IDEA Public Charter School
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Washington, DC 20019
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www.ideapcs.org

IDEA policies may be added or amended during the current school year. Any major policy changes will be communicated to students and their families in writing.
Welcome to IDEA Public Charter School!

This handbook is designed to help students and families learn about and understand what it means to be part of the IDEA community. Please read this handbook carefully. If you have any questions about our principles, expectations, or rules, please ask. We will be glad to explain the policies and procedures we have developed to maintain a culture of excellence and respect.

All of us at IDEA are excited to be working with our students and families to build on the strong foundation we have created. We are committed to making sure every student at IDEA has the opportunity and tools to succeed. Whether students choose to pursue college, military service, or a career in technology, IDEA will help prepare them to thrive.

IDEA is committed to developing a results-driven learning environment that includes all students, families, and staff in order to improve practice through productive effort, collaboration, critical thinking, continuous growth and reflection. The underlying principle is that IDEA is a place for learning and collaboration as we prepare for college and career readiness. This handbook sets out rules and guidelines for maximizing learning opportunities for our students in an environment of high-quality education.

We are delighted to have you with us and hope this will be an outstanding academic year for everyone.

Justin Rydstrom, Executive Director
Nicole McCrae, Principal
Nicole Seward, Chief Operating Officer
Shomari Jennings, Vice Principal
Melody Washington, Director of Student Support Services
Sara Sharpe, Academic Counselor
Andrea Zimmermann, Director of Career & Technical Education
Lori Briscoe, Dean of Culture
Natalie Hinds, Instructional Coach
IDEA Public Charter School

Preparing students with the academic, social, leadership and occupational skills for post-secondary opportunities and to be responsible citizens who contribute to the community.
Parent Boosters & Engagement Events

Engaged families are essential to the growth and development of our community. Research shows that students succeed when schools and families work together to support them. We invite you to join IDEA’s Virtual Weekly Town Halls to help us strengthen our team efforts!

Our meetings are weekly, Thursdays from 6:00 - 6:45, through our Zoom platform. Email and text reminders will be sent weekly to invite you to the event.

To learn more or get involved with the Town Hall, contact Taylor Ray at tray@ideapcs.org or join our weekly meeting.
IDEA’s Guiding Principles

Each student is an important and valued member of the IDEA community. In order to be a community member in good standing, one must embody in word and action the following principles that guide who we are and how we behave as members of the IDEA community.

- We are prepared to learn and do our best
- We respect ourselves, each other, and our community
- We take responsibility for our actions and learning
- We work together to resolve challenges in thoughtful and meaningful ways
- We celebrate our individual and collective successes

In order to live out these principles, each IDEA student must consider that his actions affect not only his own and his family’s, but also the reputation of everyone associated with IDEA. For this reason we advocate good behavior within the school and in the larger community. Good behavior is defined as a fundamental understanding of right and wrong, respect for the rights and property of others, and the exercise of self-control. With that in mind, we have created these expectations in and outside of the classroom, as well as a Code of Conduct, to ensure that the school functions in a manner that supports a superior learning environment and student achievement.

Guiding Principles in Action and Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct stems from our Guiding Principles. We’ve outlined here each principle and what it means for IDEA students to follow that principle. Our Code of Conduct also includes all disciplinary policies and procedures listed and explained elsewhere in this handbook.

We are prepared to learn and do our best
As an IDEA scholar, I will:
- Come to school on time, with my materials, and dressed in the appropriate uniform.
- Participate in my classes and focus on learning while at school.
- Challenge myself to learn and work to the best of my ability.

We respect ourselves, each other, and our community
As an IDEA scholar, I will:
- Treat students and staff with courtesy and decency.
- Take care of school property and the school building.
- Represent IDEA well even when outside school.

We take responsibility for our actions and learning
As an IDEA scholar, I will:
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity inside and outside the classroom.

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Control my thoughts, attitude, efforts, and actions every day.  
Accept the consequences of my decisions.

**We work together to resolve challenges in thoughtful and meaningful ways**  
As an IDEA scholar, I will:  
o Work to understand others’ perspectives.  
o Keep an open mind to new ideas, people, and challenges.  
o Keep a positive and encouraging attitude when faced with new opportunities.

**We celebrate our individual and collective successes**  
As an IDEA scholar, I will:  
● Encourage my peers to be their best.  
● Appreciate and encourage diversity in thoughts and beliefs.  
● Celebrate the progress of myself, my peers, and my school.

**Academic Policies**

**Academic Communications**  
Progress reports are distributed mid-quarter throughout the school year. Report cards are distributed at the end of each quarter according to the academic calendar. Students and families can access the [PowerSchool Student/Parent Portal](#) anytime throughout the quarter for real-time progress updates.

**Academic Records Requests**  
Requests for academic records (transcripts, report cards, conduct, attendance, and/or Verification of Enrollment, etc.) must be submitted in writing to the Academic Counselor. The form for such requests is available in the main office or online at [www.ideapcs.org/apps/pages/transcripts](#). Requests will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis and may take at least 5 business days to process.

**Assessments**  
Students in the 9th through 12th grades take a variety of tests, including final exams, internal IDEA assessments, and the following standardized tests:  
MAP - Measures of Academic Progress  
PARCC - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers  
MSAA - Multi-State Alternate Assessment  
WIDA - World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment  
PSAT - Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test  
SAT - Scholastic Aptitude Test  
ACT - American College Testing  
Virtual Job Shadow - Career Assessment  
The assessment calendar can be found at [www.ideapcs.org/apps/pages/assessments](#).

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Community Service
Students are required to complete 100 hours of community service to meet graduation requirements set forth by the District of Columbia. Community service must be documented annually by April 15. IDEA guides students to complete 25 hours each academic year to ensure that all 100 community service hours are performed by the end of senior year to meet requirements for graduation. Various programs at IDEA will periodically arrange for community service projects for students.

Regulations
In order to receive credit for community service, students must have an official Community Service Hours Form completed and signed by an adult who oversaw his or her service. This adult may not be an immediate family member. Students may obtain these forms from the Academic Counselor, their grade level dean or www.ideapcs.org/apps/pages/communityservice. All completed forms must be handed in to the administrative office to be entered into a student’s permanent file.

Computer Use and Internet Policy in a Remote Learning Environment
IDEA provides chromebook laptops to new families arriving to our campus for students to engage in continuous learning experiences. Using the online learning platform Canvas, students can engage in both synchronous and asynchronous learning within their courses.

To ensure that students become responsible internet users, IDEA recommends that social media website visits not be permitted during the instructional schedule, unless they are part of an assignment made by a teacher.

Course Catalog
IDEA publishes course offerings annually. It is important to note that not all courses listed are offered each semester. Course offerings are subject to change. Course offerings may be accessed at www.ideapcs.org/apps/pages/courseofferings.

Course Credit
To receive course credit to meet promotion and graduation requirements, a student may not score lower than a C- (70%) for a final grade for a course. Students who receive final grades that are 69% or below do not receive credit for the course for graduation purposes and no Carnegie Unit will be recorded on the student’s transcript. Students who do not successfully master (earn 70% or higher in) a course will be required to retake and master the course to receive credit.

Credit Recovery
IDEA offers credit recovery (summer school) during the summer for classes not passed during the previous school year.

IDEA reserves the right to offer credit recovery to students during the school year on a case by case basis.

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Competency Based Credit
IDEA scholars are provided with personalized learning opportunities that can include online and blended learning, dual enrollment and early college high schools, project-based and community-based learning, and credit recovery. Instead of relying solely on standardized assessments, students can demonstrate mastery of content in a variety of ways, including essays, portfolios, exhibitions, performances, and internships. IDEA reserves the right to allow students who showcase the ability to earn credit through this alternative accelerated path.

Grades (Calculating)
Courses are either semester-long or year-long courses.

Semester Courses: For half-credit (.5 credit) courses, both quarters are equal to 100% of the final grade. Quarterly and final exams are calculated as part of the final grade.

Year-long Courses: For year-long courses (1.0 credit), all four quarters are equal to 100% of the final grade. Quarterly and final exams are calculated as part of the second and fourth quarter grades.

Grade Scale/Policy
Students must earn a grade average of 70% or higher to receive credit for all offered courses at IDEA. IDEA uses a letter grading system to measure student progress in courses, and does not recognize “D” grades as mastery (unless previously awarded from another school). The grading scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100–97</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96–93</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92–90</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89–87</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86–83</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82–80</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79–77</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76–73</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72–70</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>69–50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades for an academic year are comprised of four quarters that are weighted equally. Percentages per quarter (25%) are determined by a student’s mastery of the curriculum.
Graduation Requirements

2012 and beyond Graduation Requirements*
(Students entering 9th grade after September 4, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEA Course</th>
<th>IDEA Graduation Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Carnegie Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Physical Education</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>100 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Acceptance</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please note that this is subject to change based on curricular needs, which are reviewed on an annual basis.

**select courses may be amended due to Covid-19**

Special Education Services
IDEA PCS abides by all applicable laws regarding special education in public schools. IDEA’s staff includes special education coordinators, teachers, and social workers to meet the needs of special education scholars and to assist in proper placement.

All scholars for which an area of concern has been identified which is impeding the scholar academically will go through the Student Support Team process. Once that process has concluded and the scholar continues to require academic support or the process has been circumvented directly by the parent (either with a written or verbal request or a Parent Referral Form), the following process will occur.

IDEA must decide whether a student is eligible for special education services within 60 days of receiving consent to evaluate the child, as required by the District of Columbia. IDEA will document all parent or guardian requests for evaluations within three business days. IDEA staff must inform the Director of Special Education as soon as a parent requests an evaluation for his or her scholar. IDEA’s special education team will gather all documentation (attendance,
discipline referrals, SST documentation, scholar work, and classroom observations) for submission into the Analyzing Existing Data (AED) section of the eligibility process. Once this has been completed, the team (parent, teacher, Local Education Area (LEA) representative, evaluator and related service provider) will meet to review the documents. At that time, the team will decide whether to move forward with the eligibility process by conducting an evaluation. The decision of whether to evaluate and efforts to obtain parental consent will be completed within 30 days of the referral. The goal at IDEA is to serve the scholar in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

Please see the District of Columbia Notice of Procedural Safeguards: Rights of Parents of Scholars with Disabilities

**ELL Scholar Placement**
All scholars are given a home language survey asking parents to indicate the primary language spoken in the home. If English is indicated, scholars are assumed to be English proficient. If any language other than English is checked, the scholar's name will be submitted to the English Language Learner Coordinator in order to check the status of previous testing. All other scholars will be tested at the school level to determine their English proficiency level by the ELL Coordinator.

English Language Development (ELD) is a component of a total program designed to serve the needs of English language learners. ELD is a specific curriculum that addresses the teaching of the English language according to the level of proficiency of the ELL scholar.

**Promotion and Retention Policies**
Students must meet the following criteria to move to the subsequent grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>English Credits</th>
<th>Other Credits</th>
<th>Credits for Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 to 10</td>
<td>English 1</td>
<td>Algebra I AND History OR Science</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 to 11</td>
<td>English 2</td>
<td>Geometry AND History OR Science</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11 to 12</td>
<td>English 3</td>
<td>Algebra II, Spanish I, History OR Science</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 to graduate</td>
<td>English 4</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accordingly, students must meet applicable academic, community service, and discipline standards in order to be promoted to the next grade level. All students meeting these benchmarks are automatically candidates for promotion. Students who do not meet these criteria may be retained. To receive a diploma, seniors must meet all graduation requirements.

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Retention
If a student fails one or more core classes or does not obtain the necessary credits, he or she could be retained at the present grade level. Core classes include English, mathematics, history, science, and Spanish.

Virtual Learning
Students will attend two 90-minute classes in the morning to receive synchronous learning. Each day of the week is designated for a different pair of subjects. After lunch students will work on projects connected to the current unit of learning from the morning classes. This will be done independently. During the afternoon, students will have the opportunity to attend office hours on Mon/Tue and Th/Fr from 2:00-3:00pm or by appointment. There are no classes on Wednesdays to allow for building cleaning and staff professional development.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian
IDEA selects a valedictorian and salutatorian from the senior class each year. To be eligible, a student must have been enrolled at IDEA for three consecutive school years. The valedictorian will be the student who has the highest cumulative grade point average (weighted GPA). The salutatorian will be the student with the second highest cumulative GPA.

The IDEA administration may determine that a student does not qualify to be valedictorian or salutatorian if he or she has any discipline infractions or is not in good standing based on his or her conduct record.