



Harvest Best Academy District

PARENT & SCHOLAR CODE OF CONDUCT 2026-2027

**Harvest Best Academy
Wakanda Virtual Academy**
1301 7th Ave. N
Minneapolis, MN 55411
(612) 876-4105 • Fax (612) 238-0178
www.thebestacademy.org
<https://wakandaacademymn.com>

Sankofa PREP
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Organizational Overview

Harvest Best Academy is a public charter school district headquartered in North Minneapolis that exists to unleash the potential of our scholars and transform communities through education. The district serves approximately 800 scholars across three innovative educational programs: two seat-based, traditional programs Harvest Best Academy (HBA) and Sankofa Prep Academy (SPA) and Wakanda Virtual Academy (WVA), a statewide blended online public charter school with learning site locations throughout Minnesota.

Together, these programs provide scholars and families with high-quality educational options that meet diverse learning needs while maintaining a shared commitment to academic excellence, character

development, culturally responsive teaching, and preparing scholars for success in college, career, and life. The district proudly serves a diverse student population and is committed to closing opportunity gaps by delivering rigorous instruction, meaningful relationships, and equitable educational experiences for every scholar.

Mission Statement

The mission of our school is to instruct, empower, enable, and guide scholars to achieve superior academic, social, and moral development.

Vision

It is our responsibility to graduate scholars who have a strong sense of identity, purpose, and emotional intelligence. Through a loving, academically rigorous, and culturally affirming environment we develop emerging leaders who have a sense of duty to transform our community.

Harvest Best Academy Program Information

Our school's formula for success is built on strong standards based instruction and rooted in an understanding of African culture and heritage. Academic skills are taught by the use of scientific, evidence based reading and math instruction aligned with the Minnesota state and Common Core standards. Science and social studies instruction is taught using a careful balance of textbook instruction and opportunities for experiential learning. All staff at HBA believe all scholars are college bound.

Programs

Harvest Best Academy offers a range of different approaches to learning that offer our students a strong culturally affirming environment that builds a strong sense of identity and belonging. We cater to our students' cultural backgrounds by engaging our families and partners in the community through cultural events such as the Kwanzaa Night program where students share performances based on the seven Principles of Kwanzaa.

HBA staff and students celebrate Peace Night to highlight our East African community showcasing the beautiful and broad cultures of our students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Our elementary and middle school programs believe in teaching the whole child by incorporating the learning of technical skills for tomorrow and addressing social and emotional wellness through the implementation of a rigorous well thought out curriculum.

Harvest Best K-5 Program

Harvest Best is a K-5 program that uses the principles of Nguzo Saba to guide their scholars in a culturally affirming environment to build a strong sense of identity. Harvest Best K-5 offers programming throughout the year, including parent events such as Kwanzaa and a Black History program. Harvest promotes academic development by offering a rigorous, targeted and culturally affirming curriculum.

Middle School Program

The Best Academy has programs focused on the positive development of Middle School scholars. Best Academy teaches critical technical skills for tomorrow, while developing the emotional skills necessary for a successful life. For that reason Best Academy includes a wide range of specialist programs

teaching scholars life skills and conflict resolution strategies. The Best Academy promotes academic development by offering a rigorous and culturally affirming curriculum.

Sankofa PREP Academy:

At Sankofa PREP, our K–5 program is built on the belief that every child’s culture, identity, and voice are assets to their learning. Rooted in the principle of *Sankofa*—learning from the past to inform the future—our program provides rigorous academics within a culturally affirming environment that empowers students to see themselves as scholars and leaders.

Wakanda Virtual Academy:

Wakanda Virtual Academy (WVA) is a K–10 blended online public charter school that provides families across Minnesota with a flexible, high-quality educational experience grounded in academic excellence, strong relationships, and culturally responsive teaching. Through a combination of live virtual instruction and in-person learning site opportunities located throughout the state, WVA offers scholars the flexibility of online learning while maintaining meaningful connections with teachers, peers, and their local school community.

WVA promotes academic success through rigorous, standards-aligned instruction, targeted interventions, and personalized support designed to meet the unique needs of every learner. Guided by the Nguzo Saba principles and the Wakanda Way, scholars develop the knowledge, character, and life skills needed to thrive in college, career, and life while learning in a safe, inclusive, and culturally affirming environment that celebrates diversity and empowers every scholar to reach their fullest potential.

Board of Directors

Specific information about Harvest Best Academy Board of Directors can be found at www.thebestacademy.org under **About Us > Board of Directors**

School Administration

Emily Peterson Executive Director epeterson@thebestacademy.org	Mekeal Welch-Collins Director Human Resources mwelch-collins@thebestacademy.org	Jason Burns Senior Vice President of Operations jburns@thebestacademy.org
Nicholas Boettcher WVA Principal (K-10) nboettcher@thebestacademy.org	Mohamed Mohamed HBA K-8 SPA K-6 NIA K-5 mmohamed@thebestacademy.org	Rachelle Larson Assistant Principal (HBA) rlarson@thebestacademy.org

Lead in Drinking Water Notification

The State of Minnesota requires all public schools to complete testing for lead in drinking water. While the major source of lead exposure in most Minnesota children is paint, lead in plumbing fixtures and background levels from Municipal Water Supplies can add to a person’s overall exposure. Drinking water in schools and homes may contain lead from old lead pipes, plumbing fixtures such as fountains and faucets, or solder that joins pipe sections together. As required by the State of Minnesota and as a part of our commitment to facility safety and maintenance, Harvest Best Academy is following the requirements of Minn. Stat. 121A.335 and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidance which includes sampling for the presence of lead in drinking water in all of our school buildings. Harvest Best Academy’s Lead in Drinking Water Safety Plan can be found on the district website as well as testing results. All district buildings will be testing Fall 2026 with results posted and communicated to families including if necessary, remediation plans. Questions and/or concerns can be directed to Jason Burns, Senior Vice President of Operations (jburns@thebestacademy.org).

[HBA Lead in Water Safety Plan](#)

High Expectations All Students and Families

Harvest Best Academy, through the Diversity and Equity Policy, has affirmed that learning and work environments are enriched and improved by the presence, contributions, and perspectives of diverse participants. Learning environments must welcome, respect, and value diversity. Our school’s Non-discrimination Policy bans discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, or age in its programs and activities. In addition, our school ensures that children and youth who are homeless and highly mobile have opportunities to achieve the same high academic standards as students who are not homeless or highly mobile. This means that all scholars and their families are welcome and encouraged to participate in the full range of opportunities at our school, including academic classes, school-sponsored organizations, clubs, activities, athletics, and after-school programs. The only limits to participation will be those reasonably related to the activity.

School Hours

Our school day is:

Monday-Thursday <u>Harvest Best Academy</u> Start: 8:30 am End: 3:40pm <u>Sankofa PREP</u> Start: 8:30am End: 3:40pm <u>Wakanda Virtual Academy</u> Start: 7:30am End: 2:20pm	Friday <u>Harvest Best Academy</u> Start: 8:30 am End: 12:15pm <u>Sankofa PREP</u> Start: 8:30 End: 12:15 <u>Wakanda Virtual Academy</u> Start: 7:30am End: 12:20pm
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Attendance & Tardiness

Harvest Best and Sankofa scholars are required to arrive at school on time (Scholars are considered

tardy after 9:00 am.) and to remain in school until dismissal at 3:40 pm (12:15pm on Fridays). It is important that scholars are in school and on time every day to achieve academic success.

Wakanda Virtual Academy scholars are expected to arrive at their designated learning site by 7:30 a.m. each day. This ensures they have adequate time to eat breakfast and are prepared to begin instruction promptly. Dismissal is at 2:20 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 12:20 p.m. on Fridays.

WVA home learner scholars are expected to log in and be ready to participate in their scheduled instruction by 7:50 a.m. each day. Monday through Thursday, scholars should log in to their specialist class at 7:50 a.m. On Fridays, scholars must log in to the appropriate instructional block at 7:50 a.m.

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to academic success. Arriving on time and being prepared to learn each day minimizes lost instructional time, promotes engagement, and supports scholars in achieving their full academic potential. Consistent attendance is an important responsibility and is expected of all Wakanda Virtual Academy scholars.

Attendance

Attendance is the first step in ensuring academic achievement. Scholars must show up and give their best effort at school each and every day in order to meet their academic goals. At our school, regular attendance is required. Our curriculum is an ambitious one; every day is essential for scholars to keep pace with their class. Parents/guardians/families are expected to ensure that their children are in school.

Illness

Please do not send your child to school if they are experiencing any symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, diarrhea, and/or vomiting. Students who miss school for illness will be marked as “excused” if the absence is reported to the school by 8:30am.

- Please report your scholar’s absence for the day to the school by 8:30 a.m.

612-876-4105/4100

Absences

All Absences - “Excused” and “Unexcused” - are Considered Absences

Any day your child does not attend school is considered an absence. Scholar illness (with doctor’s note), a death in the family, or a religious holiday (with parent/guardian/guardian’s notes) are all considered excused absences at Harvest Best Academy.

Attendance Steps:

- Contact from school
- Connection with family and provide support if needed
- Social Worker, School Counselor, or Family Liaison
- Referral to the Be@School

Tardiness

Our doors open at 8:00 a.m. each morning. Scholars must arrive between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Scholars that arrive after 9:00 a.m. (as measured by the school’s clocks) are marked tardy. In cases when a school bus arrives late, those scholars riding the bus are not considered tardy.

Tardiness Policy

Under Minnesota Law (120-A-22 subd. 5a), children must attend school 95% of the time until they are 17 years old. This means that a child should have no more than eight (8) excused or unexcused absences in

a school year. Three (3) unexcused tardies are equal to one (1) unexcused absence.

Scheduling Necessary Appointments

We encourage families to schedule appointments at a time that disrupts learning the least. The best time for appointments is when school is not in session. In the rare case when a scholar has a medical appointment during school, she/he should try not to be absent for the entire school day.

Out-of-School Suspensions are Considered Absences

If a scholar is held out of school due to suspension it is considered an unexcused absence.

Tracking and Follow Up on Student Absences

Harvest Best Academy will keep records of all scholars' absences. If a scholar misses school, Best Academy staff will make reasonable efforts to contact the scholar's parent/guardian by telephone, in writing, or in person. Staff will explain the school's strict attendance policy and request the parent's/guardian's strong support in enforcing this policy. The school administrator will follow up with the parent/guardian about attendance issues.

Be @ School Response

Hennepin County's Be@School program is designed to support families in school attendance and address barriers to school attendance. Students will first be referred to Be@School after 7 days of unexcused absences. More information about the program can be found at:

<https://www.hennepinattorney.org/prevention/students-youth/be-at-school>

Students who miss an excessive number of days may not be promoted to the next grade. Our policy is in accordance with the state truancy policy.

*Minnesota law states that all students are required to attend school from age 7, or when they enter kindergarten (whichever comes first) until they are 18 years old. A student's failure to attend school may lead to legal action for the parents/guardians and the student.

be@school <http://www.hennepinattorney.org/prevention/students-youth/be-at-school>

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office manages the be@school program, an important initiative to support our children's education and their future. It is estimated that thousands of children in Hennepin County have excessive unexcused absences from school. This is a major societal problem. School absence is a risk factor for substance abuse, teen pregnancy, criminal behavior, and chronic unemployment later in life. Concern for the devastating effects of truancy led to the development of the be@school program. The be@school program serves Hennepin County, with all educational neglect and truancy efforts consolidated under the leadership of the Hennepin County Attorney's Office.

Academic Programming

Learning Environment

Our school is committed to teaching, learning, and academic achievement for all students. To achieve this goal, the learning environment must be safe, orderly, and well managed. It is the expectation that all students are active learners and responsible members of the learning community. Our staff and families share responsibility for developing and maintaining learning environments in which every member is:

- Safe
- Respectful
- Responsible
- Learning

- Treated with dignity and kindness

The academic day at Harvest Best Academy includes core subjects—Reading (Language Arts), Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies—along with Social/Emotional Skills, Specialist classes, and targeted Intervention.

Assessment

At Harvest Best Academy we strive for excellence and have high expectations for our scholars. We strive to give each scholar ample opportunity to meet the academic challenges they will encounter, now and in the future. We assess (test) our scholars regularly, gather data from these assessments, and use the data to enhance instruction so scholars achieve mastery of the concepts and skills being taught. The assessment tables below show the guidelines we have established for our scholars.

Classwork

At our school scholars are given different opportunities to succeed in the classroom. Classwork encompasses a variety of learning experiences including: independent and group work, projects, exit slips, as well as participation. Students are responsible for completing and turning in all classwork. In the event of an absence, students should contact their teacher for any missed assignments.

Homework

Our culture of achievement includes completion of homework each night. A scholar's homework is extra practice of the day's skills; it is meaningfully assembled, and provides valuable repetitions. Homework connects to the classwork and is due by the scheduled due date. If the scholar is unable to complete the homework, the parent/guardian or scholar needs to contact the teacher to explain before the next day via phone or email. Homework is 10% of a scholar's grade. Parents/guardians will be notified if homework is not turned in through progress reports, at conferences, and directly by the teacher after three (3) missed assignments.

Assessment Tables:

<i>Grade Calculation</i>	
45%	Assessments (weekly quizzes, unit tests, comprehensive exams - COMPS)
45%	Classwork (includes participation, exit slips, projects, and independent work)
10%	Homework

<i>Grading Scale</i>	
Exceeds Standards (E)	90% +

Meets Standards (M)	80% - 89%
Partially Meets Standard (PM)	75% - 79%

Does Not Meet Standard (DNM) 74% and below

Retention Process

In order to be eligible for promotion, scholars in grades K-8th must demonstrate the ability to meet these expectations through each term of the school year. Should they not meet these expectations, it will be at the discretion of the school to promote the scholar to the next grade level.

For students at risk of retention:

1. Families will be notified on or before Spring conferences
2. Families will work together with the school to build a plan for academic success
3. Academic success plans will be reviewed with families at spring conferences and a final decision will be made for placement in the upcoming school year.

Scholars who have been previously retained at Harvest Best Academy are welcome to return in order to make sure that their academic goals are achieved. Administration is responsible for overseeing the support plan for retained scholars, which includes:

- A check-in plan organized for each retained scholar at the beginning of the year;
- School will keep abreast of his/her grades, and offer additional support services if needed, which could include organizational skills and developing good study habits.

School Operations

Bus Transportation Information

Bus Dismissal

Bus dismissal times are as follows:

Best Academy	Sankofa PREP	Wakanda Virtual Academy
Dismissal Time: Monday- Thursday @ 3:40pm Friday @12:15pm	Dismissal Time: Monday- Thursday @ 3:40pm Friday @ 12:00pm	Dismissal Time: Monday- Thursday @ 2:20pm Friday @ 12:20pm

HBA and SPA scholars will be escorted from their classrooms to the dismissal area by teachers and dismissed according to their bus number. If you need your child to get off the bus, please go to the main office where someone will contact the bus monitor, and your child will be escorted back into the building for pick-up.

Wakanda Virtual Academy scholars will be dismissed in accordance with the routines and procedures established at their assigned learning site to ensure a safe, orderly, and efficient dismissal process. Families who have questions or concerns regarding their child's transportation or dismissal arrangements should contact their child's Site Coordinator directly for assistance.

Inappropriate Bus Behavior

We treat the bus as an extension of the school. Scholars must remain in their seats, talk quietly, and follow all directions given by the bus driver. Inappropriate bus behavior may result in suspension, or termination of transportation services. If your child is suspended from the bus it will be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to arrange for alternative transportation.

Family Transportation Information:

Parent Transportation Agreement

Parents/guardians have the option to transport their scholars to and from school every day. Parents will be reimbursed based on the transportation agreement with the school and will drop off and pick up on time from their designated door and time slot. Parents living outside of a range of over 5 miles from the school will be reimbursed at a rate of \$8.80 per day.

Parent Transportation Dismissal

Parent Pickup dismissal times are as follows:

Best Academy	Sankofa PREP
Dismissal Time: Monday- Thursday @ 3:30pm Friday @12:00pm	Dismissal Time: Monday- Thursday @ 3:00pm Friday @ 12:00pm

Scholars will be escorted from their classrooms to the dismissal area by school staff members and dismissed as designated pickups arrive. Scholars who are picked up from school before the dismissal time must be signed out at the main office by an authorized pickup person.

Wakanda Virtual Academy scholars will be dismissed in accordance with the routines and procedures established at their assigned learning site to ensure a safe, orderly, and efficient dismissal process. Families who have questions or concerns regarding their child's transportation or dismissal arrangements should contact their child's Site Coordinator directly for assistance.

Authorized Persons

To ensure the safety of all scholars, only authorized persons are able to pick up a scholar from school. The authorized persons would be any/all parents/guardians and listed emergency contacts as provided by the scholar's parent/guardian. In the event you need to have someone pick up your scholar that is not an authorized pickup person or you have changes to authorized persons, please contact the front desk at 612-876-4105. Is there a limited amount of authorized persons each family gets? If so, add that here

Late Pick Up Policy

Students will be dismissed to their designated parent-pick-up door at their designated time. All children must be picked up by their designated time. In the event that your child has not been picked up within your 15 min window, and we have not heard from the parent/guardian, we will take the following steps (in order):

1. Call the parent/guardian
2. Call those listed on the authorized/emergency contact for pick-up list
3. 4:45pm - If no contacts can be made and the scholar(s) have not been picked up by this time, child welfare or the police may be contacted for assistance.

Late Pick-Ups will be tracked and monitored. In the event that the policy is being repeatedly breached, there will be a meeting with the principal, executive director, and/or board chair.

Early Pick Up Policy

No students can be picked up early! :)

Food Service

Nutrition

Nutrition plays a critical role in health and wellness. In order to support scholars' success, we provide a healthy well balanced meal twice per day at school. Our food service provider is Done Right Foods.

Nutrition plays a vital role in supporting scholars' health, wellness, and academic success. To help scholars thrive throughout the school day, Harvest Best Academy provides two healthy, well-balanced meals each day through our food service provider, Done Right Foods.

Harvest Best Academy is committed to meeting the diverse dietary needs of our scholars. Pork-free meal options are available daily, and meals can be accommodated for scholars with documented dietary restrictions, food allergies, medical needs, or other dietary requirements. Families who need dietary accommodations for their child should notify the school and work with their child's School Leader or Site Coordinator to ensure appropriate meal arrangements are made.

Free and Reduced Lunch

All families will need to complete a form that enables the school to participate in the free or reduced-price meal program.

Food Allergies

Families who need a special diet due to medical reasons or a disability will need to complete a special diet form by contacting the school nurse or the health office. The phone number for the health office is 612-876-4136. Any questions, please reach out to Kaitlin Pear, kpear@thebestacademy.org or call at 612-876-4040.

If a scholar has lactose intolerance needs, families may request lactose free milk for students. The form is located with the school nurse in the health office. You may reach the health office at 612-876-4136.

Home Lunch

While every scholar will be provided a meal, families may choose to provide a home made lunch for scholars in addition or instead of the school provided meal. Scholars will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave, so meals must be packed accordingly.

If you are sending lunch to school with your child, we ask that you send in nutritious foods. Please do not let your child bring unhealthy drinks (e.g., colas or juices heavy in sugar) or unhealthy foods to school. Candy, gum, chips, and soda are not allowed to be eaten at school. If you choose to send lunch, the entire lunch must be in one bag or container labeled with the scholar's name.

School Closings

2026-2027 School year Calendar

The complete 2026-2027 School Year Calendar can be found on our website at:

<https://www.thebestacademy.org/yearly-school-calendar>

Please see the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar for a complete list of school release days, conferences, and other events.

Inclement Weather

We will close school only in cases of extreme weather conditions. It is the policy of the board of directors to keep the school open as much as possible. If you don't know whether we are delayed, closed, or open during inclement weather please visit the school website (www.thebestacademy.org), call the school voicemail (612-876-4100/4105/4099), listen to radio stations (WCCO-AM, KMOJ-FM), or check a local television news channel (4, 5, 9, 11).

At the discretion of the principal and executive director, any classroom days lost to closure due to inclement weather or other reasons may be made up by adding an equal number of days during or at the end of the school year.

E-Learning Days

For the 2026-2027 school year, the first school closing due to inclement weather during the school year will be a 'No Make-Up' day. In the event of a 2nd school closure due to inclement weather, HBA will operate with an e-Learning Day for students and staff. According to [MN Statute, section 120A.414](#), an "e-Learning Day" means a school day where this district offers complete access to online instruction provided by students' individual teachers due to inclement weather. The district will not use more than two (2) consecutive e-Learning Days and no more than five (5) e-Learning days per school year. E-learning information will be shared with parents during Fall conferences and communication from teachers will be provided by 10am on each e-learning day.

Field Trips

Field Trip Policy

Field trips are a wonderful opportunity for scholars to participate in learning experiences outside of the classroom. They are fun and exciting experiences and we strive to find affordable opportunities for

students to participate in each year. There is usually a fee that must be paid for each scholar to attend a field trip. The fee will vary for each field trip and will be clearly communicated along with each individual field trip permission slip.

Permission Slips

Permission slips are required for every field trip. Scholars cannot attend field trips without having a permission slip signed by the legal parent/guardian.

Field Trip Attendance

Field trips are considered an extension of the classroom. As a result, scholar field trips are based on homework, attendance, grades, behavior, or other criteria designated by the school. Scholars are expected to attend school even if they are unable to attend field trips due to academic or behavior issues.

If a scholar is dismissed or suspended from a field trip due to behavior, monies will not be refunded.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular Activities

Our school offers various extracurricular activities outside of the traditional school day. Participation in these activities may require an additional fee, and parents/guardians will be notified by the school prior to the beginning of these programs.

Activity Fees

Harvest Best Academy may require students to pay for certain specified school-related costs. Those costs may include but are not limited to:

- Uniforms (beyond the initial free uniform provided)
- Extracurricular activity fees & supplies
- Damage to technology
- personal athletic equipment
- Field trips
- voluntary student insurance
- musical instruments
- student publications
- graduation announcements
- post-secondary instructional programs excluding adult basic education programs, and personal stationery supplies.
- Lost or destroyed textbooks, workbooks, and library books if the school district annually informs parents and students about its fee policy regarding lost and destroyed books.

Harvest Best Academy must hold a public hearing before imposing a fee that is neither authorized nor prohibited by statute. School districts may waive fees for economically disadvantaged students.

Extracurricular Activities: Scholar Expectations

Scholars who are participating in extracurricular activities must maintain academic progress and proficiency. If scholars are not at a partially meet in all of their core classes, they will be put on an academic improvement plan. Scholars must adhere to their academic improvement plan to remain eligible for extracurricular activities.

Visitor Policy & Family Involvement

Family Involvement Policy

Harvest Best Academy is a partnership between school leadership, teachers, scholars, and scholars' families. Although the job of making decisions about school policy belongs to the board of directors, executive director, and principals, family involvement is absolutely critical to the success of the school.

Harvest Best Academy's family-school relationships are maintained through:

- Conferences with scholars, families, and teachers
- Orientation prior to the start of school
- Teacher-family calls
- Parents/guardians who serve on the school's board of directors
- Volunteer opportunities

Harvest Best Academy's families are asked to:

- Reinforce Harvest Best Academy's academic and behavioral standards at home
- Provide a quiet space for students to study
- Provide positive reinforcement of scholar progress and success
- Help scholars with homework
- Ensure that scholars complete all of their homework every night
- Chaperone field trips and volunteer at the school
- Attend programs/special assemblies throughout the year
- Attend all family/teacher conferences

Visitor Policy

All visitors, including parents/guardians, must sign in at the main office and be given a visitors badge before proceeding forward in the building. The visitor badge must be present at all times while in the building, and we ask that all visitors sign out after the visit is completed and before leaving the building. We have an open door policy for our parents/guardians; however, if a teacher is having a special, closed activity s/he may choose not to accept visitors at that time.

Volunteer Policy

All volunteers, including parents/guardians, must sign in at the main office and be given a visitors badge before proceeding forward in the building. The visitor badge must be present at all times while in the building, and we ask that all visitors sign out after the visit is completed and before leaving the building. All volunteers must have a completed background check completed by the school. Please contact your child's principal in order to become a volunteer.

Wakanda Virtual K-12 - Principal: Nick Boettcher, nboettcher@thebestacademy.org

Best Academy K-8 - Principal: Mohamed Mohamed mmohamed@thebestacademy.org
Sankofa Prep K-6

Grievances/Complaints

The Harvest Best Academy wants to ensure that communication between parents/guardians, community members, and staff benefits the students. All parties will be engaged in a respectful and productive dialogue surrounding the point of concern .

If a resolution cannot be achieved through the homeroom teacher, the parent/guardian or community

member will inform school leaders of the concern. The following steps must be taken in order to make a formal complaint:

1. Request a conference with the program principal and teacher citing specific concerns and listing the names of all others you wish to attend

Sankofa Prep Principal: Mohamed Mohamed mmohamed@thebestacademy.org
Best Academy K-8

Wakanda Virtual K-12 Principal: Nick Boettcher nboettcher@thebestacademy.org

2. The principal or principal's designee will set and confirm an appointment with the concerned party or parties.
3. If the complaint is not resolved in the conference, the principal will request that the parent or community member make the complaint orally or in writing.
 - Any complaint remaining unresolved may be forwarded to the Executive Director.
 - Complaints against school administrators will follow the same protocol, except that the initial complaint will be reported to the executive director.

Student Culture & Expectations

Student Dress Code

Appearance & Hygiene

For scholars to be prepared for learning, it is important that they come to school ready to learn. This includes being in uniform and well rested. It is important that scholars prepare for the day prior to coming to school. If a scholar needs support in preparing for the day or unusual circumstances arise, families or scholars can request assistance from the school nurse, social worker, and/or school counselor.

Every scholar will be responsible for arriving at school neat and clean. Every scholar should maintain the scholarly appearance and freshness of his/her uniform on a regular basis. In the event that a teacher notices any student with repeated occurrences of poor hygiene, the student will be referred to the nurse, related services staff, principals, or director who will contact the parent/guardian. Scholars should not attend to their appearance in class. The expectation is for the scholar to prepare prior to their arrival at school.

Uniforms (Only applies to HBA Location, the SPA location does not require a uniform)

We have a required school uniform for several important reasons:

- **Uniforms unite us as a community.** When you look at a group of scholars in any of our Harvest Best uniforms, it is a powerful visual statement of our community. Scholars make a commitment that when they put on the school's uniform, they are agreeing to live up to the school's high expectations.
- **Uniforms reduce distractions and clothing competition.** They eliminate worry about purchasing and planning outfits. Often scholars spend more time discussing and evaluating what others are wearing or not wearing than they spend focusing on learning. Wearing uniforms eliminates this distraction.
- **Uniforms make us all equal.** We all have the same mission. We are all going to college. We all come to school looking the same way.
- **Uniforms look professional.** Scholars look neat when they arrive at school with shirts/blouses tucked in and uniform items clean. The scholars come mentally prepared for school and

“dressed for success”.

- **Uniforms provide security.** Most importantly, as a security measure, uniforms provide us the ability to identify all of our scholars inside or outside the building.

All scholars must come to school in full uniform every day. Scholars may not change out of their uniform at any point during the school day.

HBA Best Academy Uniform		
<u>Tops</u>	<u>Bottoms</u>	<u>Shoes</u>
✓ Solid black/white/navy blue polo shirt	✓ Tan/Khaki pants	✓ Black tennis or dress shoes
✓ Solid black/navy blue sweater	✓ Tan/Khaki skirt (knee length or longer)	
*Solid White or black socks, tights, or leggings		

Middle School Uniform		
<u>Tops</u>	<u>Bottoms</u>	<u>Shoes</u>
✓ Black or White button down dress shirt	✓ Black or Tan/Khaki skirt (must be knee length or longer)	✓ Solid color tennis or dress shoes. Must cover the entire foot. No sandals, boots, or open toed shoes. No Crocs.
✓ Black polo shirt	✓ Black or Tan/Khaki pants (bootcut or straight leg pants. No tight pants, leggings, or jeggings)	✓ Black or White socks, tights or leggings (leggings may only be worn under other bottoms, they cannot be worn as pants)
✓ Black or white abaya		
✓ Black or white hijab		
✓ Black sweaters or sweatshirts (no sweatshirts hoodies)	✓ Black or Tan/Khaki shorts (must be knee length or longer)	

Out of Uniform

If students arrive out of uniform, HBA has an escalating consequence sequence as outlined below. The first time a scholar is out of uniform, the family will be contacted. The second time a scholar is

out of uniform, the scholar will be required to serve a lunch detention. The 3rd time a scholar is out of uniform, it will prompt a meeting with the family. The fourth time a scholar is out of uniform, they will receive an after-school detention.

Purchasing Uniforms

Information about where to find uniform shirts

Our uniforms do not require the school logo. Uniforms are available at Walmart, Target, and other stores. Uniforms must be clean, with no writing, or name brand logos.

Wakanda Virtual Academy Dress Code:

We have a required school dress code for several important reasons:

- *Reduces distractions.* When there is a clear dress code for students to follow, this reduces any possibility of clothing distracting others from their learning.
- *Ensures that attire worn by students aligns with our values.* Having a dress code aligned with WVA's values of high morals and academic standards ensures that students are dressed in a way that reflects our school's values and mission.

WVA Dress Code Policy:

Wakanda Virtual Academy encourages students to take pride in their appearance as it relates to a respectful and productive school environment. This dress code applies to all students, whether attending in-person at a learning site or participating in online classes from home.

It is essential that all students, regardless of their learning location, maintain high standards in their daily attire. Students should dress in a way that aligns with the educational setting and supports a safe, healthy, and respectful learning environment for themselves and others. Clothing choices should not disrupt or distract from the learning process.

Below is a list of examples of items not permitted in school. This list is not exhaustive, and final decisions regarding appropriate attire will be made at the discretion of building administrators.

Clothing that is disruptive or potentially disruptive to the educational process is prohibited, including, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Wearing clothing that includes words or pictures which are obscene, vulgar, abusive, weapons discriminatory, racist, sexist or otherwise degrading or sexually suggestive or which promote or advertise alcohol, chemicals, tobacco or any other product that is illegal for use by minors.
- b. Wearing clothing in a manner that represents and/or promotes threat/hate groups or supremacist groups is prohibited.
- c. Wearing clothing that does not cover, chest, or buttocks. Clothing that does not cover undergarments, and undergarments that are worn as outer garments.
- d. Wearing see-through pants and shirts are prohibited.
- e. Wearing a costume face mask or wigs in school that would not allow the student to be identified is prohibited.

Additional Dress Code Guidelines:

- Leggings are only allowed when worn under dresses. Wearing t-shirts over leggings is not permitted.
- Hats are not permitted to be worn in buildings.

- Shoes and sneakers are allowed. Flip-flops or soft-soled footwear designed as beach or athletic wear is not allowed.

Scholars not Dressed in Alignment with Dress Code:

For any scholars who arrive at a learning site or online session in clothing that is not aligned with the dress code will have their parent or guardian contacted immediately. The parent or guardian will need to provide the scholar with appropriate clothing, in alignment with our dress code policy. After the first dress code infraction, there will be a required meeting with the scholar, the scholar's parent or guardian, and the school principal or site coordinator.

Student Behavior Standards & Conduct

Community Building

Our school offers a variety of ways for students and staff to build community. Some examples are morning meetings, closing circle/daily wrap up, certificates and awards, class parties, classroom colleges, lunch with an administrator, and more.

Student Behavior Expectations

We believe that students at our school are entitled to learn and develop in an environment that promotes self-respect, self-determination, and respect for the African world community. We realize that *"It takes a village to raise a child"* and we fully expect that everyone will contribute to the harmony and holistic well-being of our school community by honoring the following Nguzo Saba Principles:

Nguzo Saba	
Student Mindset	Adult Mindset
Umoja-Unity	
We strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race. We unite as we assume the best of others.	We support the building of culture in all areas of school by promoting our mission and core values. We treat others how we wish to be treated and always assume the best of others.
Kujichagulia - Self Determination	
When we fail, we don't give up. We have a growth mindset. We define and name ourselves, as well as to create and speak for ourselves.	We have and demonstrate a growth mindset. We don't give up on ourselves or our scholars. We are responsible to and valued by our colleagues, parents, scholars and community members.
Ujima - Collective Work and Responsibility	
We take ownership for our learning and are a positive productive member of our community.	We plan together in teams and provide frequent checks for understanding to continuously hone our skills.
Ujamaa - Cooperative Economics	
We manage our Nia points in exhibiting self-discipline.	We provide frequent feedback to scholars and analyze trends.
Nia – Purpose	
All of the work we do and all of my education will help to build and develop my family and my community.	We have high expectations for ourselves as we teach and facilitate our scholars' learning and emotional development.
Kuumba – Creativity	
We will consistently challenge ourselves to take an interest in and learn new things for fun.	We employ dynamic teaching practices to ensure the most impactful learning opportunities for every student.
Imani – Faith	
We believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders.	We base all decisions on what is best for scholars. Our advisees are our sons and daughters.

* Additional principles we recognize:

- Murua=Respect
- Busara= Practical Wisdom

Teacher & Staff Expectations

HBA staff members will:

- Support scholars in their academic, social and emotional growth
- Abide by HBA policies regarding supporting scholars and their needs
- Partner with HBA families to create an optimal educational experience
- Model and acknowledge appropriate social behavior at all times and in all setting

Principal Expectations

HBA principals will:

- Lead HBA programming and scholar support initiatives
- Will ensure that HBA's policies are being followed by all stakeholders
- Audit HBA's programming effectiveness and quality
- Model and acknowledge appropriate social behavior at all times and in all settings

Family Member Expectations

Community Members (parents, guardians, visitors, etc.) will:

- Be respectful with their tone, volume, language, and cadence
- Value a growth mindset toward social behavior
- Initiate and accept the apology of action
- Support and abide by the Behavior Management Cycle
- Model and acknowledge appropriate social behavior at all times and in all settings

School-wide Behavior Management System

Overview

Our approach to discipline is rooted in a belief that the learning environment is sacred. In our school we will do whatever it takes to make sure that every child is safe (physically, emotionally, mentally, and intellectually) and to make sure that every child has the chance to learn without needless disruptions. We have very high expectations for scholar behavior, and we “sweat the small stuff” to create and preserve a focused learning environment. Additionally, we root our school in the Nguzo Saba Principles. These principles are the foundation for expectations that we expect from our students.

The Nia system reinforces the desired behaviors from our scholars in our classrooms and common areas such as hallways, bathrooms, and cafeterias. Effective utilization of the Nia system will ensure we have a unified code of conduct and consistent intervention protocols.

Nia Point System (left off here)

Our teachers use a wide variety of strategies to promote positive behavior and ensure that classrooms remain safe, supportive, and conducive to learning. One of our primary strategies is the Nia System, our schoolwide behavior management framework grounded in the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa. Nia, which means purpose, reflects our commitment to helping scholars develop strong character, make positive choices, and contribute to a positive school community.

As part of the Nia System, scholars earn bonus points through our LiveSchool platform for demonstrating positive behaviors, meeting expectations, exhibiting strong character, and going above and beyond. These points are never taken away. Instead, scholars continue to accumulate points over time, much like depositing money into a bank account. Scholars may redeem their points for a variety of rewards on both a weekly and quarterly basis.

Our staff intentionally focuses on recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors by "catching scholars doing the right thing." We believe that consistent positive reinforcement encourages scholars to develop habits that lead to long-term success both inside and outside the classroom.

Undesired behaviors are also documented within the LiveSchool platform to help staff monitor behavior patterns, communicate with families, and provide appropriate support. However, negative behaviors do not deduct from a scholar's accumulated point balance.

In addition to earning bonus points, scholars' eligibility for Fun Friday is determined by their overall behavior ratio. Scholars who maintain a 5:1 ratio or higher of positive to negative behaviors in LiveSchool are eligible to participate in Fun Friday activities each week. Scholars who do not meet this expectation will participate in reflection and receive instruction on replacement behaviors and strategies that will help them improve and become eligible the following week.

Through the Nia System, we strive to build a school culture that emphasizes purpose, positive relationships, personal responsibility, and character development while recognizing and celebrating scholars for making positive choices each day.

Bonus Points

Scholars are able to earn bonus points each day for demonstrating positive behaviors and consistently meeting school expectations. Bonus points are recorded through our LiveSchool platform and can be redeemed for a variety of rewards throughout the school year.

Families are encouraged to stay informed about their scholar's behavioral progress by accessing the LiveSchool Parent Portal, where they can view their scholar's earned points, behavior history, and positive recognitions. Families will receive instructions for accessing the parent portal from their scholar's teacher.

The chart below explains how scholars may earn bonus points.

Nia Point Categories						
Murua <i>Respect</i>	Imani <i>Faith</i>	Nia <i>Purpose</i>	Ujima and Busara	Umoja <i>Unity</i>	Ujamaa	Kujichagulia and Kuumba
			<i>Collective Work and Responsibility and Practical Wisdom</i>		<i>Cooperative Economics</i>	<i>Self-Determination and Creativity</i>
Point Earning Behaviors						
<i>(this is not an exhaustive list, scholars may earn points in a variety of ways by demonstrating any of the Nguzo Saba principles)</i>						
Respect	Treat Others With Respect Accept Others Use Good Manners Be Considerate Use Conflict Resolution To Solve Disagreements					
Trustworthiness	Be Honest Be Reliable Be Loyal Show Integrity Treat Others How You Want to Be Treated					
Caring	Show Kindness Express Gratitude Forgive Others Help Others In Need Use Positive Language Encourage And Uplift Others					

Responsibility	Be Responsible for Yourself Follow Directions Always Do Your Best Use Self- Control Take Accountability Think Before You Act Peer Support
Citizenship	Be A Good Community Member Follow School Expectations Respect Your School Community And Environment Be Neat And Organized In Your Space Represent The Mission Of Our School Speak Up When Something is Wrong
Fairness	Play By The Rules Take Turns Share Be A Good Listener Respect Decisions
Growth Mindset	Use Your Time Wisely Work Hard Be Determined And Persevere Be A Problem Solver
	Be Solution Oriented 'Think Outside The Box'

Progressive Approach to Discipline

Step One: Verbal Redirections (at least two, teacher discretion)

Step Two: Take a Break (in the classroom)

Step Three: Buddy Room (student takes a break in another classroom or space)

Step Four: Dean intervention support

Step Five: Written Referral

Infractions & Consequences

Misbehavior in school disrupts teaching and learning and may cause injury to the individual who is misbehaving or others, damage property, or violate school rules or civil law. Misbehavior ranges from very minor to very serious infractions. Similar misbehavior may have different causes in different situations. Therefore, schools must use a wide range of responses to misbehavior to help students learn appropriate behavior, avoid repetition of similar incidents by the student(s) involved or others, and maintain a safe learning environment.

Listed below are misbehaviors that are so serious that a student must be removed from school to

maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. There are three sets of misbehavior that will always result in suspension, except for students with disabilities. It is expected that whenever a student is suspended, other interventions will be used as well. Other misbehaviors may result in suspension depending on the severity of the incident. In addition, Harvest Best Academy has identified nine misbehaviors that may result in referral for expulsion.

The Harvest Best Academy District complies with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act regarding procedures for suspensions, expulsions, and other disciplinary acts. Whenever a student is referred for expulsion, s/he will be given a five day suspension which can be extended up to 10 days for special education students or 15 days for general education students.

The following chart summarizes consequences for severe misbehavior which may result in suspension, and/or expulsion. Harvest Best Academy recognizes that situations may arise that are not covered by these policies and procedures. Harvest Best Academy trusts the leadership of each school to make sound decisions in the best interest of individual students and the school as a whole. The principal retains the right to take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the school, students, and staff, and to provide interventions and consequences that will help students learn appropriate behavior. It is the principal's responsibility to seek other options and to use suspension judiciously in order to maximize the amount of time students are safely and productively in class.

Infractions	Actions	Suspension	Referral for Expulsion	Police Referral
Possession of a Weapon (knife, gun, rocks, pencils, harmful objects, toy weapons)	Immediate confiscation by administration; Intervention; Parent Communication	1-5 days	Possible	Possible
Possession/Use of Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs, unauthorized/un-prescribed medicine	Immediate confiscation by administration; Intervention; Parent Communication	1-5 days	Possible	Possible
Possession/Use of Inappropriate Substances/Objects (matches, lighters, mace)	Immediate confiscation by administration; Intervention; Parent Communication	1-5 days	Possible	Possible
Other Safety Violations (running away, skipping, leaving the classroom, leaving the building)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Possible ISS	0-3 days	Possible	Possible
Physical Aggression (pushing, poking, shoving, scuffling, unfriendly touch, biting, spitting, hazing)	Intervention; Apology of Action; Possible ISS	0-3 days		

Bullying (continual/extreme verbal or physical harassment; repetitive harmful actions; spreading rumors/gossiping; social media/cyberbullying/sexting; inappropriate websites)	First Offense: Intervention; Second Offense: Peer Mediation; Third Offense: Team meeting (parents, BI, GC, SW, admin)	0-5 days	Possible	Possible
Obscene Gestures (gang related, sexual)	Intervention; Parent Communication	0-3 days		Possible
Boyfriend/Girlfriend (kissing, touching)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Repeat offenses may result in OSS	0-5 days		
Verbal Aggression (arguing, teasing, name calling, inappropriate school conversation, mocking)	Intervention; Apology of Action; Possible ISS	0-3 days		
Harassment (culture, religion, language, race, disability, LGBTQ+)	Intervention; Apology of Action; Possible ISS	0-3 days	Possible	Possible

Severe Defiance of Authority (failure to comply with the request or direction of an adult; persistent lack of cooperation)	Intervention; Apology of Action; Possible ISS	0-3 days		
Severe Temper Tantrum	Direct to BI; Parent Communication; Possible ISS	0-3 days	Possible	
Theft/Possession of Stolen Property	Intervention; Apology of Action	0-3 days	Possible	Possible
Property Offenses (vandalism, unauthorized use of school equipment)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Apology of Action	0-5 days	Possible	Possible

Cheating/Copying	Automatic zero on assignment; Parent Communication; Repeat offenses may result in ISS/OSS	0-3 days		
Forgery	Intervention; Apology of Action; Repeat offenses may result in ISS/OSS	0-3 days		

Detention Policy

It is the goal of Harvest Best Academy to provide the best possible educational experience for the students in our community. A possible alternative to suspension for students' misconduct may result in an after-school detention. While in detention, students will work on academics assigned by their classroom teacher. The parent will be notified by a school representative the day prior to the detention. The parent will be responsible for picking the child up at the time designated by school staff. Students are allotted three detentions for each term. Any offenses after that may result in suspension.

Escalation of Consequences:

At our school, we are committed to helping every scholar succeed by providing proactive supports, positive behavior interventions, restorative practices, and opportunities to learn replacement behaviors within the classroom whenever possible. Our goal is to address behavioral concerns in a manner that keeps scholars engaged in learning while promoting personal growth and accountability.

However, the safety and well-being of all scholars and staff is our highest priority. While every reasonable effort is made to support scholars within the school environment, some behaviors are so serious or unsafe that they require immediate action to protect the learning environment and the safety of others. In these situations, it may be necessary to remove a scholar from school through a suspension or other disciplinary action while appropriate interventions and supports are put into place.

Listed below are examples of behaviors that may result in a scholar being removed from school to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. Whenever a scholar is suspended, the school will continue to implement appropriate interventions and supports designed to address the underlying behavior and promote future success.

Our school complies with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regarding all procedures related to suspensions, expulsions, and other disciplinary actions.

The following chart summarizes consequences for misbehaviors, including suspension and expulsion. Our school recognizes that situations may arise that are not covered by these policies and procedures. Harvest Best Academy trusts the leadership of each school to make sound decisions in the best interest of individual students and the school as a whole. The principal retains the right to take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the school, students, and staff, and to provide interventions and consequences that will help students learn appropriate behavior. It is the principal's responsibility to seek other options and to use suspension judiciously in order to maximize the amount of time students are safely and productively in class.

Infractions	Actions	Suspension	Referral for Expulsion	Police Referral
Possession of a Weapon (knife, gun, rocks, pencils, harmful objects, toy weapons)	Immediate confiscation by administration; Intervention; Parent Communication	1-15 days	Possible	Possible
Possession/Use of Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs, unauthorized/un-prescribed medicine	Immediate confiscation by administration; Intervention; Parent Communication	1-5 days	Possible	Possible
Possession/Use of Inappropriate Substances/Objects (matches, lighters, mace)	Immediate confiscation by administration; Intervention; Parent Communication	1-5 days	Possible	Possible
Other Safety Violations (running away, skipping, leaving the classroom, leaving the building)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Detention; Possible ISS or OSS	0-3 days	Possible	Possible
Physical Aggression (pushing, poking, shoving, scuffling, unfriendly touch, biting, spitting, hazing)	Intervention; Apology of Action; Detention or OSS	0-3 days	Possible	Possible
Bullying (continual/extreme verbal or physical harassment; repetitive harmful actions; spreading rumors/gossiping; social media/cyberbullying/sexting; inappropriate websites)	First Offense: Intervention; Second Offense: Peer Mediation; Third Offense: Team meeting (parents, BI, GC, SW, admin); Possible Detention	0-5 days	Possible	Possible
Obscene Gestures (gang-related, sexual)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Detention	0-3 days		
Sexual Behaviors (kissing, touching)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Detention Repeat offenses may result in ISS or OSS	0-5 days		
Verbal Aggression (arguing, teasing, name calling, inappropriate school conversation, mocking)	Intervention; Detention; Apology of Action; Possible ISS or OSS	0-3 days		
Harassment (culture, religion, language, race, disability)	Intervention; Detention; Apology of Action; Possible ISS or OSS	0-3 days	Possible	Possible
Severe Defiance of Authority (failure to comply with the request or direction of an adult; persistent lack of cooperation)	Intervention; Apology of Action; Detention; Possible ISS or OSS	0-3 days		
Severe Temper Tantrum	Direct to BI; Parent Communication; Detention Possible ISS or OSS	0-3 days	Possible	

Theft/Possession of Stolen Property	Intervention; Apology of Action; detention	0-3 days	Possible	Possible
Property Offenses (vandalism, unauthorized use of school equipment)	Intervention; Parent Communication; Apology of Action; Possible ISS or OSS	0-5 days	Possible	Possible
Cheating/Copying	Automatic zero on assignment; Parent Communication; Repeat offenses may result in Detention/ISS/OSS	0-3 days		
Forgery	Intervention; Apology of Action; Repeat offenses may result in Detention/ISS/OSS	0-3 days		

Suspension Process

When a scholar's behavior results in a suspension, the school will follow all procedures required by the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and applicable federal and state laws.

When appropriate, and unless the scholar poses an immediate and substantial danger to themselves, others, or school property, the suspension process will include:

1. An informal administrative conference with the scholar to explain the alleged misconduct, review the available information, and provide the scholar an opportunity to share their perspective.
2. Notification of the scholar's parent or guardian by telephone as soon as reasonably possible.
3. Written notice of the suspension, including the grounds for the suspension, a summary of the facts, a readmission plan, and information regarding the scholar's rights under the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. Written notice will be provided to the scholar and mailed or otherwise delivered to the parent or guardian as required by law.
4. A suspension decision made by the school administrator in accordance with school policy and applicable law.
5. A re-entry meeting upon the scholar's return to school, when appropriate, to review expectations, identify needed supports, and develop a successful plan for returning to the learning environment.

If a scholar's conduct presents an immediate and substantial danger to themselves, other individuals, or school property, the scholar may be removed from school before the informal administrative conference. In those situations, the conference and required notices will occur as soon as practicable, consistent with Minnesota law.

The school remains committed to providing behavioral interventions, restorative practices, and appropriate supports whenever possible. Suspensions are used only when necessary to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment or when otherwise required by law. Any consideration of exclusion or expulsion will follow the procedures and due process requirements established under

the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and applicable federal law. Scholars suspended for more than five consecutive school days will be provided alternative educational services as required by Minnesota law.

Expulsion and Exclusion Process

Expulsion and exclusion are reserved for the most serious circumstances and are considered only when required to protect the safety of scholars, staff, or others, or when otherwise authorized under the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. Before recommending expulsion or exclusion, the school will consider the nature and severity of the incident, the scholar's disciplinary history, applicable interventions and supports that have been provided, and any other factors required by law.

When the school determines that expulsion or exclusion may be warranted, the following procedures will be followed in accordance with Minnesota law:

1. The school will provide the scholar and parent or guardian with written notice that expulsion or exclusion is being recommended. The notice will include the reasons for the proposed action and information regarding the scholar's rights under the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.
2. A hearing will be scheduled before an independent hearing officer, unless the parent or guardian and the school agree to waive the hearing in writing. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the procedures established by the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.
3. During the hearing, the scholar has the right to:
 - Be represented by legal counsel or another representative at the family's expense;
 - Present evidence and witnesses;
 - Confront and question witnesses, consistent with applicable law;
 - Receive a fair and impartial hearing before a decision is made.
4. Following the hearing, the hearing officer will prepare findings of fact and a recommendation. The School Board will review the hearing officer's recommendation and make the final decision regarding whether expulsion or exclusion is appropriate.
5. The School Board's decision will be provided to the parent or guardian in writing and will include the findings supporting the decision, the length of the expulsion or exclusion (if applicable), and information regarding any rights or remedies available under Minnesota law.

Throughout this process, the school remains committed to providing appropriate behavioral supports, interventions, and restorative practices whenever possible. Expulsion and exclusion are measures of last resort and are used only when required to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment or as otherwise permitted by law.

Student records related to disciplinary actions will be maintained in accordance with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and other applicable laws and regulations.

Pupil Fair Dismissal Act

Retrieve here: [Pupil Fair Dismissal Act](#)

Safety

Visitors

Visitors are welcome in all schools, and family attendance at school programs is encouraged. It is important that all visitors sign in and out at the reception desk and receive a visitor badge to wear during the visit. During the school day, all visitors should be escorted to their designated location. Harvest Best Academy reserves the right to deny or revoke permission to visit individuals or groups who do not comply with school procedures, or if the visit is not in the best interest of students, staff, or the school. A visitor who does not comply with school policies and procedures may be guilty of criminal trespass, and school personnel will call to request an immediate police response.

Technology

Technology is an important tool for teaching, learning, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Scholars are provided access to school technology resources and the internet to support educational activities, including online instruction, research, communication with teachers and classmates, and access to educational resources.

The use of school-issued devices, school networks, internet access, and digital resources is a privilege, not a right. Scholars are expected to use technology responsibly, ethically, safely, and in accordance with school policies and all applicable local, state, and federal laws.

To help provide a safe digital learning environment, the school utilizes internet filtering, monitoring, and management systems, including Securly, to help protect scholars while using school-issued devices and school-managed accounts. Consistent with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the school employs technology protection measures designed to block or filter access to visual depictions and online content that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or are harmful to minors. The school also takes reasonable measures to monitor online activity on school-issued devices and school-managed accounts to promote student safety and support appropriate educational use.

Although the school makes reasonable efforts to filter and monitor internet access, no filtering system is completely effective. Parents and guardians are encouraged to discuss responsible digital citizenship, internet safety, and appropriate online behavior with their scholars.

Scholars may not use school technology or network resources to:

- Access, create, possess, or distribute inappropriate, obscene, or illegal content.
- Harass, threaten, bully, or intimidate others, including through electronic communications.
- Access another person's accounts, files, or information without authorization.
- Attempt to bypass security measures, internet filters, or monitoring systems.
- Download, install, or use unauthorized software or applications.
- Engage in any activity that disrupts the educational environment or violates school policy or applicable law.

Violations of this policy may result in the temporary or permanent loss of technology privileges, school disciplinary action consistent with the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act and school policies, restitution for damaged equipment when appropriate, and referral to law enforcement when required by law.

School-issued devices, school-managed accounts, and data created, transmitted, received, or stored using

school technology resources are school property or school educational records, as applicable. Scholars should have no expectation of privacy when using school-owned technology or school-managed accounts. The school may access, review, or disclose information as permitted or required by law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, and other applicable state and federal laws.

Electronic Devices, Cell Phones, Tablets, etc.

Scholars are not permitted to use or make any personal electronic devices or cell phones visible in school. Harvest Best Academy encourages scholars to leave cell phones at home. If their devices are powered on, visible, or making noise, the phone will be confiscated. Scholars should also understand that they are not allowed to take pictures or videos of themselves or friends in bathrooms, lockers, or any other school areas without authorized permission. If scholars violate this policy the following steps will be taken:

- The first time a scholar's phone is confiscated, s/he will be given a warning, and the phone will be returned at the end of the day.
- The second time a scholar's phone is confiscated a parent/guardian may pick up the phone at their convenience during school hours, Monday through Friday.
- The third time will result in the scholar not being allowed to bring their device in the building or need to turn in their cellular device as they enter the building

Administration is not responsible for the upkeep of cell phones while in their possession. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to retrieve all phones as quickly as possible and hold their scholars accountable to the policies and procedures of cell phone use. For safety reasons and to minimize classroom distraction the administration asks that parents/guardians contact scholars only through the main office. We will not reimburse any items that are lost or stolen.

Wakanda Virtual Academy K-10 Digital Citizenship Policy

Purpose

At Wakanda Virtual Academy, we believe that responsible digital behavior is essential for a successful and respectful learning environment. This Digital Citizenship Policy is designed to:

- Minimize access to distracting or inappropriate digital content during school hours
- Encourage scholars to take responsibility for their online actions and participation
- Promote a safe, respectful, and focused online school community

Expectations for Scholars

All scholars are expected to follow these digital citizenship guidelines while participating in the online school environment:

1. Stay Focused on Learning

- Scholars must access only assigned platforms and learning tools during instructional time.
- Visiting unrelated websites, playing games, watching non-educational videos, or accessing personal social media during school hours is prohibited.
- Scholars may not access any content that disables Securly or attempt to bypass or access content blocked by Securly. This includes downloading content on devices without permission from the school.

2. Be Responsible Online

- Scholars must log in on time, remain engaged in live lessons, have cameras on and actively participate.
- Devices should be fully charged and ready for learning each day.
- Scholars must protect their login credentials and use their school accounts only for school-related activities.
- Chat features and online tools should be used respectfully and appropriately.

3. Demonstrate Respect and Integrity

- Scholars must use kind and appropriate language in all digital communications.
- Recording or sharing class sessions, peers, or teachers without permission is strictly prohibited.
- Plagiarism or submitting work that is not their own is a violation of academic integrity.

Consequences for Not Following the Digital Citizenship Policy

Failure to follow the digital citizenship policy will result in the following progressive consequences:

Violation Level	Consequence	Restorative Action
1st Violation: Level 1	Verbal reminder of expectations and infraction logged in Digital Citizenship Tracker Parent or Guardian is notified	Re-teaching of appropriate digital behavior Scholar is required to submit reflection to site coordinator and school leader
2nd Violation: Level 2	Conference is scheduled with family to discuss ongoing violation of policy. Site coordinator, family, and scholar are present at meeting. 2nd infraction logged in Digital	Scholar sets a digital behavior goal in collaboration with site coordinator and family. Scholar must sign behavior contract aligned with their digital behavior goal

	Citizenship Tracker Fun Friday Privilege is taking away for the week	
3rd Violation: Level 3	Conference is scheduled with school-leader, site coordinator, family and scholar. Fun Friday Privilege is taken away for two consecutive weeks	Scholar writes comprehensive letter explaining how we have reached our 3rd infraction and how they will avoid a 4th infraction. Letter will be shared at conference with school leader, site coordinator, family and scholar present.
4th Violation: Level 4	Scholar will lose technology privileges for one week and be required to complete physical work only	Parent meeting to discuss re-entry to using school technology again.

Toys, Games, and Gadgets

Scholars are not permitted to bring toys of any kind to school. All toys, cards, and games, will be confiscated and returned only to the parent/guardian. The same policies for cell phones apply for any major electronic games (PlayStations, Nintendo DS, etc.).

Video Cameras

Harvest Best Academy is authorized to use video cameras on school property and transportation vehicles to ensure the safety of all staff, students, visitors, and property. The cameras may be used in locations deemed appropriate by the Executive Director, as allowable by state and federal laws. Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record. Harvest Best Academy will comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention.

Data Privacy

Harvest Best Academy maintains student education records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13), Minnesota Statutes § 13.32, and all other applicable state and federal laws.

Student education records that identify a scholar or contain information regarding the scholar's educational progress, services, or performance are classified as private educational data. These records are accessible only to individuals who have a legitimate educational interest or as otherwise authorized or required by law. School officials may access student records when such access is necessary to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

Parents or guardians of students under the age of 18, and eligible students who are 18 years of age or older, have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's education records;

- Request the amendment of education records believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights;
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information from education records, except where disclosure is permitted without consent under FERPA or Minnesota law; and
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding an alleged failure to comply with FERPA.

Health Records

It is essential that parents/guardians cooperate with the school nurse in bringing all medical records up to date. Children whose records are not up to date in accordance with state law will be excluded from school until the nurse has been provided verification that the scholar may attend or return.

All scholar medicines will be kept in a locked cabinet. The school will keep a detailed log of all medicines that are administered.

Medication

Harvest Best Academy strongly encourages families to dispense both temporary and maintenance medications outside of school hours. Medication must be brought to school in its original container to be administered by the school nurse. Note that medication will not be given without the completion of the Administration of Medication form, which must be completed by a healthcare provider. Families can obtain a copy of this form by calling or visiting the school. This policy and the requirement to have a form on file applies to all medicine, including aspirin, Tylenol, and other over-the-counter medicines. Scholars are not allowed to have medication (prescription or non-prescription) of any kind in their possession at school; however, scholars are permitted to carry their inhaler with written consent from their primary doctor, as well as medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school and the parent or as specified in an IEP, 504 Plan, or IHP (Individual Health Plan). For further information on medication or any health related issues please call the school nurse.

Parent/Guardian Contract for Academic Expectations

As the parent/guardian of a scholar enrolled at Harvest Best Academy, I understand and agree to partner with the school in supporting my child's academic, behavioral, and personal success.

- I understand that Minnesota law requires all scholars to meet state immunization requirements or have a legally recognized exemption on file. If my child's immunization records or exemption documentation are not current as required by law, my child may be excluded from school until the required documentation is provided.
- I understand that Harvest Best Academy maintains high academic expectations for all scholars in grades K-12. Promotion to the next grade level is based on multiple measures of academic performance, demonstrated mastery of grade-level standards, classroom performance, attendance, intervention data, and the professional judgment of school staff. If my child is at risk of not meeting grade-level expectations or graduation requirements, I will be notified and invited to work collaboratively with school staff to develop and implement appropriate interventions and supports designed to improve my child's academic progress.
- I agree to attend conferences, meetings, or other scheduled appointments with teachers, counselors, administrators, or other school personnel when reasonably requested to discuss my child's academic progress, attendance, behavioral concerns, or educational programming.
- I will review school communications in a timely manner and respond as appropriate. I understand that I

am responsible for school-issued books, instructional materials, technology devices, and other school property assigned to my child. I agree to return these items in good condition or reimburse the school for loss or damage, consistent with school policy and applicable law.

- I will communicate respectfully and professionally with all members of the school community, including school employees, scholars, families, volunteers, and visitors. Harvest Best Academy is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and welcoming learning environment. Threatening, abusive, harassing, or disruptive conduct may result in restrictions on a visitor's access to school property or participation in school activities, consistent with applicable law and school policy. Such actions will not affect a scholar's right to receive a free public education.

I understand that a strong partnership between home and school is essential to my child's success and commit to working collaboratively with Harvest Best Academy to support my child's learning, growth, attendance, and positive school experience.



Parent/Guardian Letter of Commitment

Harvest Best Academy is a public charter school of choice. By enrolling your child at Harvest Best Academy, you are choosing a school that emphasizes academic excellence, strong character, meaningful family partnerships, and a safe, supportive learning environment. We believe scholars are most successful when families and the school work together.

This Letter of Commitment outlines the shared expectations that help create a positive educational experience for every scholar. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received, or will receive, the Harvest Best Academy Student and Family Handbook (Code of Conduct), will review its policies and procedures, and will partner with the school in supporting my child's success.

As a parent/guardian, I commit to the following:

- I will make every reasonable effort to ensure my child attends school regularly, arrives on time, and is picked up promptly at dismissal or, when applicable, is present at the designated transportation location.
- I understand and will support the school's uniform expectations and will work with the school to address any uniform concerns in a timely manner.
- I will support the school's behavior expectations and the Nia System, including the use of LiveSchool to recognize and reinforce positive behavior. I will work collaboratively with school staff to address behavioral concerns and support my child's growth.
- I will make every reasonable effort to participate in parent-teacher conferences, orientation activities, family engagement opportunities, and meetings requested by school staff to discuss my child's academic progress, attendance, or behavior.
- I will review school communications in a timely manner and respond when appropriate.
- I will encourage my child to complete homework, projects, and other assigned learning activities and will provide support when needed.
- I will provide a regular time and appropriate environment for my child to complete homework and study.
- I will communicate respectfully with all members of the Harvest Best Academy community and will address questions or concerns through appropriate school channels.
- I understand that Harvest Best Academy is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, and other prohibited conduct will be addressed in accordance with the Minnesota Safe and Supportive Schools Act, the Harvest Best Academy Code of Conduct, and all applicable state and federal laws. The school's response may include education, restorative practices, behavioral interventions, disciplinary action, or other appropriate measures based on the circumstances of each incident.



Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed this Letter of Commitment and understand the expectations described above. I understand that this document reflects our shared commitment to supporting my child's educational success and fostering a positive partnership between home and school. I further acknowledge that I am responsible for reviewing the Harvest Best Academy Student and Family Handbook and understanding the policies and procedures that govern the school community.

***Please return the signature page to your scholar's teacher.**

Printed Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student's Name (Please Print)

Student's grade

Date