately suggestive material is prohibited.
8. Use of the district network and computers to access, store, or distribute materials or sites that are considered racially derogatory or "hate sites" is strictly prohibited.
9. Students are to report immediately any inappropriate material they access to a teacher or other staff person. Students are not to share inappropriate materials or their sources with other students.
10. Users who receive files that contain personal information about employees or students either by intentional or unintentional means must maintain all

privacy regulations as stated in this policy. They may not copy, forward or distribute such information.

11. Use of the district's networks and computers to access, store or distribute materials or sites that are considered racially derogatory, homophobic or "hate sites" is strictly prohibited.
12. Teachers and staff should report any inappropriate, illegal behavior or misuse of district devices, systems or networks immediately to their supervisors.

Social Networks

All users must maintain a high level of respect when using social media as a charter school employee or as students. Educators should follow the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators when dealing with students in online activities. See Standards of Professional Conduct 5.01.

A. Use of Personal Electronic Devices

eStem will grant teachers and students permission to bring a personal web-enabled device to campus for academic use. Student owned devices must be a laptop or tablet. No smartphones will be allowed. Student use of personally owned devices will be granted only after a BYOD form has been submitted by a parent or guardian. All policies stated in this document apply to personal devices used on eStem campuses.

Students who use personally owned web-enabled devices will have access to wireless Internet but will not have access to any charter school drives such as network folders. Network drives can only be accessed via charter school machines.

eStem is not liable for any loss or damage incurred, nor will eStem staff offer technical support or load software on any personal device. All users are responsible for the security of any equipment brought with them to school. All laptops and other devices should contain proper antivirus software as well as fully patched operating systems and should be clearly marked with the user's name for identification purposes.

Users will not loan their device to someone else. The user is responsible for the content contained on the device regardless of how it originated. All devices brought onto an eStem campus are subject to search and seizure.

Improper use will result in the loss of privileges for such devices.

eStem is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personally owned devices.

B. Supervision of the Computer Network

1. Coordination of the district computer network is under the supervision of the school director or designee. The principal or designee will be responsible for coordination of activities related to the network.
2. The principal or designee will establish a system that ensures that all employees and students receive instruction in district policies that address computer systems and networks. The principal or designee will also establish a process for supervision of students using the system and will maintain user and account agreements.
3. The director or designee will establish a process for reviewing these regulations with employees annually. All employees must sign the Employee Use Agreement annually. The students will sign the Acceptable Use Policy, once in Elementary, Middle, and Senior High. Parent's signature will be required even when a student transfers to another school.
4. Monitoring for proper use and/or violations of any type are performed through, but not limited to, teacher observations, filtering and network management software.

Social Networks: All users must maintain a high level of respect when using social media as a district employee or as students. Educators should follow the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators when dealing with students in online activities. See Standards of Professional Conduct 5.01.

C. Penalties for Non-Permitted Activities

1. Any user who violates this policy and accompanying regulations is subject to loss of computer, phone, and network privileges as well as other district disciplinary actions.

Students will have access to desktop computers, laptop computers, and other types of technology. If a student intentionally damages technology that is the property of eStem

Public Charter School, the student and parent will be responsible for the cost of the damages. *Intentional damage includes, but is not limited to:

- removing keys
- applying pressure to the screen to cause damage
- hinge covers removed
- left on floor and stepped on

Negligent or intentional damage will result in the student/parent assuming the financial responsibility based on the current market value.

Damage Fees(Prices are subject to change):

- Broken Screen – \$65.00
- Broken Keyboard – \$30.00
- Shell/Frame Damage – \$75.00
- Full Replacement – \$260.00

Insurance

If you want to protect yourself in the event that your child's device is lost, stolen, or accidentally damaged, you can participate in our School Device Coverage (SDC) Program. To obtain coverage, visit schooldevicecoverage.com and click on 'Sign Up'. More information regarding insurance will be provided by your school.

Google Apps for Education

Google Apps for Education is available as a tool for our students and staff. It is an online web service and may be used from any computer with internet access. This education version of Google Apps provides a self-contained environment for students and staff to collaborate and share information and to publish some resources publicly. The features and options available will be based on grade level, student awareness, requirements for coursework and formal permission from parents/guardians. By signing the student handbook, a parent is agreeing to allow his or her student to have a Google Apps for Education account that can be used on any computer connected to the internet. The parent understands that the account is for educational purposes and use must meet the expectations outlined below. Any misuse of the account will be handled exactly as if it were done in school on a district account.

If a parent does not agree to his or her child using the Google Apps for Education resources, please submit that request in writing to the school director.

Student accounts may include a variety of Google Apps such as (but not limited to) Google classroom, email, shared documents, websites and blogs. Document sharing and email, when activated, can only be shared within the district domain.

Student Responsibility

Along with opportunity comes responsibility. Student use of Google Apps follows the expectations and disciplinary action outlined in the District's Acceptable Use Policy and Student Handbook which can be reviewed on the District website. Although the Apps can be accessed outside of school, any use of the account on the LRstem.com domain is bound by the same rules and guidelines as use of a eStem student account on the eStem network. It must always be used for educational purposes just as if the student were in school.

School Responsibility

Google Apps student accounts created by the school district will be managed based on parent permission and requirements for use in classes. Internet safety education will be included as part of introducing new web based tools. In school, teacher supervision and state provided content filters are used to prevent access to inappropriate content and to ensure that student use of digital tools follows the District Acceptable Use Policy referenced above. District school administrators and teachers will use GoGuardian to supervise students' use of network hardware. Alerts from GoGuardian will alert administrators, teachers, and staff of inappropriate use. Student accounts can be accessed by domain administrators at any time.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Parents assume responsibility for the supervision of Internet use outside of school. Parents are encouraged to discuss family rules and expectations for using Internet-based tools, including Google Apps for Education. Parents are encouraged to report any evidence of cyber-bullying or other inappropriate use to the school.

Photo/Video Use

eStem Public Charter Schools may want to photograph by still camera, movie camera or video camera for use or for potential use on www.estemschools.org, eStem eNews,

eStem social media, or other medium; or by news gathering organizations, including television stations, radio stations, newspapers, and other video or print production representatives authorized by eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc., may use your child's name, voice likeness in any and all promotional material that benefits eStem Elementary, Junior High, High Public Charter School or eStem Public Charter Schools, Inc. Your child will NOT receive a publicity fee for publication of his/her photograph or use of video.

Click [here](#) for a summary of our 22-23 Parent & Family Engagement Plan.

Disclaimer: The Student Handbook provides you with important information about eStem Public Charter Schools. It also serves as a reference for looking up critical policies and procedures that will affect you and your child during your time at the school. These policies, procedures, and benefits as described in the handbook do not constitute a contract or implied contract with students or personnel. The school administration reserves the right to interpret, revise, amend, or withdraw them at its discretion. Changes to the school policies in the handbook will be communicated to parents during the school year.

eStem Public Charter School LEARNING COMPACT

Student's Name: _____

Grade _____

STUDENT AGREEMENT

It is important that I work to the best of my ability; therefore, I shall do the following:

- Attend school regularly and be on time for all classes
- Come to school each day with the necessary supplies and tools for learning
- Complete and turn in all class assignments
- Keep hands and feet to self at all times
- Conform to rules of student conduct
- Conform to rules of dress code
- Respect school property and materials

Student Signature _____

Date _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

I want my child(ren) to achieve; therefore, I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

- See that my child(ren) are punctual and attend school regularly
- Pick-up my child(ren) at the designated time daily
- Demonstrate respect for all staff members.
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline
- Attend required academic and disciplinary conferences
- Stay aware of what my child(ren) is learning. Read the weekly newsletter and monthly calendar to stay aware of what is happening at school
- Notify the office if there are changes in my address, email, and/or contact numbers

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date**_____

TEACHER AGREEMENT

It is important that students achieve; therefore, I shall do the following:

- Comply with policies and procedures of the school
- Provide relevant, challenging assignments for students
- Provide necessary assistance to parents so that they can help with assignments
- Encourage students and parents by regularly (at least weekly) posting student progress to eSchool
- Use special activities in the classroom to make learning meaningful and interesting
- Work proactively with parents to maintain classroom discipline and procedures
- Demonstrate professionalism in all aspect of my role as an educator

Teacher Signature _____ **Date**_____

ADMINISTRATOR AGREEMENT

We support this partnership on behalf of the student; therefore, I will do the following:

- Provide an environment that allows for positive communication between the school and the home
- Encourage teachers to regularly provide instruction that is rigorous and will challenge the student to think
- Encourage teachers, students, and parents to be involved in the learning process
- Adhere to the expectations as outlined in both the school and employee handbook
- Monitor and adapt systems of structure that provide a safe and supportive learning environment for students and staff.

Director Signature: _____ **Date**_____