

**Phalen Leadership Academy  
Student Handbook**

**Expectation of Excellence In Achievement,  
Attitude, Actions**



**Scholar Handbook**

**2016-2017**

## **Welcome**

On behalf of the administration, teachers, and staff of Phalen Leadership Academy (“PLA Network”), we welcome you to our network of schools. At the PLA Network, we believe that education is a partnership that thrives only with the support of every staff member, the involvement of every parent, and the commitment of every scholar.

We also understand that communication is of utmost importance in establishing a successful home-school partnership. In an effort to inform and educate our school community, we have created this handbook to inform you on important policies and practices of the PLA Network. Please take time to review and familiarize yourself with the information contained within the handbook, as it will serve as a valuable reference in seeking answers to commonly asked questions. Should you have a question or concern that is not addressed in this handbook, please contact the school Principal.

As the school year progresses, additional or updated information about school policies and procedures will be provided through e-newsletters and posted on the school website. Each family will be provided with a hard copy version of this handbook upon enrollment and an updated version each fall semester. Additional copies may be downloaded and printed from the Phalen Leadership Academies website. We look forward to a very rewarding and engaging school year.

## **A. Mission Of The PLA Network**

The mission of the PLA Network is to ensure that each of our scholars meet high academic and social standards, and thrive as leaders at home, in their communities, and in the world.

## **Guiding Principles Of The PLA Network**

- PLA has adopted a scholar-focused, learning-oriented environment.
- PLA will focus on the academic education of scholars within a safe environment.
- Our learning environment will be relevant and engaging. PLA will focus on assisting students in developing the following skills: cooperation, teamwork, research, problem solving, ability to work independently, and communication using technology effectively.
- PLA is committed to accountability and having meaningful metrics of success that demonstrate continuous improvement.
- PLA will provide Scholars with differentiated, personalized, rigorous opportunities for learning with an emphasis on developing 21st Century Skills.
- PLA will empower Scholars to shape and manage their future by encouraging prudent and intellectual risk-taking.
- PLA will work to develop processes to become knowledgeable of

stakeholders' needs and expectations.

- PLA will support parents and the community in their roles in the character education, moral education, and social education of Scholars.
- PLA will provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of a total person, including physical, recreational, civic, and social activities.

## **B. General Information**

### **Enrollment**

All scholars are eligible to enroll in a PLA Network school, as long as there are seats available per our charter with the Indiana Charter School Board ("ICSB"), or they reside in the attendance area of our innovation school. We welcome scholars who will be entering grades K-6. All interested scholars must submit an application form. An adult who is a non-custodial parent or does not have a legal guardianship and wishes to enroll a scholar in a PLA Network school must contact the School Enrollment Coordinator or designee for assistance to complete the enrollment process.

Parents must provide the following documents to the school during the enrollment process:

- Birth certificate,
- Court documents specifying parental rights, responsibilities or custody (if appropriate),
- Proof of Indiana residency, and
- Proof of immunizations.

### **Note: The McKinney-Vento Act**

The McKinney-Vento Act protects scholars from discrimination based on their lack of a permanent residence. Homeless Scholars are eligible to receive a variety of services including: transportation services, free meals under the school nutrition programs, limited English proficiency class, gifted and talented programs, and special education services based on a scholar's eligibility. **Homeless Scholars will not be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency. Please consult the McKinney-Vento Act Liaison if you need assistance.**

**The McKinney-Vento Act Liaisons for the PLA Network are the Principals.**

### **EEO Statement**

PLA Network does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability or national origin in any employment and/or educational opportunity. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to unlawful discrimination in any program or activity for which the PLA Network Board is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. PLA Network values diversity and the benefits of different perspectives and backgrounds.

Complaints of Discrimination should be directed to [humanresources@phalenacademies.org](mailto:humanresources@phalenacademies.org).

### **Scholar Attendance**

It is imperative that Scholars be in attendance each school day. Learning is a result of active participation in classroom and other school activities that cannot be replaced by individual study. Scholar attendance hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Scholars arriving after 8:00 a.m., leaving early, or being signed out for a portion of the instructional day that is less than 1/2 day, will be marked as tardy. Scholar truancy may trigger a Project Attend referral in as few as 2 instances. Check the school website or contact the Principal to get the school's protocol for reporting absences and checking in late.

PLA strives for a 95% attendance rate. To meet this expectation, no scholar should exceed 9 absences per year. Unless previously notified of extenuating circumstances necessitating the frequent absences, the school may contact the parent once a scholar reaches the midway point of 5 absences. This communication will be by phone or letter. If your child has a chronic illness, we encourage you to contact the school nurse to avoid any attendance issues.

- **Missed School Work Due To Absence**

Following a return from absence, Scholars will have time equal to the length of their absence to complete their missed work. Please do not request homework in anticipation of a planned absence. If the request for homework is due to an illness, the request must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. Parents should call the Principal's office to request homework and to pick up books and materials at the end of the day.

### **Intent to Return/Continuing Scholars**

Each spring, parents/guardians of current scholars must complete 'intent to return' paperwork and/or procedures to register their scholar for following school year. It is believed that families who do not submit intent to return materials will be considered to have withdrawn from the Phalen Leadership Academies.

### **Withdrawing From School**

Parents must contact the Front Office Administrator, if they choose to withdraw their child from school. If a student is withdrawing to homeschool, form 1005 must be completed at the school. For information or questions regarding the Home School Enrollment Process, please contact the Indiana Department of Education's Home School Liaison at 317-232-9111.

### **Classroom Assignments**

The principal assigns scholars to his or her classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal. Changes to an assignment of a scholar with an Individual Education Program (IEP/Special Education) can only occur through a case conference committee.

## **Dress Code**

**See policy in Appendix.**

## **Early Dismissal**

No scholar will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without parental permission. No scholar will be released to a person other than a custodial parent without a permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or other legal authorization. The person picking up the scholar should have photo identification and present it to the school.

## **Eligibility For Extracurricular Activities**

Most activities conducted at PLA Network schools are in large part curricular. These activities are connected to the curriculum either academically or in the development of social or physical skills. Thus, it is important to the scholar's total development that he/she participates in these offered activities. If in the rare instance a scholar presents a discipline problem or disrupts an activity to the detriment of other scholars, the principal with input from the teacher and parent, will decide whether to deny that scholar the opportunity to participate in certain school activities.

## **Recess**

The Scholar's school day may include a recess time. Typically, scholars go outdoors for recess period. Inclement weather, excessively cold wind chill, or unsuitable playground conditions may result in an indoor recess period. The Principal will determine whether recess will be inside or outside on a daily basis, keeping the health and safety of scholars in mind. PLA recognizes that a scholar may occasionally be well enough to attend school, but because of a recent illness or health condition is unable to go outside to play. A note from a parent will excuse a scholar from outside recess activities on a daily basis. Missing outside recess for more than five days at one time requires a doctor's excuse. It is the responsibility of the Principal to decide where an excused scholar will be assigned during the time the scholar's class is outdoors.

## **Physical Education**

Physical Education classes have special dress requirements. Scholar dress for PE class must allow safe performance of all physical education activities. Every scholar must wear flat-soled athletic shoes that are not slip-ons. A doctor's statement will be required for three consecutive absences from physical education class in one grading period. A note from a parent will excuse a single week's absence from participation in physical education class.

## **Scholar Fundraising**

The Principal will approve all fundraising activities for the school. Scholars are not permitted to sell items for personal gain or for organizations that are not affiliated with the school on school property.

### **Emergency Closings and Delays**

In the event of severe or inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, PLA may be closed or start at a later time. Information regarding school closing, delayed starting time, or early dismissal will be provided via our School Messenger system (phone and text alerts). Additionally, the PLA website will list delays and closings ([www.phalenacademies.org](http://www.phalenacademies.org)). If weather closes the school, then all extracurricular activities including athletic practices and games will be canceled.

### **Address Change**

All scholars must contact PLA if he or she changes his or her address. Parents and/or scholars must obtain change of address information from the principal's office or they can obtain the documents online at [www.phalenacademies.org](http://www.phalenacademies.org).

### **Board Meetings**

A Board of Directors governs PLA charter schools. These board meetings are subject to Indiana's Open Door Law. Information regarding Board meetings will be posted on the school website and in specified locations throughout the school, within 48 hours of the meeting. The Board of Directors approves and authorizes all items in the school handbook.

### **The Pledge Of Allegiance**

Each day, scholars will be provided with an opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. A scholar is exempt from participation in the Pledge of Allegiance and may not be required to participate in the Pledge if the scholar chooses not to participate or if the scholar's parent chooses to have the scholar not participate. PLA will also provide a daily moment of silence in each classroom.

### **Visiting Our School**

We welcome our parents and community to visit our school and take part in the education of your scholar. However, we do ask that you help us in carrying out our two main objectives: making sure our school is safe for all scholars and making sure all scholars are able to learn by not disrupting instructional time. All visitors are to report directly to our main office when visiting our school and should follow our PLA school expectations such as no smoking on school grounds, no profanity, no threats or intimidating behavior, no destruction to property, and no unlawful behavior. PLA Expectations are posted inside our main entrance. In order to set up a meeting with the building leaders, teachers, or other staff, please call the office to set up an appointment, unless you have an emergency. This will ensure that we will be available when you arrive. We do not practice the release of teachers during instructional time because it is not in the best interest of all scholars. Thank you for your interest in Phalen Leadership Academies.

All visitors are expected to check in at the office to obtain a visitor's tag. Please do not be offended if you are stopped if you do not have a visible visitor's tag displayed, as our Scholars' safety and security are of the utmost concern for all of us. Please consult the PLA Network Visitor's Policy regarding the steps for scheduling and/or obtaining permission to visit the school and classrooms. **The policy is located in the Appendix of this handbook.**

### **Loitering**

PLA staff will supervise scholars throughout the day. Scholars may not loiter on school campus. Scholars must leave school grounds within 15-20 minutes of dismissal, unless staying on campus for an approved and supervised event or purpose. Scholars staying after school for an extracurricular activity must be under the sponsor's supervision at all times.

### **Confidentiality**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits the PLA Network from disclosing personally identifiable information ("PII") from scholars' education records without the consent of a parent or eligible scholar. An eligible scholar is a scholar who has reached the age of eighteen (18).

Parents or eligible scholars have the right to inspect and review the scholar's records and request that PLA correct records which they believe to be inaccurate. PLA must obtain written permission from the parent or eligible scholar in order to release any information from the scholar's record. PLA may disclose records without consent under the following conditions.

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

PLA may also disclose, without consent, information designated as "directory information", which includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors, awards, dates of attendance, scholar photos, and scholar work displayed at the discretion of the teacher. **Please read and sign the Notification of Rights under FERPA found in the Appendix and return to the Principal.**

### **School Fee Waivers**

The parent of a scholar or an emancipated minor who is enrolled at PLA, and who meets the financial eligibility standard established by IC 20-33-5-2 may not be required to pay the fees for curricular materials, supplies, or other required class fees. If PLA pays the fees, it may seek reimbursement from the Department of Education. If the reimbursement amount is less than the fee assessed for the curricular material, PLA may request that the parent or emancipated minor pay the balance of the amount.

### **Cafeteria/Food Service**

Every full day of school, breakfast and lunch will be available for scholars to purchase in the cafeteria. Scholars will be allowed to enter the cafeteria at 7:45 a.m. for breakfast. All students will have an account number issued to him/her and will use that number in the cafeteria line. For scholars with paid or reduced lunches, the scholar prepays on his/her account and will be charged accordingly. Scholars who qualify for free lunch will use his/her account number to assist in record keeping for the Federal School Nutrition Program. Scholars with special dietary needs must provide a medical statement to substantiate the need for a food substitution. The medical statement must include an identification of the medical or other special dietary condition that restricts the scholar's diet, the food or foods to be omitted from the scholar's diet; and the food or choice of foods to be substituted. Medical statements for diet restrictions must be renewed every year to reflect the current dietary needs of the scholar. PLA bars scholars from bringing fast food for school lunch or events.

### **Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drills**

Phalen Leadership Academies complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to scholars by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building. Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures prescribed by the state. The alarm system for tornadoes is different from the alarm system for fires, and scholars will be informed of the difference. Safety drills will be conducted once per school year. Teachers will provide specific instruction on the appropriate procedure to follow in situations where scholars must be secured in the building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

### **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

PTO events are a major part of the "life" of our schools. They provide a variety of special opportunities for our scholars and your participation is extremely important. Volunteers are needed in different capacities throughout the year, many of which occur outside the school day. Please refer to PLA Network's website or main office for information regarding the PTO, meetings times, and related activities.



### **Scholar Council**

The Scholar Council provides service to the school, increases school spirit, and promotes better relationships and understanding between administration, faculty, and scholars. The Scholar Council also introduces new ideas for policies and activities with the school and discusses problems arising within the school community. Scholar council members represent their classes by bringing ideas, suggestion, comments, and questions to the Council and taking information, ideas, and plans back to their classmates. The Scholar Council represents the scholar body as a whole by presenting ideas, suggestions, and comments to the school faculty and administration.

### **Social Health Program/Body and Personal Safety Program**

A Social Health Program is offered for 4th and 5th grade scholars. Scholars are shown appropriate films for their group followed by a question and answer period. Parent/Guardian previews of all films are held before the films are shown to scholars. Any parent/guardian who does not wish his/her scholar to participate in this program may contact the Principal's office to make alternate arrangements. PLA also provides the Body and Personal Safety program. It is a comprehensive Kindergarten through 5th grade program that will help our scholars to develop the ability to judge between appropriate and inappropriate touch, learn assertive self-protection skills and know whom they can ask for help.

### **Child Abuse/Neglect**

PLA Network school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately when they have reasonable cause to believe that a child who is 17 years of age or younger and known to them in a professional or official capacity has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed (physically, sexually, or through neglect) and that a caregiver either committed the harm or should have taken steps to prevent the child from harm.

### **Animals**

Live animals are permitted on school property only with advance permission of the classroom teacher and Principal. For reasons of safety, animals must be caged and may not be transported on a school bus. For health reasons of individual scholars and teachers, some classrooms may not be able to have animal visitors.

### **Birthday Recognition**

In order to provide optimum learning time, classroom birthday snacks/parties are not permitted at school. Additionally, in order to protect the feelings of all classmates, Scholars are not permitted to pass out any invitations at school even if inviting the entire class. Additionally, PLA is not permitted to release scholar addresses or phone numbers.

### **Classroom Parties**

Each elementary classroom is allowed two parties each year. Teachers may work

with parent support groups to plan fall, winter or spring parties. The Principal must approve all other parties. Older and younger siblings may not attend parties. All food items brought in to school must meet the minimal nutritional value policy as established by the federal guidelines. All food items distributed to scholars must have manufacturers' labels that list nutritional value. No home baked or homemade food products may be distributed to scholars.

### **Flowers and Balloons**

Please do not have flowers or balloons delivered to school for birthdays or special holidays.

### **Lost and Found**

Scholars who find lost articles should turn them in to the Principal's office. Scholars who have lost items should check with the Principal's office to see if their missing items are in the Principal's office.

### **Library/Media Center**

The library has books and magazines for study and recreational reading. It is open for use during the entire school day. Scholars must return books and other items checked out from the media center on time. If a scholar loses a book, he/she must pay for it. If a book is damaged while checked out to a scholar, he/she must pay for its repair or replacement.

### **Cellular Phones and Devices**

Scholars are permitted to have cell phones in school, but they must always be muted and out of sight. During school hours, cell phones can be used to make or receive calls only when requested by the teacher for educational purposes or in school declared emergencies. Any other use of a cell phone during school hours shall result in disciplinary action. At no time can these phones, or particularly camera phones be used to invade the privacy of another scholar. It should be noted that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damage to cell phones.

### **C. Transportation**

PLA Network has a variety of transportation options. Not all options are available at each school. Check with your school administrator regarding which options are available at your school.

### **Parental Transportation or Walking To School**

Scholars who are dropped off or are walking to school should arrive between 7:45-8:00 a.m. Scholars are expected to respect the property of others when walking to and from school keeping in mind that school rules apply.

### **Bicycles/Scooters/Roller Blades/Skateboards/Heelys**

Helmets have been shown to reduce head injuries. Therefore, as a part of its overall safety program, PLA requires scholars who ride bikes or scooters to wear a helmet. Scholars who do not have on a helmet while riding bikes or scooters on school

property may have their bike or scooter privileges suspended for a period of time to be determined by the principal. Bicycles/scooters shall be parked in the bike rack and locked. Skateboards may not be brought on school property. Heelys or other wheeled shoes are not permitted on school property.

### **School Bus Conduct and Safety Expectations**

The Indianapolis Public School Corporation (IPS) provides bus transportation for some affiliated network schools. Riders must reside within the school attendance boundary to ride IPS buses. All riders must comply with IPS policies and procedures for riding the school bus. Any violation of IPS transportation policies or misconduct that jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of the scholars riding the bus may result in the scholar being denied the privilege of riding the school bus. When this happens, school attendance is still required and parents must make other arrangements for their children to get to school.

### **Field Trips**

PLA may use bus transportation for field trips and during such trips scholars must comply with the following bus safety and conduct rules:

- Go immediately to assigned seat and remain in the seat for the entire bus trip.
- Remain seated and facing forward while the bus is in motion.
- Talk in a quiet reasonable tone of voice. Loud, boisterous, profane language or indecent conduct will not be tolerated.
- Scholars will not be allowed to tease, scuffle, trip, hold, hit or use their hands, feet or body in any objectionable manner.
- Throwing items on the bus will not be tolerated.
- Food, drink, candy and gum are prohibited on the bus.
- Phones and electronic games are prohibited.
- Windows are not to be lowered below the designated mark and only with the driver's approval. Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus at all times.
- Keep aisle of bus clear of all items, feet, legs, book bags, instruments etc.
- Scholars shall be respectful of the bus driver and follow all directions given by the driver.
- Treat all school property with respect.
- Observe the same conduct rules as expected in the classroom.
- Scholars must be completely quiet when bus stops at all railroad crossings.
- Girls sit with girls and boys sit with boys.
- Skateboards, scooters, etc. are prohibited on buses.

## **D. Health Services**

### **School Clinic**

A credentialed nurse staffs the school clinic. The nurse treats all injured or ill scholars according to industry health services protocols and guidelines. If a scholar should become ill during the day, he/she should notify the teacher. He/she will be given a pass to go to the clinic. Scholars must go to the clinic to be evaluated by the

nurse. The nurse will determine whether the scholar may return to class after a brief rest period or should be sent home with his or her parents. The nurse may bar the scholar from school if the scholar has a communicable disease that is transmissible through normal contact and poses a substantial threat to the health and safety of the school community.

The general guidelines for sending ill scholars home are: temperature above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or serious injury or extreme pain. A scholar must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours in order to return to school. A scholar must also be free of vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours in order to return to school. Parents will be contacted whenever the scholar's injury or illness is such that continued attendance at school is not possible. The school nurse must release all scholars who leave school, during school hours, due to illness.

Scholars may not contact parents and ask to be picked up without the nurse's permission. If the scholar does contact his or her parent and asks to be picked up without the nurse approval, the absence will be unexcused. If a parent cannot be reached, the school nurse or office personnel will call the persons listed as emergency contacts and request that they pick up the child. No scholar will be released from school without proper parental permission.

Parents are encouraged to keep the school informed of the status of the scholar's health by communicating with the school nurse. It is crucial that any scholar allergies to medications and various foods are communicated by the parent to the school nurse. Food allergies require a doctors' statement for special dietary needs through the cafeteria service.

### **Immunization Requirements**

All scholars are required to have the statutorily mandated immunizations or to have an authorized waiver. If a scholar does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the Principal may remove the scholar or require compliance by a set deadline. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the school's nurse. Each scholar shall provide proof of their immunizations that complies with the rules set forth by the Indiana State Board of Health pertaining to adequate dosage and age. A full listing of immunizations can be found at:

<http://www.state.in.us/isdh/files/2015 - 2016 School Reqs Chart WR 9029.pdf>

### **Injury and Illness**

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the Principal. If a minor injury, the scholar will be treated by the school nurse and returned to class. If additional medical attention is required, the school nurse will follow the school's emergency procedures, and contact the scholar's parents. An accident report will be completed for significant head injuries and other serious injuries that occur in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or any other events sponsored by the school.

These incidents must be reported immediately to the person in charge followed by communication to the principal's office and school nurse for 24-hour follow-up of the injury. Parents will be notified of these injuries. A copy of the report will be kept in the school clinic file. Any scholar returning to school with crutches must obtain written permission from a physician stating that the scholar is allowed to use crutches in school. The note should indicate how long the scholar will need the crutches and whether he or she should be excused from Physical Education class.

The parents should contact the school office if the child will be attending field trips or rides the bus regularly for temporary disability needs. The scholar should present the note to the school nurse upon arrival at school. The school nurse will issue a pass to leave class early and for scholar assistance including permission to use the elevator. The pass will remain in effect for the duration of the use of the crutches and/or medical treatment. Specific guidelines for use of equipment on school campus will be discussed upon the scholar's return. Wheelchairs are available in the clinic and are only to be used to transport scholars or staff members who are ill or injured. In the event your child needs crutches or a wheelchair to attend school, the parent must make arrangements with your health care provider.

### **Prescription Medication Policy**

If a scholar needs prescribed medication during the school hours, a parent may come to school and give the medicine. Scholars are not allowed to leave the building to go home to take medication and then return to school. As a general rule, school personnel may not give medication of any kind to scholars. However, the nurse may be able to administer some medicine with the proper forms. For additional information and forms please see the school nurse.

All medicine must be in its original container. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Scholars may not have medication in their pockets, lunch boxes, lockers, etc. All medication brought to school must be turned in to the school nurse. This policy includes all field trips and extracurricular activities. Scholars may not possess or use prescription medications at school independently from the school nurse.

Noncompliance may result in disciplinary action and possible expulsion from school. Scholars with an acute or chronic disease or medical condition are exempt from this prohibition. These scholars are allowed to possess and self-administer medication on an emergency basis. Parents of children, who self-administer medication, must

submit their written authori-

statement must include a statement from the scholar's physician indicating his or her approval for the scholar to self-administer the medication.

### **Over-The-Counter Medicine (OTC)**

A parent/guardian must sign an OTC medication card to permit school personnel to administer OTC medication at school. The medication has to be provided by the parent/guardian and will be given according to the directions on the bottle and the dosage needs that are appropriate for the age and size of the scholar. OTC medication must be in the original container and only one medication per bottle. OTC medication

must be kept in the school clinic. An OTC permission card must be renewed at the start of every school year. For OTC medications such as cough drops, cold medicine, Tylenol or Ibuprofen, a parent should list the medication on the OTC card to indicate a scholar may take this medication at school or send a note with the medication for the nurse to attach to the OTC card if it has already been submitted. Herbal and Homeopathic medications will not be administered at school.

### **Transporting Medications**

Scholars may bring medications to school on the bus as long as the scholar turns the medication over to the school nurse upon their arrival to school. Scholars will not be permitted to transport medications home during the school year or at the end of the school year unless a Medication Transport Release form has been signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. However, PLA will not permit scholars to transport controlled substances, which includes narcotic pain medication, Sudafed, and some ADD/ADHD medications, even with a Medication Transport Release form on file, these medications must be transported by a parent. At the end of the school year, medications will be disposed of the day after the last day of scholar attendance unless the authorization form has been received.

### **Hearing And Vision Screening**

The State of Indiana mandates hearing and vision screening for students. If a scholar does not pass a screening, the examiner is required to refer the child for further testing. Hearing screenings should be performed in Kindergarten or grade 1st and grades 4th, 7th, and 10th. The speech therapist for the school corporation performs this screening. Vision screenings should be performed in Kindergarten, and grades 1st, 3rd, 5th and 8th. The school nurse performs this screening. It is important to remember that these tests are only screening tools.

### **Pediculosis (Head Lice)**

The school nurse will be responsible for all lice identification. All checks for head lice will be done in a confidential manner, to respect the scholar's right to privacy and to avoid embarrassment. The parent/guardian will be notified by telephone, if lice are detected or that there was exposure to someone infected with lice. If the parent/guardian is unavailable, the emergency contacts will be notified. An informational checklist will be given to parents/guardians of Scholars identified with live head lice. Educational information on treatment and prevention will also be distributed. In the event of discovery during a field trip, PLA will provide transportation back to the school. For a special needs scholar who is transported by school bus per the scholar's IEP, the school will continue to provide transportation.

Lost time in the classroom interferes with scholar learning, thus, classroom checks will not be conducted. The associates of scholars at the elementary, middle school and high school levels will be checked at the nurse's discretion. All siblings of the infested child will be checked if they are enrolled in a PLA Network school. Checks for the infested child and his/her sibling(s) will be conducted on Monday morning for four weeks after initial discovery to aid families with detection and treatment.

## **E. Academics**

### **Grades And Grading**

Grades are an evaluation of what a scholar has learned. They become a part of the scholar's permanent school record. Report cards will be issued on the Wednesday following the end of a grading period and are available for viewing every nine weeks. Teachers are always happy to talk with parents about the work of their child. Parents should feel free to call the teacher or team to set up an appointment to discuss their child's academic progress. Scholar grades can be monitored daily by parents and Scholars through Harmony, a secure online scholar information system. If your child's grade performance becomes a concern after checking Harmony or receiving a report card, it would be an excellent time to call your child's teacher to request a conference to discuss the problem. If a scholar receives an "I" on his/her report card, it indicates an "Incomplete". It is the scholar's responsibility to see his/her teachers for make-up work. For scholars enrolling or withdrawing other than at the beginning or end of a grading period, grades or marks will be assigned based on the number of days a scholar has been enrolled. In order to receive a letter grade, a scholar must be enrolled for at least twenty-five days of the grading period. If enrolled for fifteen to twenty days, a scholar may receive pass/fail marks. Anyone under fifteen days shall not receive grades for the grading period.

The PLA Network has established the following grade scales. The special area subjects include: art, music, physical education, media, and technology.

Subject Achievement Scale	Special Area Grading Codes	Value
A+ 98-100%	C+ 78-79%	E = Exemplary 95
A 93-97%	C 73-77%	S = Satisfactory 85
A- 90-92%	C- 70-72%	P = Progressing 75
B+ 88-89%	D+ 68-69%	U = Unsatisfactory 65
B 83-87%	D 63-67%	
B- 80-82%	D- 60-62%	
	F 59% & below	

I = Incomplete

Grade K-2: Letter grades of A, B, C, D, and F are given in Reading, Spelling, English, and Math. E, S, P and U are given for all other areas. A grade of 'I' (Incomplete) may be assigned for a scholar who has not completed required work for a subject and has been given a time extension by a teacher. A grade of 'I' will be changed to a letter grade at the next grading period depending on the scholar's completion of the required work. Any modification in grades will be noted in the comment field.

### **Honor Roll**

An Honor Roll is published for K-6th grade scholars at the end of every grading period. To be on the Honor Roll a scholar must receive all A's and B's (no grade lower than B+). A grade of 'P' or 'U' in the 'Specials' disqualifies a scholar from the Honor Roll. A scholar who receives all A's will be designated on the Honor Roll with an asterisk.

### **Homework**

Homework is a planned activity that the teacher asks children to do outside of class hours. The homework activity will reinforce the classroom experience. At PLA we believe that homework assignments should take into consideration the fact that the scholar has a home life that is an important part of his/her total development.

Grades K - 1 homework will probably consist of reinforcement and drill activities. Grades 2 and 3 should not be assigned to do more than 30 minutes of homework per day. Grades 4 and 5 should not be assigned to do more than 1 hour of homework per day. Work not completed during the school day may have to be completed at home. A scholar will not be excluded from art, music, or physical education classes because of unfinished class work.

### **Midterm Grade Reports**

Midterm grades/reports are available online mid-grading quarter for all third and fourth grade students during the second, third and fourth quarters. Report cards are distributed at the end of each quarter and semester. Throughout grading periods, parents or guardians should communicate with their children about grades and review homework, class work, and test papers. These three indicators are good measures of how your child is doing. If you feel that a conference to discuss your child's progress is needed, please call your child's teacher.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

While formal parent/teacher conferences take place in the fall, all teachers and staff are strongly encouraged to hold conferences with scholars and parents whenever it appears useful and appropriate. Because teachers are responsible for scholar groups throughout the day, it is best to pre-arrange conferences by scheduling an appointment.

### **Special Education**

PLA believes in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all scholars. FAPE mandates that school districts provide access to general education and specialized educational services. It also requires that children with disabilities receive support free of charge as is provided to non-disabled students. It also provides access to general education services for children with disabilities by encouraging that support and related services be provided to children in their general education settings as much as possible. PLA provides a variety of special education programs for Scholars identified as having a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). A scholar may



receive special education services only through the proper evaluation and placement procedure. Parent/Guardian involvement in this procedure is required. More importantly, the school encourages the parent to be an active participant. A parent or guardian who believes his/her scholar may have a disability that interferes substantially with the scholar's ability to function properly in school should review the special education link on the school website and/or contact the Special Education Coordinator.

- **Educational Evaluations**

PLA staff members are charged with monitoring scholar academics and behavior to identify scholars who may need additional supports or interventions to achieve academic success. If a staff member notices a lack of improvement, the staff member may request a staffing for the scholar. In that instance, a staffing committee is formed and may consist of the school principal, and/or assistant principal, the teacher, school psychologist, special education coordinator, special education teachers, parents/guardians, and other involved professionals. The staffing committee will make recommendations appropriate for the scholar's needs.

- **Response To Intervention**

If a determination is made that a scholar needs additional supports, PLA will utilize its Response To Intervention Process (RTI) to determine the specific interventions needed by the scholar. In the RTI process, a struggling scholar is provided with increasingly intensive instruction in his or her area of academic weakness. The scholar's progress is monitored, and if there is no positive response or improvement, the scholar will be referred for testing to determine eligibility for special education services and what services the scholar needs to succeed.

- **Services Provided**

Scholars who are determined to be eligible for services, as a scholar with a specific learning disability will be provided services deemed appropriate as determined and recommended by the scholar's case conference committee. The recommendations may include a general interventional plan, a screening, or an educational evaluation that will be conducted according to IDEA/Article 7 regulations. Scholars who do not qualify for services under IDEA/Article 7 may be considered for Section 504 services under the Rehabilitation Act.

### **Title I**

The purpose of Title I is to ensure that all children have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and assessments. Scholars who participate in the Title I Program are provided with intensified instruction in the Indiana Academic Standards through an interdisciplinary, thematic curriculum.

### **Title III**

Title III is specifically targeted to benefit Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Immigrant Students. The purpose is to help ensure that children who are LEP attain

English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.

Scholars identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and in need of placement in a language instruction educational program will be assessed for English proficiency using the Students Home Language Survey and scored on the level system according to Indiana's New English Language Proficiency Levels:

- Level 1: Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency begin to demonstrate receptive or productive English skills. They are able to respond to simple communication tasks.
- Level 2: Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency respond with increasing ease to more varied communication tasks.
- Level 3: Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency tailor the English language skills they have been taught to meet their immediate communication and learning needs. They are able to understand and be understood in many basic social situations (while exhibiting many errors of convention) and need support in academic language.
- Level 4: Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency combine the elements of the English language in complex, cognitively demanding situations and are able to use English as a means for learning in other academic areas, although some minor errors of conventions are still evident.
- Level 5: Scholars performing at this level of English language proficiency communicate effectively with various audiences on a wide range of familiar and new topics to meet social and academic demands. Scholars speak, understand, write, and comprehend English without difficulty and display academic achievement comparable to native English-speaking peers. To attain the English proficiency level of their native English-speaking peers, further linguistic enhancement and refinement are necessary.

The Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students program increases a child's English proficiency using small group instruction and modifications to classroom assignments. A child may participate in this program until he/she is reclassified as Level 5 or Fluent English Proficient (FEP) according to the State's exiting guidelines and it is determined that a language instruction educational program is no longer needed. This process may take several years. A parent/guardian has the right to remove his/her child from the program or decline services. However, if recommended, PLA feels that the child's participation in this program will most effectively increase his/her English proficiency and knowledge of the academic content. If a parent refuses services for eligible students those students must still participate in the State's annual assessment for English Learners until such time as they demonstrate proficiency.

## **F. Discipline**

PLA places a high priority on maintaining an atmosphere of respect that is conducive to learning and is safe for all scholars, staff and guests. Scholars who engage in illegal, dangerous or disruptive behavior will be called upon to correct that behavior. Each scholar is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique scholar and unique situation. The odds of children learning from their mistakes increases dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequence. At PLA we utilize a Behavior Management System that focuses on that connection and individualizes disciplinary measures. Because discipline is uniquely tailored to each individual scholar, please contact your scholar's school. Questions regarding discipline at your scholar's school should be directed to the Principal.

## **G. Complaint Procedures**

### **Grievance Procedure**

Though the faculty and administration of the PLA Network make every effort to avoid problems, parents and Scholars will occasionally disagree with decisions that are made in regard to discipline or grades. In most cases, problems can be resolved when parents speak to the person who is directly responsible for decisions that have been made concerning a scholar. If the issue is not resolved after the initial communication with staff, the complaining party should contact the Principal. If a satisfactory resolution is still not achieved the complaining party should contact the Director of Human Resources, Michelle Reeves at [humanresources@phalenacademies.org](mailto:humanresources@phalenacademies.org).

## Appendix

### **Phalen Leadership Academy Network Notification of Rights under FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 Years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the student’s education record within 45 days of the day the School Corporation receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School Corporation to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record for which an amendment is requested, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School Corporation decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School Corporation will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing,

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the School Corporation as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School Corporation has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School Corporation discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school corporation in which a student seeks or intends to

enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school corporation to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

Where disclosure is to a state or local juvenile justice agency and relates to the ability of such agency to serve before adjudication the student whose records are being released and such agency receiving the information certifies in writing that the agency has agreed not to disclose it to a third party without the consent of the student's parent, guardian, or custodian. Such information may not be used to aid in the supervision of a delinquent child.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School Corporation to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

FERPA Consent Form  
(Phalen Leadership Academies)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 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 education records.

The purpose of this form is to provide consent to the disclosure of the following information and/or records to Phalen Leadership Academy staff for an internal review of educational records.

- .. Birth Certificate or Guardianship Documents
- .. Immunization Records
- .. Technology Agreement
- .. School Messenger Consent
- .. Demographic Form
- .. Home Language Survey
- .. Family Involvement Pledge
- .. Emergency Contacts
- .. Updated Phone and Email Address

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (parent or guardian's name) do hereby grant permission to Phalen Leadership Staff members participating in the internal review to have full access to \_\_\_\_\_ (Scholar's name) records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorizing Adult

\_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Scholar (e.g. parent, grandparent, guardian, family friend)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Information (email address or telephone number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Visitor Procedure Guidelines

### Purpose

To aid PLA in maintaining a safe and academically effective school environment for scholars, staff, and the public, PLA has established uniform guidelines for granting and restricting access to school property and school events.

Although we wish for our schools to be open and friendly to our parents and patrons, our first priority is to the safety of our scholars and staff. Access to our schools during the school day shall be limited to visits necessary to conduct the business of operating a school and shall include:

### 1. Deliveries:

All PLA delivery personnel must check in at the building's main office and access to other parts of the building by means other than through the main office shall be attended by school personnel. All access points shall be attended during the duration of the delivery. Doors shall not be propped open by any means.

Anticipated deliveries shall include:

- a. Kitchen
- b. Office
- c. Custodial
- d. Others upon request

### 2. Visitors: Visits shall be limited to invited participants for a school related program such as:

- a. Academic lectures
- b. Convocations or Special Programs
- c. Textbook and recreational book sales
- d. Software demonstrations
- e. Service Technicians

### 3. Parents and Relatives: Parents and other relatives may attend special luncheons or other events by school invitation only. The practice of "stopping by" for lunch is not allowed. Classroom visits by parents and other outside entities shall not occur except by invitation and approval by building leadership team.

### 4. Volunteers: Approved volunteers who assist in the classroom, library cafeteria, school events, etc. will be allowed into the building following all appropriate background checks. Volunteers and other visitors shall wear visitor badges with name, photograph, and location where they are to be within the facility (based upon the purchase of software services).

## 5. Field Trip Chaperones

6. **School employees** are not to open the building or otherwise provide access for non-professional activities for friends, relatives, or other visitors for any reason. Using the facilities for purposes unrelated to school business shall in most cases be restricted to times other than business hours as per the building use policy. Use of facilities for these purposes requires application in writing through the building leadership team at least ten days prior to the event. A rental/utility charge and certificate of insurance may also be required. If school personnel are not present at the event to supervise and provide security, school personnel may be required to be present for cleaning, supervising, and/or securing the building before, during, and following the event and this may require additional charges to the renting group or person.
7. Persons or groups that are disruptive or otherwise do not follow the procedures and guidelines approved and provided by the school in verbal or written form during any visit to school property may be asked to leave the premises. If a person or group of persons refuses to leave the premises, law enforcement personnel may be contacted for assistance. If a person or group disrupts the safe, normal operation of the school in any manner, a letter may be written prohibiting them from accessing any school property.
8. No person shall open exterior doors to allow access to the building for anyone. After the start of the school day access to the building, other than by authorized personnel with keys, shall be through the PLA main entrance(s) of the building.
9. No person shall enter an extra-curricular event without obtaining a ticket (with the exception of school personnel assigned to the event or working in an associated capacity) and entering through the designated entrance. Persons entering the building or an event without following procedures may be asked to leave the event and may be banned from future events.
10. Scholars or school personnel allowing access to the building by opening exterior gates and doors may be subject to disciplinary measures.
11. Scholars or other persons that allow others access to events through unapproved means may be required to leave the event and may be banned from future events.



**PLA UNIFORM DRESS CODE POLICY**

<p>Shirt            Grades K-3: Solid, Collar Red Shirts only            Grades 4-5: Solid, Collar Grey Shirts only            Grades 6: Solid, Collar Black and White Shirts only            No t-shirts!</p>	<p>Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Polo</li> <li>• Long or Short Sleeves</li> <li>• Must be able to tuck in at all times</li> </ul>
<p>Undershirts            All Grades: Solid, White or Black</p>	<p>Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long or short sleeves</li> <li>• Must be long enough to tuck in at all times</li> </ul>
<p>Pants/Shorts/Skirts            Pants: Solid, Black or Khaki No jeans or cutoffs!</p>	<p>Style            (Grades 2-8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pleated or flat in front</li> <li>• Fastened at waist</li> <li>• Must be worn with a belt and set above hips</li> <li>• Walking length shorts/skirts limited to no more than 2" above the knee</li> </ul>
<p>Sweater or Sweatshirts (non-hooded)            All Grades: Solid Color per grade color requirement</p>	<p>Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• V Neck</li> <li>• Crew Neck</li> <li>• Cardigan</li> <li>• Must be worn over approved shirt</li> </ul>
<p>Shoe/Boots            Any color acceptable</p>	<p>Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed heel or strap heel</li> <li>• Closed toes</li> </ul>
<p>Belts</p>	<p>Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Logos</li> <li>• May be any color</li> <li>• Cloth or leather</li> <li>• If waistband is elastic and does not have loops, no belt required. Belt is required with all clothing that include</li> </ul>