School Vision Statement:
Creating inclusive excellence in public education.

School Mission Statement:
We exist to foster a diverse and equitable community of youth and adults striving together for academic, personal, and civic excellence.
Welcome to the 2019 - 2020 School Year

Dear Highline Families,

Thank you for choosing us! As a charter school of choice, we know that you have made an effort as a family to find a high-quality school for your child. We are excited that your family is part of our Highline family and we look forward to our partnership as your student matures over the next several years.

We are proud of our school and its history of excellence. We have been providing an effective whole-child education for a diverse student community for 15 years now. Our Southeast campus has been a distinguished school since 2009 and continues to provide a program of excellence for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Our Northeast campus is in its fifth year and serves students in preschool through fifth grade. It is in high demand in the community and is recognized by many as a school of excellence in Green Valley Ranch.

As the Executive Director of Highline and Board Chair, we are both deeply committed to carry on the traditions of excellence at Highline and to work collaboratively to help us to continue to improve. We welcome your feedback as we move forward, striving together, to create the wonderful community of Highline.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors and the Highline staff at both campuses, we welcome you. It's going to be a great year!

Sincerely,

Chris Ferris, Highline Executive Director and
Brent Baribeau, Highline Board Chair
Having done extensive research into successful public charter schools, we understand the complexity of our mission. We employ numerous research-based design strategies that assist us in fulfilling our ambitious mission and staying true to our values:

- **Performance Grouping:** We meet all students at their individual level through flexible performance groupings in the core subjects of literacy and math. Students work in performance-based groups that allow them to learn and be challenged at their current level of understanding. All students are instructed with grade level content and curriculum, with some students receiving additional support and other students receiving extra challenge. This ensures that we effectively challenge our accelerated learners by providing them with advanced, rigorous instruction while also preventing students who need more support from becoming frustrated or falling through the cracks.

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Students benefit both from homogeneous and from heterogeneous groupings. While students are performance grouped for literacy and math, they are grouped with their age-mates for science, social studies and all specials. Students in grades K - 2 are heterogeneously grouped for language arts, while 3rd - 8th grade students are performance grouped for language arts. At the middle school level, students are also performance grouped for Spanish. Through this mix of heterogeneous and homogeneous groupings, students learn to collaborate effectively with their peers, many of whom have divergent learning styles and abilities. In addition, by differentiating the difficulty of assessments and assignments within the class, students are still challenged to fulfil their individual potential.

- **Spanish:** All students receive Spanish instruction beginning in kindergarten. As students emerge into the middle school grades, Spanish becomes an increasingly significant focus of academic study.
• **Technology:** Students are exposed to technology throughout their day and technology is integrated into the curriculum. Classrooms are equipped with a variety of computers, ipads and SMART boards (depending on need), and technology is available for all students to use.

• **Small Classes:** We provide a small, safe, structured environment where all students are known, respected, and valued as individuals of great potential. At the Southeast campus, we have two classes per grade level with 26 - 29 students per class. At the Northeast campus, we have three classes per grade level with 26- 29 students per class. Bubble classes may be added as needed at the discretion of the principal.

• **High Expectations:** We insist on holding students to high academic and behavioral expectations. Students are required to complete regular homework and actively participate in class. Students are required to wear uniforms, to speak and work respectfully with one another, to follow directions of authority and to uphold all of the school values outlined in REACH.

• **REACH:** We actively prepare students to succeed in the diverse environments that await them—in college, in the workplace, and in community life—by teaching them about responsibility, empowerment, aspiration, citizenship, and honesty, the five key character traits emphasized through our REACH program. We also ask our students to REACH In for Self Growth, to REACH Up for Academic Excellence, and to REACH Out to their community.

• **Student Leadership:** We encourage students to take a leadership role in creating a productive learning environment. Students participate in building the school’s culture, developing service projects, and leading community-based activities. Whenever possible, we include student representatives as partners in shaping the school. Students serve on our hiring committee, review and give
input on critical school policies, and provide feedback about the school’s performance on a regular basis. Through this process, the school gains valuable information for its own improvement and students learn critical skills, including analysis, leadership, collaboration and public speaking.

- **Parental Partnerships:** As a parent and community-founded school, we rely heavily upon parental partnerships to ensure our success. While we are not a parent-run school, we are a parent-involved school. In addition to encouraging a parent commitment of hours (40 hours for a double headed household and 15 for single headed household), we also encourage parents to serve as thinking partners and leadership colleagues in shaping and implementing our vision. Parents serve on our Board of Directors, accountability committee, hiring committee, and provide constant feedback to the school about its successes, areas of needed improvement, and future direction.

- **National Common Core Standards:** Highline aligns its curriculum to the National Common Core Standards as adopted by the CO State Department of Education. These standards replaced the state standards in 2011. It is not a curriculum, but a list of learning goals in each content area for each grade level. The curriculum we have adopted is based off of these standards (Eureka Math and Engage New York for language arts). The Common Core standards, in general, require more critical thinking and depth of understanding than the previous state standards. Therefore students will be asked to explain their thinking, write about their understanding, and cite evidence from text to support their answers frequently, even at the youngest grade level.

**History**

The concept of Highline Academy was born in the spring of 2003 by a group of parents and community members in southeast Denver. This founding committee was committed to creating a charter school that set high standards for all students and provides all students with the tools needed to reach high levels of academic and character achievement. The founding committee hoped to accomplish this vision through a content-rich, sequential curriculum; a safe, disciplined environment; differentiated instruction in core subjects; and a curriculum that includes a focus on
character development and respect for diversity. Highline Academy opened its doors in August, 2004 to approximately 300 students in grades K - 6. In the fall of 2005, 7th grade was added, and in the fall of 2006, 8th grade was added. Highline Academy is a K - 8 school that serves approximately 500 students. In 2012, Highline Academy was approved by the Denver Public School Board to replicate its successful program in Far Northeast Denver. In August 2014, Highline Academy Northeast opened its doors to approximately 130 Early Childhood Education (ECE), Kindergarten and 1st grade students in the Green Valley Ranch Community. It is now an ECE to 5th grade school.

Over the past 15 years, many things have changed at Highline Academy including staff, curriculum and standards. As an organization we believe in deepening our foundation of our mission, REACH and core values. However, we know that as our community evolves we must evolve with it and to keep current to both best practice and the guiding educational laws in Colorado and Denver. Examples of changes include adopting the National Common Core Standards, shifting curriculums (for example Saxon to Eureka Math) to ones that are more rigorous and culturally responsive to our students, and adding curriculum as well as changing scheduling to meet the needs of English Language Learners. These practices only continue to build on who we are as a school and ensure we are meeting our mission to close achievement gaps.

**What Makes Charter Schools Unique?**

A charter school is a free, public school of choice. Existing now in many states, charter schools have sprung up across the nation over the past decade in an effort to reform our public school system. The charter school movement is based on the premise that education is not a one-size-fits-all proposition, and as such, families should be entitled to choice within public education to select a school that best suits the needs of their individual student. Charter schools trade greater autonomy (site-based control) for higher accountability. Charter schools have flexibility to select their own curriculum, hire/manage/fire their own staff, and manage their own financial resources. In exchange for this flexibility, charter schools operate under short-term renewable contracts that force more accountability. In Colorado, for example, charter schools operate under a contract
with the local school district (in our case Denver Public Schools). If a charter school fails to produce results or meet parents’ needs, it can lose its charter contract. Most charter schools are organized around a strong and specific mission, and each has a unique educational philosophy and program. Charter schools are also differentiated by their parent involvement. In Colorado, many charter schools are organized and founded by parents seeking a better educational alternative for their children. As a result, parents tend to be more involved in decision-making and spend more time volunteering at the school.

**Other important characteristics of charter schools:**

- They are always tuition free.
- They are non-religious.
- They are open to everyone, regardless of ability or performance level.
- They must meet the state content standards and take all required state assessments.
- They must meet all special education laws.
- They must get accredited by the school district, just like your neighborhood school.
- They are supported by tax dollars, just as District schools, but they are governed by their own Board of Directors and can make their own choices about policy, curriculum and hiring.

**Highline School Hours:**

Drop off begins at 7:30am. Classes begin promptly at 7:50am. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, school ends at 3:30. Wednesdays are early release at 2:10pm. Please note that students will be engaged in learning until the end of their school day.

**Before and After School:** An outside vendor at each campus provides morning care from 6:30 am until school begins and after school until 6:00 pm. Please visit our website to find more information about the aftercare program on your campus at www.highlineacademy.org
Academic Policies

**Academic Differentiation:** Highline Academy Charter School is committed to the success of every student and has therefore built an academic program that ensures all students are working toward fulfilling their individual potential. To help build a community of learners in which all students feel pride and investment, Highline Academy Charter School has developed a pyramid of supports to assure all students have equitable access to necessary resources in order to foster their academic success.

**Performance Grouping Placement:** All new students are placed in performance groups for math and literacy based on the results of formal assessments administered in the spring or fall. Returning students are placed based on the results of these assessments as well as on work samples and teacher observations from the previous year. Highline adheres to the philosophy of flexible performance grouping. As such, we commit to re-assessing and re-assigning performance groups, as necessary. A collaborative decision regarding the student’s ideal placement will be made between instructors and administration. Parents will be notified of each change of placement.

**Middle School Homework Support:** A homework check happens every day. Any student with incomplete or missing homework will attend a homework support group to complete the assigned work during lunch of the same day.

**Elementary Intervention Classes:** Intervention support is provided during our math and literacy classes for elementary students who need additional help.

**Class Placement Policy:** Homeroom classes are assigned at the sole discretion of Highline’s faculty and administration. Classroom placements are based on a complex analysis of students’ academic performance, behavioral record, age, gender, race, and learning styles. Classes are intentionally balanced in order to promote the success of all students. Parents/guardians who have a compelling placement request based on a student’s social, emotional, physical or academic health must submit a request to the principal in writing by June 1st. While such requests will be considered, unless they come from a health care provider, there is no guarantee that they will be fulfilled. We do not honor teacher requests based purely on preference.
Students with Special Needs:
All students are welcome in the inclusive community of Highline. We will work with students, families and teachers to support all students in meeting the academic, civil, and personal excellence expectations for Highline students. At times, some students with IEPs may have a personal plan for follow up on behavioral issues. Federal and state law provides certain procedural rights and protections relating to the discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A copy of these rights may be obtained from the principal, but individual student plans can only be shared with that student’s family.

Field Trips: Highline Academy Charter School makes use of community and regional resources to enhance its curriculum. Elementary classroom teachers plan an average of three field trips per year that support students’ understanding of key academic and cultural concepts. All students are expected to attend field trips as they are expected to participate in all other academic activities. Field trips are not optional attendance activities, and Highline is not responsible for providing individualized instruction to students who are unable, for approved reasons, to attend. Instead, such students will be supervised in another classroom while completing independent work.

Parents/guardians must sign a permission slip and submit student fees prior to a student’s participation in a field trip. Highline will never deny participation to a student based on funding. Families for whom the field trip fee is prohibitive should speak directly with their classroom teacher well before the date of the field trip. Students without a signed permission slip on the date of the activity will not be permitted to attend the field trip. Students must wear the school uniform, (unless directed otherwise by the teacher), and uphold all school-wide behavioral expectations while on Highline Academy sponsored field trips, including while being transported to these activities. The school will apply its discipline policy consistently on field trips, including during bus transportation.

Grading System: Highline Academy subscribes to a philosophy of grading called standards based education (SBE). Grades are based on specific measurable standards, not on a curve. As such, students at Highline are graded against absolute standards, as defined by Common Core standards, Colorado state standards, and teacher-designed standards. Standards define explicitly
for students what they need to know, understand, and be able to do to achieve academic mastery. As opposed to traditional grading scales that assess students in relation to one another (i.e., on a curve), Highline assesses students based on their mastery of key academic skills and basis of knowledge. Practically speaking, this means that as a teacher is grading a class set of essays, s/he is not comparing one to the next to determine grades (i.e., on a curve), but instead evaluating each essay independently and against explicitly articulated performance standards, usually communicated to students ahead of time via a rubric or benchmark checklist. Students are then assessed against their progress in reaching proficiency on each of the benchmarks addressed in the curriculum. Students’ grades are reported for their progress made on each benchmark as a score of 1-4.

**Report Cards** are provided to parents through the DPS parent portal. Families can also check student grades during the year in the portal. Families are notified when grades are finalized each semester and a printed version of what is in the portal is sent home.

**Homework Norms:** As a general rule, students may expect to have approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level per night. For instance, a 1st grader might have approximately 10 minutes of homework and a 5th grader approximately 50 minutes of homework per night. Homework will be in math and reading only for elementary students. In addition, students and families are asked to engage in daily reading outside of school. Highline does not assign weekend homework on a regular basis. Occasionally a student may be asked to work on a project, complete a missing assignment or study for a test over a weekend.

Teachers may allow time in class to begin work on homework. Therefore, the amount of effort students put in during school hours will directly affect the amount of homework the student has that evening. It is the student’s responsibility to track homework assignments using their student planners.

Middle School students who fail to complete the previous night’s homework will be assigned to a lunch-time support meeting where they will have the opportunity to catch up on their academic work. Elementary school teachers will work with students on a case by case basis if homework is not regularly being completed. Consequences may include having to make up homework during lunch, recess, and/or a parent meeting to discuss.
**Make Up Work and Missed Tests:** Students are granted one class day per day of absence to make up missed work. Families taking extended absences, although discouraged, may request work in advance - but it is up to the teacher’s discretion if they will be able to meet this request. Upon return from an absence, it is the student or parent/guardian’s responsibility to collect a completed “We Missed You!” form from the homeroom teacher. This form notes all missed assignments, class work, and assessments.

If a student misses an assessment during his/her absence, it is the student’s responsibility to schedule a day and a time to make up these missed tests and quizzes. The student has two opportunities to schedule a time with the teacher to make up missed assessments. If those two scheduled appointments are missed by the student, then the score for the missed test/quiz will be marked as a “0”.

**Retention Policy:** Highline Academy Charter School believes it is necessary for the educational professionals within our building to have the final say in student retention. As such, we have sought and received a waiver from the standard DPS retention policy. This waiver grants the school the final authority in all retention decisions.

If we promote students before they have demonstrated the ability to meet our academic standards, their academic weaknesses will continue to compound, and students will only grow increasingly frustrated with the rigor of our academic program. As such, Highline students earn promotion to the next grade level only when they have gained proficiency on the critical benchmarks of their current grade level. Grade retention may increase the likelihood that students will succeed in meeting challenging academic and behavioral expectations at the next grade level. Retention provides a second opportunity to master skills, and is recommended only after other interventions aimed to support the student have been documented. Grade retention will depend on several factors including the following:

- **Academic Proficiencies:** Any student with two or more grades of C or D on his or her report card will automatically be considered for retention
- **Maturity**
- **Satisfactory completion of assigned work**
- **Likely success in completing the academic work at the next grade level with**
independence and proficiency

Grade retention or acceleration will be based on the best interests of the student and his/her educational success, and will be determined by a team of educators including teachers and administrators.

**Special Education:**

Like all public schools, Highline Academy Charter School provides special education services to students who qualify for such assistance. If a student is having persistent difficulty with school work, parents may wish to consider making a referral for an evaluation by the Student Intervention Team (SIT). If after a minimum of 30 days these general education interventions do not support the student in making adequate progress, the SIT team may refer the student for Special Education testing. Such testing cannot be conducted without prior written consent from a parent/guardian. A special education evaluation might result in the creation and implementation of an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). This document outlines strategies and services for meeting the student’s academic needs and provides legal support to ensure that they receive such assistance.

**Standardized Testing:** In addition to classroom and curriculum based assessments, Highline Academy Charter School students take standardized assessments each year, including the CMAS, internally created interim assessments, and literacy assessments mandated by the Colorado READ Act. Highline uses the results of these assessments to triangulate data and strategize for individual student and school-wide improvement. Per state law, Highline Academy will automatically distribute individual CMAS and PARCC results to parents/guardians each year within two weeks of the school’s receiving them from Denver Public Schools.

**Communication Between Home & School**

Highline Academy Charter School is dedicated to a high level of communication between parents, students and teachers. We use several methods of communication, all listed below.

**Board Meetings:** Parents are invited and encouraged to attend Board Meetings. Meetings
are held monthly and alternate between the Northeast and the Southeast campus each month, have specific agendas, and begin promptly at 6:15 pm. If there is an agenda item that you would like to add, please contact the Chair of the Board in advance. The schedule of meetings and locations can be found on our website at www.highlineacademy.org. Agendas are posted at each campus and on the school website on Thursday prior to each meeting.

**Conferences:** Parent - teacher conferences provide needed opportunities for parents/guardians and teachers to exchange useful information about the educational and social needs and progress of students. At conferences, teachers will review student progress and note any areas of special concern. By attending conferences, parents/guardians have the opportunity to work collaboratively with the teacher to address academic or behavioral problems early in the school year so that they do not have a negative impact on a student’s overall performance. By attending conferences, parents/guardians send a clear signal to their students that school is important and that they are willing to partner with teachers to further their child’s education.

- Per its contract with Denver Public Schools, Highline must maintain a 95% attendance rate at parent/teacher conferences. Please mark these dates on your calendars now, as your attendance is required. Each conference will last 20 minutes, and will be scheduled directly with your child’s teacher. Conference dates can be found on the school calendar and on the website, www.highlineacademy.org

**Additional Parent- Teacher Meetings:** Teachers may not be available for ad-hoc conversations with parents/guardians due to other responsibilities or duties. Faculty and administrators are happy to schedule a meeting with you if needed with advance notice. Please email or call in advance to arrange such a meeting.

**Newsletters:** Every Thursday the office staff produces an electronic newsletter which outlines activities and announcements for Highline Academy Charter School. The newsletter is emailed to families with a current email address and posted on the Highline Academy website.

**Thursday Folders:** Highline has provided each student with a designated Thursday Folder to use as a primary home/school communication vehicle. Each Thursday, this folder is sent home
containing class work, tests, and pertinent classroom / school-wide updates. Each week, parents/guardians should empty and read the contents of the folder. Parents/guardians should sign and return any documents needing attention. Please note: Highline does not assume responsibility for information parents/guardians choose not to read. By not reviewing in detail the updates contained in each Thursday folder, you are releasing your claim to further action pertaining to said information.

**Infinite Campus One Call System:** The Infinite Campus (IC) one call system uses voice message, text, and email to notify you of various events at Highline. IC will also be used to let you know information specifically related to your student or family, such as an overdrawn lunch account, attendance, and weather related closures or delays. Please follow up on these phone blasts if it has specific information about your student(s). If you are not receiving regular phone/email messages from Highline, it is your responsibility to update your phone number and email address with the front office.

**Classroom Observations:** While Highline encourages parental/guardian presence in the school building, out of respect for our teaching faculty and student body, we ask that you arrange for classroom observations 24 hours in advance. Please arrange your observations with your classroom teacher, who will alert the front office of your appointment. Usually, your request for an observation will be accommodated. However, due to assessments, specials schedules, and the nature of certain classroom activities, we may on occasion have to ask that you find an alternate time.

- Parents/guardians who want to drop in for an impromptu visit with their children are encouraged to do so during lunch and recess.
- Parents/guardians wishing to visit a classroom other than the class their child attends must receive permission from the principal.

**Parent/Guardian Education Nights:** Highline Academy Charter School holds Parent/Guardian Education Rights during the school year. These events are designed to educate parents about topics related to your child’s education and to help parents gain a deeper understanding of how and what your child is learning. Parent Education events will be published in the newsletter and shared via Infinite Campus messaging.
**Telephone Use and Messages:** To facilitate home/school communication, phones are located in every classroom. All staff members have voicemail accounts that can be accessed by calling the school’s main number, 303 - 759- 7808. Students will only be permitted to use the phone in cases of an emergency. Please feel free to leave voicemails for any teacher, staff member or administrator.

**Email:** Email is the preferred way of contacting faculty or staff members at Highline. All employees have email addresses (listed in the directory) and most prefer it as a mode of communication. Please be patient, our faculty and staff receive many voice and email messages. Our goal is to respond within 48 hours to all non-emergency communication.

**Student Planners:** Student planners are issued to all Highline Academy Charter School students in grades 1 – 8. Planners are used to record homework assignments and to provide a daily home-school communication vehicle. Students are expected to have their planners with them each day and in every class except PE. Planners are provided to teach students valuable-lifelong organizational skills. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher if there is a question about the use of the planner. Third through eighth grade student planners include a hall pass page. Students in 6th – 8th grades must carry their planners with them as their hall pass. There is a $5 replacement fee for a lost planner.

**Website:** Highline Academy Charter School maintains and updates our website with information about the school. Please visit our website at [www.highlineacademy.org](http://www.highlineacademy.org)

**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act:**

Student education records are official and confidential documents protected by one of the nation’s strongest privacy protection laws, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). FERPA applies to all schools that receive federal education funds, including Highline Academy Charter School. Non-compliance can result in the loss of those funds. Confidential education records include student registration forms, contact information, graded papers, academic records (including report cards), discipline files, social security numbers linked to names, and student information displayed on a computer screen. All school employees and school volunteers are required to keep student information secure and confidential, and to protect the rights of students.

The essence of this act: Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review their own
child’s educational records (any records from which the student can be individually identified), to the exclusion of third parties. Students also have this right when they reach age 18. Highline is committed to responding to parental requests for student information within 15 days, and only when they have been put in writing. Highline charges an administrative fee of $0.50 per photocopied page to cover the expense of time and resources involved in providing such records. Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents/guardians have the right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by Highline Academy to comply with the requirements of the act.

Institutions and their employees may not disclose information about students, nor permit inspection of their records, without the parent or student’s written permission - unless such action is covered by certain exceptions as stipulated in the Act.

Practically speaking, FERPA prohibits all employees from discussing confidential student information with third parties, including parents and guardians. For instance, should two students engage in a disciplinary act together, the school is prohibited from naming or discussing the other involved student in conversations with parents/guardians. Similarly, should a parent request an explanation of a discipline or academic event that did not involve his/her child, but which transpired in his/her child’s classroom, the school is not permitted to disclose any names or details of events, nor disclose the resultant consequences.

All school officials - teachers, administrators, staff, Board members, and volunteers - must all comply with the expectations of FERPA; and therefore may not discuss any student other than your own with you at any time or for any reason.

One exception allowed by law is directory information, which includes information such as name, address and telephone number. This information is provided in the Highline Academy Student Directory for all families who state in writing that they wanted to be included in the directory.

**Student and Community Life**

In order to create an environment in which students can reach the high levels of academic and character achievement promoted at Highline Academy Charter School, the school is committed
to providing a safe, well structured, and orderly environment for all students. When classrooms function in a manner such that students know the school's expectations of them, good work happens; teachers are able to teach and students are able to learn. All students will be held accountable for actions that impede a teacher's ability to teach and other students' ability to learn.

**Celebrations and Birthdays:**

Due to the diversity of our student population and the intense academic program that Highline Academy Charter School provides its students, the school does not celebrate the holidays of any one particular religion or culture. To provide a familiar environment for our students, we do not decorate for any holidays or have children dress in costumes. Please do not send your student to school with Halloween or Valentine's Day treats or cards as they will not be distributed. Flowers, gifts and balloons may not be sent to the school for any reason.

**Birthday Treats:**

Birthdays are very important to young children, and we would like to help them celebrate. Please check with your child's teachers about any food allergies in the class. We do have several students with significant nut allergies which need to be closely monitored, products with nuts, traces of nuts and/or nut oils are prohibited.

- In kindergarten, birthdays will be celebrated on each child's birthday. Children may bring store bought cupcakes or other small treats to class on their birthdays if there is enough for each child. Please inform the homeroom teacher in advance that treats are coming so that a few minutes can be set aside to share them. Include napkins, plates, or any necessary utensils.

- In 1st-5th grade, birthdays will be acknowledged monthly, in celebration of all students who were born in that given month. Your child's homeroom teacher will notify parents of the exact date of the monthly celebration. Parents/guardians may bring store-bought treats to share with the entire class.

- In Middle School birthdays will be acknowledged, but not with food or materials from home.
**Birthday Parties and Invitations:** Please do not ask your child or the teachers to distribute invitations to birthday parties at school, even if the whole class is invited. We strongly encourage parents to mail invitations using the school directory.

**Behavior Support**

**The Goal:** Highline Academy takes pride in its diversity. Our students’ ethnicity, culture, background, and needs vary from student to student. This richness provides an opportunity to learn and grow with each other, as well as to challenge the status quo. Highline’s positive behavior system is designed to support our diverse community of youth and adults working together as positive partners in creating an inclusive learning community committed to constant growth and reflection as well as to high standards of conduct and learning. While Highline strives to uphold consistent behavioral expectations school wide, it should be noted that employees retain the right to make discretionary decisions about discipline.

**PBS Defined:** The positive behavior system (PBS) framework organizes adults and students to create a social-culture in schools that will encourage positive behavior and interactions while discouraging problem behaviors. This social-culture will lead to a safer environment where students achieve academically and build positive relationships with each other and adults.

When coming to school, adults and students should know what to expect and what is expected of them. When students know and understand procedures and expectations, there will be less time spent on off-task behaviors and more time available for academic instruction. A positive behavior system allows us to accomplish our mission of preparing students for success in academic and civic life.

**Positive:** Focus on what we want students to do….the positive.

**Behavior:** Focus on specific behavioral expectations, versus concepts such as those espoused through our REACH program. Focus on what appropriate behavior looks like.

**System:**

DEFINE – Clear and concise definition of behavior expectations

TEACH – Direct teaching of behavior expectation

REMIND – Daily reminders and supervision

CELEBRATE – Consistent acknowledgement of the expected behavior
EDUCATE – Consistent correction of the problem behavior

For 80-85% of children, defining, teaching, and reminding is all that is needed for them to know, understand and exhibit desired behaviors. The remaining 15-20% of students need more help in learning procedures and behaviors, just as 10-20% of a classroom will need additional support in learning the skills and content presented in academic instruction.

**Middle School Advisory Program**

Highline Academy advisory program is designed to support our students academically, socially, and personally as they move through their middle school years. Each middle school student will be assigned an advisor with a group of 10-16 students who are the same grade level. Advisors serve as a touch point for students for both academic and social issues. Students start and end each day with their advisory class.

**The REACH Program:**

Highline Academy’s REACH incentive program teaches our students important values by rewarding behavior that reflects our key REACH values - Responsibility, Empowerment, Aspiration, Citizenship and Honesty. In order to better communicate these to students we have created three categories of REACH behavior:

- **REACH In:** Students who demonstrate they are working on their own goals, such as developing stronger organizational or impulse control skills, developing self-awareness and learning how their behavior impacts those around them.

- **REACH Out:** Students who demonstrate they are working to make the community better for all. This may include students who support others in solving conflicts, helping to take care of the school or campus grounds, are friendly and work well with all of the students in their classes, or who speak up appropriately when there is a problem.

- **REACH Up:** Students demonstrate that they are striving for their academic potential and taking intellectual risks. This may include choosing a harder book to read, studying extra for a test, or
challenging one’s self in any way to improve academic performance.

**Incentives:**

REACH Cards: Given by classroom teachers to honor and support students who have been demonstrating their REACH behaviors in class.

REACH Shirts: Teachers award students their REACH T-shirts for demonstrating all of the REACH In, Out, and Up qualities. Students are then presented with their REACH shirts and can wear them to school on Fridays.

REACH Awards: Students who consistently demonstrate the school’s REACH goals are nominated by their classroom teachers monthly. Nominations and supporting reasons / examples are submitted, final decisions are made by the school administration. All students who receive a REACH award are celebrated in a school wide assembly and invited to add their handprint to Highline’s REACH for Success Wall. Parent/guardians are encouraged to attend this school-wide recognition assembly.

A REACH award will be given monthly in each of the following categories:

- Reach Up — The Booker T. Washington Award for outstanding achievement in academics
- Reach In — The Aldous Huxley Award for Recognition of Self-Growth
- Reach Out — The Margaret Mead Award for Service to the Community

**Restorative Justice**

In keeping with new state laws regarding disciplinary practices, Highline uses the Restorative Justice approach to help resolve conflicts. The restorative justice process enables students who are involved in a conflict with another student, or a staff member, to have an opportunity to discuss the problem with the person involved and a trained staff member facilitating. In the discussion, both parties can express what happened, how it affected them, take responsibility for their action, and then suggest solutions to restore any harm caused. All Highline staff was trained in the restorative justice process and it is used regularly to support students. After learning the practice of restorative justice, students
are able to develop stronger problem solving skills, which they can apply before future conflicts arise. Restorative Justice is not a replacement to consequences for inappropriate or dangerous behavior, but it can help the school staff better understand the conflict and allow students a voice and ability to take responsibility for their actions.

**Consequences**

While Highline Academy will take a proactive and positive approach to discipline in our building, there will be times when misbehaviors or choices in behavior lead to consequences. Highline Academy holds our students to the highest behavioral standards in order to be prepared for top high schools and colleges. Our building must remain focused on learning.

**Lunch/Recess Detention K-5**

Students in lower elementary who have reached the red color on their clip chart, or students in upper elementary who lose 3 or more class dojo points in one day, may be asked to serve a detention. This detention may be served at lunch / recess with their homeroom teacher or a member of the administration. Students serving detention may lose partial to full recess and lunch period, dependent upon the severity of the situation. Anytime a detention is assigned, the assigning party will contact the family of the student by phone or email.

**Lunch/Recess Detention 6-8**

A middle school student detention will be served in a middle school classroom. Students should collect their lunch and report immediately. Students may work on school work if deemed appropriate by the issuing teacher. A call or email from the teacher who issued the detention will be made to inform parents/guardians of the incident. Further details can be acquired by calling the issuing teacher.

**Lunchtime Homework Support 1 - 5**

Elementary school teachers will work with students on a case by case basis if homework is not regularly being completed. Consequences may include having to make up homework during lunch, recess, and/or a parent meeting to discuss further.
**Lunchtime Homework Support 6 - 8**

In an effort to support students with work completion and to provide additional academic assistance, Homework Support will take place daily during middle school lunch. Students who do not complete homework assignments will be required to attend Homework Support in order to complete their work and be fully prepared for class. Homework Support will be run by a classroom teacher, who will also be able to provide academic assistance as needed. It is our hope that this shift will provide a stronger structure for accountability and work completion, thus making a positive impact on student achievement.

**In-School Suspension**

A student who receives an in-school suspension will remain in the building and will continue to have access to the curriculum, but will be separate from classmates and peers. An in-school suspension may also result in natural consequences, such as cleaning graffiti, writing an apology or re-taking a test. A parent/guardian will be strongly urged to meet with an administrator before the student’s re-admittance to class. A student will remain on in-school suspension until she shows that s/he can follow Highline Academy Charter School behavioral rules and expectations. A student who is serving an in-school suspension and continues to fail to meet our expectations may be subject to an out of school suspension. Any student whose behavior consistently disrupts the learning of other student’s academic achievement may be subject to an immediate suspension from class. Only when the student demonstrates the appropriate behavior will that student be allowed to return to class. Additional consequences may follow at the discretion of the Principal.

**Alternatives to In-School Suspension**

Under certain circumstances, Highline Academy Charter School will allow a student to avoid an in-school suspension and remain in classes if a parent/guardian attends each class with the student for a period of time specified by the Principal. This alternative will only be considered with the consent of the student’s classroom teachers and when behavior and consequences have not reached expulsion proceedings. If the parent/guardian does not agree to attend class with the student, or fails to attend class with the student, or the continued presence of the student or parent/guardian is disruptive to the
educational process, the student will be suspended in accordance with this policy.

**Out of School Suspension**

An out of school suspension will result in the immediate removal from school of the student in question. If the family cannot pick up the student, other transportation arrangements must be made. Unless otherwise stated, the final determination of the length of suspension will rest with the Director of Student Programs and/or the Principal. The suspension may continue until the Administration, the student and his/her family meet to agree upon appropriate behavioral conditions for the student’s readmission into the school community. This meeting will take place as quickly as possible after the student’s removal. However, in accordance with state law, we will not bar a student from class if his or her parent/guardian is unable to meet with an administrator. A suspension may continue if an agreement is not reached at this meeting. In the case of more serious or repeated infractions, suspensions may last for a longer duration and may be accompanied by other sanctions.

*A student who is suspended will not be allowed on school grounds or at school-related functions without written permission from the Director of Student Programs or the Principal.*

**Suspension Procedures**

**Student Notification:** Before a suspension is considered, the student should be given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her, an explanation of the evidence that the suspending authority has, and the opportunity to present his/her version of the incident. A student conference shall occur to discuss said incident, unless the student’s presence endangers persons or property or threatens disruption of the academic process, necessitating immediate removal from school. In this case this conference will follow as soon as is practical. If the suspension will count toward declaration of habitually disruptive, as dictated by DPS, the parent/guardian and student must be so notified in writing.

**Parent/Guardian Notification:** The parent/guardian must be notified immediately that the student has been suspended, the grounds for suspension, the period of suspension, and the time and place for the parent/guardian to meet with an administrator. In that meeting the parent and administrator will develop agreed upon conditions for the student’s readmission into the school
community. Suspended students must leave the building immediately with a parent/guardian.

**Homework During Suspension:** All reasonable attempts will be made to gather academic work for the student being suspended prior to their removal from the school. All remaining work will be available the next school day at 12:00 pm. Suspended students are responsible for all missed work.

**Parent/Guardian Suspension Conference:** A conference involving the designated administrator, the pupil, and the parent/guardian must be held before the suspension expires. Parent/guardians must be provided with all relevant information and be allowed to make statements related to the issue.

**Extended Suspension Procedures:** Policy allows a principal to recommend that the DPS Area Superintendent extend the suspension for not more than ten additional days for the following reasons: a serious violation of the Student Conduct Code, the need to further investigate the incident, or a recommendation of the Area Superintendent to expel the student.

**Expulsion:** The decision to expel a student rests with Denver Public Schools, not with Highline Academy Charter School. Expulsion means the permanent exclusion of a student from attending school and participating in school activities. Students who have been suspended for 10 or more days, or who commit a breach of expectations listed above as qualifying for expulsion, may be brought before the expulsion board of DPS. Procedures for expulsion may be found under the expulsion section at:

http://www.boarddocs.com/co/dpsk12/Board.nsf/goto?open& id+973M TZ5CD E41#.

**Basis for Use of Restraint:**

On rare occasions, staff may need to use reasonable physical restraint and/or time-out as a means to protect the student being restrained or others from a serious, probable, imminent threat of bodily harm. Restraint may be used only in cases of emergency when other less restrictive alternatives have failed or the staff member determines that such alternatives would be inappropriate or ineffective under the circumstances. An emergency is a serious, probable, imminent threat of bodily harm to self or others where there is the present ability to effect such harm. The purpose of using restraint shall be to
prevent the continuation or renewal of the emergency. Restraint shall only be used for the period of time necessary to accomplish its purpose. Only staff members trained in safe restraint practices will be allowed to provide this.

**Bullying Policy:**

All members of the Highline Academy Charter School are committed to making our school a safe and caring place for all students. We will treat each other with respect, and we will refuse to tolerate bullying in any form at our school. Highline Academy defines bullying as: Unfair and one-sided actions against another. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:
- Hurting someone physically by hitting, kicking, tripping, pushing, etc.
- Stealing or damaging another person’s property
- Ganging up on someone
- Teasing someone in a hurtful way
- Using put-downs
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Leaving someone out on purpose or trying to get other students not to play with someone
- Using social media in a threatening or demeaning way that negatively affects another student’s feelings of safety and/or ability to learn while in classes

All adults at our school will do the following things to prevent bullying and help children feel safe:
- Teach positive behaviors through our Social Emotional Learning Curriculum
- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground
- Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it occurs
- Teach and model appropriate behavior for all students, all of the time
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports
- Take seriously families’ concerns about bullying
- Look into all reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying based on the school discipline code
- Assign immediate consequences for retaliation against students who report bullying

All students at our school will do the following things to prevent bullying:
- Model REACH behavior in all areas of the building
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out
- Report bullying to an adult

**Bystander Rule:** A Highline Academy Charter School student is expected to act conscientiously and courageously in situations where s/he perceives the following:

- Another person is the subject or instigator of teasing, bullying, verbal abuse, harassment, physical abuse, unsportsmanlike conduct, lying, cheating, stealing, or vandalism.
- Behavior which is clearly disrespectful of another person or person’s property

Courageous action in these situations often require overcoming fear of being wrong or being belittled by peers. Students are expected to report any witnessed infraction. Teachers will foster the student’s understanding of these situations and of appropriate actions through our character education program, role playing, and revisiting specific situations. When, however, the student bystander is deemed to be an enabler or encourager in such situations, he or she will be subject to disciplinary action at a level less than or equal to the person(s) actively involved.

**Internet Acceptable Use in School:** Highline Academy Charter School Charter School provides a wide-area network service that connects classrooms to each other and to the Internet at large. Access to the Internet offers vast and unique resources to both students and teachers. The school’s goal in providing this service is to promote educational opportunities to the school community by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The smooth operation of a network that provides both in-school and worldwide access depends upon the proper conduct of each user. Users must adhere to the guidelines of this policy in order to acquire and maintain network access. Violation of any of the provisions of this policy may result in termination of access, denial of future access or possible disciplinary action.

The school provides filtering to restrict access to obscene, pornographic, or other material that is harmful to minors. The school does not guarantee that such material will never be encountered, yet consistently updates protective and restrictive systems.
The use of the school’s network is a privilege, and must be treated as such by all users. Inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of this privilege. The following activities are expressly prohibited:

- Using the school’s network for or in support of any illegal, inappropriate, or obscene activity.
- Using the school’s network for any non-school related business and/or commercial purpose, product advertising, or support of any political or lobbying activity.
- Vandalizing the network or network resources, which includes, but is not limited to, any malicious attempt to harm, destroy, or alter data on the school’s network, including introduction of any computer virus.
- Attempting to access restricted data or to disrupt the use of the network for other users.
- Using profanities or language that is generally offensive, defamatory, harassing, or threatening to another individual and/or group.
- Creating or accessing dangerous information.
- Violating copyrights or interference with license agreements. This includes, but is not limited to, software, unaccredited use of text, graphics, photographs, electronic data, or interference with the privacy rights of individuals or entities without their authorization.
- Providing access to the school’s network to unauthorized users.
- Sharing electronic email account passwords, leaving passwords available in obvious locations, or leaving signed on computers unattended.
- Compromising personal safety.
- Allowing minors to access inappropriate matter on the Internet.
- Disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.
- Plagiarizing any information gathered via the school’s network is also prohibited. Users have no proprietary ownership of materials placed on the school’s network, unless such material is otherwise covered by copyright.

Communication conducted over the school’s network is not private and school staff may, in conducting network supervision and maintenance, review and inspect directories or messages. The school reserves the right and will access stored records with or without reasonable cause to assure compliance with this policy. The school makes no warranties that the functions of its network system will meet any specific requirements. Nor will the school be responsible for any
damages suffered through the use of the network. This includes loss of data, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions. Use of any information obtained through the school's network is at each user's risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet.

Students should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using Highline Academy Charter School's computer equipment. The computer network is the property of Highline Academy Charter School and may only be used for school sanctioned activities.

**Phone Use:**
Except in the event of an emergency, or as approved by a teacher, students are not permitted to use classroom phones. All after school arrangements must be made prior to school. To protect instructional time from disruptions, phone messages will be delivered to students during break times. Student use of cell phones at any time during the school day is prohibited, unless approved by a teacher due to extenuating circumstances. If a student’s cell phone is visible and/or heard, or evidence is presented that the phone has been in use during school hours, it will be turned off, taken to the office and a parent/guardian must come in to claim it. Should a student need to make a call home for an extenuating circumstance, s/he must ask permission to use the front office phone.

**Operational Policies**

Students are not permitted for any reason to enter the staff lounge, copy room or any classroom that is not directly supervised by a staff member. Any student found unsupervised in these areas may receive a consequence. When waiting for a class to begin, students must wait outside the classroom until the teacher welcomes the students into the classroom.

**Snacks:**

All students will be given an opportunity to eat a nutritious snack during the class day. Teachers will determine the most suitable time for this to happen. Parents should send a snack with their child daily, as the school does not provide snacks for students except for those in extreme need. Highline Academy is sensitive to and aware of food allergies. Because of the
severity of reaction to peanuts and tree nuts we do not allow nuts or products with nuts and/or nut oils to be consumed in the building. Please do not send snacks or lunches containing nuts. Nuts or nut products in lunches or snacks will be returned whenever possible to the home.

**Guidelines for Student Snacks:**
Healthy snacks suggestions include fruits, carrot or celery sticks, pretzels, crackers and / or a form of protein other than peanut or other nut butters. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles in order to stay hydrated through the day. High sugar snacks such as cake, cookies and candies are discouraged and may be replaced with a lower sugar communal classroom snack. Sodas, Gatorade, coffee drinks and other beverages high in sugar are not allowed in school.

*Due to allergies that could be unknown students are asked not to share or trade snacks.*

**SOUTHEAST CAMPUS:** Due to widespread nut allergies, with subsequent life threatening reactions, nuts and/or products with nuts and/or nut oils are not to be consumed in the building. Nuts or nut products found in lunches or snacks will be returned to the home whenever possible. This includes but is not limited to mixed nuts, individual nuts, loose granola or granola bars with nuts, peanut or other nut butters, or baked goods with nuts and / or nut oils.

**Dress Code/Uniform Policy:**
The dress code / uniform is an important part of Highline Academy Charter School’s school culture. Abiding by dress code/uniform guidelines conveys respect for others and for self that underlies Highline Academy Charter School’s mission. A dress code/uniform emphasizes the school is both a community and a place of work. Students are to be in dress code/uniform from the time they arrive at school until they leave the school grounds. By enrolling your child at Highline Academy Charter School, parents accept full responsibility for their child’s adherence to the dress code/uniform requirements.

All clothing must fit properly and be neat, clean, and in good repair. Any student wearing or possessing any article of clothing or accessory deemed a distraction to learning will be required to change. Students who come to school out of uniform may not be permitted to attend class. Parents will be called and asked to bring the student’s uniform.
**Dress Code/Uniform Options:**

French Toast uniforms are both an option and a guideline of acceptable dress code pieces, although not a required brand. Not all uniform styles are acceptable; a detailed list of Highline’s approved uniform/dress code is available in the office and online at [www.highlineacademy.org](http://www.highlineacademy.org).

French Toast uniforms can be viewed and/or ordered online, or ordered by phone. Once on the site of [www.frenchtoast.com](http://www.frenchtoast.com) enter Highline’s code, **QS5 NYR** to bring up Highline approved uniform pieces only. You may also call by phone at 1-800-FRENCH TOAST.

Other retailers carry the same approved colors and styles. You may find what you need at stores such as Target, Kohls, JCPenney, Sears and Walmart. Gently used items may be purchased or traded for other gently used items in the school uniform closet.

**Dress Code**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pants and Shorts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pants and Shorts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Must be khaki or navy</td>
<td>* Cargo pants or cargo shorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Must be dress type pants/shorts</td>
<td>* 5 pocket jean style or zipper pockets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* May be flat or pleated front</td>
<td>* Pants with outside stitching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Shorts must have a hemline no more than 2 inches above the knee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shirts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shirts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Navy, pale yellow, or white polo shirt</td>
<td>* Shirts with logos (other than Highline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Hunter green is for middle school only</td>
<td>* Pockets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Long or short sleeves</td>
<td>* Button down shirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Turtle necks</td>
<td>* Shirts that cannot be tucked in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sweaters/ Vests/ Sweatshirts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sweaters/ Vests/ Sweatshirts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Plain navy or white</td>
<td>* Hoodies, or zippered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* V-necks or button front</td>
<td>* Colors other than navy or white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Plain navy round-neck sweatshirts</td>
<td>* Logos or writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Highline sweatshirts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dresses/Skirts</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dresses/Skirts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Must be khaki, navy or navy with green plaid</td>
<td>* Dresses of any other color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Must have a hemline no shorter than 2 inches above the knee</td>
<td>* Logos or designs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Jumpers are allowed, a shirt must be worn under them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tights, Leggings, Socks</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tights, Leggings, Socks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* White, navy, black</td>
<td>* Any other colors, patterns or designs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Belts:
* Brown, Black or navy
* Patterns, chains, studs

Dress code / uniform sweaters and sweatshirts may be worn in the building during school hours. Any type of coat may be worn to and from school, and at recess, but not in the classroom. Shoes must fit properly, secured to the foot (not loose flip-flop type shoes) and be suitable for play, PE, recess and science lab.

**Labeling Student’s Clothing:**

Please take the time to label each piece of your child’s clothing with his or her first and last name. This should be done with a permanent marker on the inside tags. Any misplaced clothing that is not labeled will be put in the lost and found. The lost and found will be cleaned out frequently and all unlabeled dress code/uniform clothing will be placed in the uniform closet for sale. All other unclaimed lost and found clothes may be donated to local charities.

**Dress Code/Uniform Violations and Consequences:**

Students wearing clothing deemed to be in violation of the uniform may not be permitted to attend class. When a teacher asks a student to correct a dress code violation, the student is expected to comply immediately. Questions regarding interpretation may be discussed at a later time. When a dress code violation occurs, students will be asked to call home for the delivery of proper uniform. Students may be asked to wait in the front office until they are in compliance with the dress code. The Front office staff should be consulted if there are any questions about whether a particular item of clothing meets the requirements of the above policy. The Highline Academy Charter School administration reserves the right to restrict individual items of clothing as necessary, given notification of a parent or guardian, if such clothing interferes with normal school activities.

If your family qualifies for the free or reduced lunch program, we will provide assistance in acquiring a uniform for your student. Please contact the school counselor if you would like help.

**Student Searches:**

Highline Academy Charter School reserves the right to conduct searches of the students and their property, including backpacks and journals. Searches will be conducted so as to respect the privacy
and interests of the students to the fullest degree possible, but will balance such concerns with its predominant interest in maintaining student safety and discipline. The parent/guardian of a searched student will be notified as soon as possible to inform them that a search is about to or has just occurred. Should a student refuse to cooperate with a search request, the school will confiscate the property in question. School lockers, cubbies and desks, while assigned to students for their use, remain the property of Highline Academy Charter School and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to searches by school officials at any time.

Use of Outside Authorities:
In the case of a severe behavioral infraction, emergency or crisis situation, Highline retains the right to utilize outside authorities at its discretion. Such authorities include, but are not limited to, police officers, juvenile officers, members of the DPS Office of Safety and Security, members of the Behavior Evaluation Specialist Team (BEST), and area experts. The school maintains the right to provide crisis intervention for students when, in our best professional judgment, it is deemed necessary. The school will make all reasonable efforts to communicate details about such interventions to parents ahead of time. However extenuating circumstances may render this impossible in certain instances. Please contact the principal with any questions or concerns regarding behavioral support policies at Highline Academy Charter School.

Pick-Up/Drop-Off Policies & Procedures:
Transportation to and from Highline Academy Charter School is neither the responsibility of the school nor Denver Public Schools; instead, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are encouraged to carpool.

The safety of your children is of utmost importance to Highline Academy Charter School. We realize that mornings can be hectic and that everyone can feel a bit rushed. However, ensuring the safety of our students is a whole-community endeavor. Please take a little extra time during drop off and pick up to consider the safety of all our children.

Please see your campus guidelines for the exact drop off and pick up procedures for your campus.

Students Arriving After 7:50am:
School begins promptly at 7:50am. Students arriving after 7:50am will be marked tardy. The school’s clock in the drop off area, not individual clocks, will determine the official time for marking students tardy. After 7:50am parents must escort their child to the office. Students will then be issued a tardy slip and proceed to class.

**Early Dismissal:**
If you must pick up your child before the end of day dismissal time, you are required to sign him/her out from the front office. Office staff will call to the classroom and request your child to be sent to the front office. Students may not be called to the office for early pick up if the time is too close to the regular dismissal. In those situations, please ask the office for direction and they will review options with you. Highline Academy Charter School urges that your child participates in the full day of classes, as last minute directions and review of the day's assignments are often given during the classroom's preparation for dismissal. All attempts should be made to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours. Regular early dismissals disrupt your student’s full classroom learning and may require meeting with the teacher, administrator, or the school counselor for assistance in attendance.

**RTD Passes:**
Highline offers a limited number of RTD passes, distributed on a first come first serve basis to families who qualify for free and reduced lunch and who require transportation assistance. Please inquire for more details with the principal.

**Southeast Camps Parking**
As a neighborhood school, parking at Highline Academy Southeast is very limited. Before and after school please use curbside parking, with the exception of the curb directly in front of the school. Parking on that curb is restricted between the hours of 7:30am and 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, and might result in a parking ticket. The Faculty parking lot is by permit only.

**Northeast Parking:**
Parents should park on the street, making note of all applicable street signs, or in the visitor’s lot if they come in during school hours. Parents are strongly encouraged to use carline for pick up and drop off. ECE students’ families must park and walk their students into class.
Administrative School Hours:
The Highline Academy Charter School administrative team is available between 7:30am and 4:00pm Monday through Friday. The administrative staff is happy to meet with parents/guardians, but please call ahead to make an appointment. Please also understand that while you may find faculty and administrators in the building in the early mornings, later afternoons/evenings, or even on the weekends, their presence does not indicate their availability to parents/guardians or students without an appointment. Faculty and administrators often utilize these hours to catch up on focused work, and therefore may not be available for impromptu meetings during these times.

Attendance/Tardiness Policy:
It is the belief of Highline Academy Charter School, Denver Public Schools and the Colorado Department of Education that a commitment to consistent, punctual attendance is a necessary component of a successful education. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make regular school attendance a priority within the home. We strongly discourage your planning vacations, trips, and doctor appointments when school is in session. Habitual absences and tardiness has a tremendous, negative impact on the integrity and effectiveness of the school experience – for the student and for the class as a whole.

Highline Academy Charter School is required by its DPS contract to maintain a 95% attendance rate each year. This means a student may not miss more than 9 days of school per year. Highline Academy Charter School’s attendance policy is compliant with the Colorado Compulsory Attendance law (C.R.S. 22 - 33- 104) and is as follows:

Late Arrival (Tardy):
Tardiness is a failure to appear on time and is considered a form of absence. School starts at 7:50am every day. Students who are not in their homeroom at 7:50am will be marked tardy. Any student arriving after 7:50 am must be escorted inside by a responsible adult directly to the front office, where the student must be signed in. The student will receive a tardy pass and have their tardy recorded in the office records. Repeated tardiness will be reported to the school counselor and subsequently to the district. Tardies are recorded daily in the Denver Public School
attendance reporting system and show up on report cards.

Tardiness is considered excused in a small number of circumstances such as poor weather and road conditions that inhibit a child's punctual arrival. This decision will be made by the administration on a case by case basis. Over sleeping, car troubles, heavy traffic, work, or personal related tardiness is not excused.

If your student has been recorded tardy more than 10 times during any school year, you will receive a letter from Highline Academy Charter School requesting that you make every effort to improve your child’s attendance. Five tardies are recorded as 1 day of unexcused absence, and may require a parent meeting with the administration to discuss how to resolve chronic tardiness. Please feel free to contact the administration if you have any questions regarding the policy or consequences. Thank you for ensuring that your student understands the responsibility of school attendance and punctuality, as well as related consequences.

**Absences and the Attendance Line:**

When your child is going to be absent from school, we ask that you call the school attendance extension and leave a detailed message about the absence. Please leave your child's name, grade, date your child will be absent, reason for absence and your name. In order to accurately reflect an excused absence in your student’s record, please report an absence by 10:00am. Each day we will check those messages against our attendance records. We will attempt to contact the parents of any student who is not accounted for to assure the student/s safety. If we are unable to reach you, your student’s absence will be recorded as unexcused. Again, this information is shared with Denver Public Schools and the district truancy office as required by law.

**Excused Absences:**

Excused absences are those resulting from temporary or extended illness, doctor/dental appointments, injury, or physical, mental, or emotional disability; family emergencies; absences excused by the principal through prior requests of parent/guardian, i.e. a death in the family,
an ill parent; absences which occur when a student is in custody of a court or law enforcement authority; and absences occurring as a result of a religious holiday. In order for an absence to be considered excused, the child’s parent / guardian must call the office and give the reason for the absence, within 24 hours. If a student's number of absences due to appointments becomes excessive, as deemed by the principal, a note from the child's doctor may be requested. For a pre-planned absence, parents/guardians should notify the school office regarding the dates or times to be missed at least 2 days in advance.

**Unexcused Absences:**

Unexcused absences are those with or without prior knowledge and approval of the parents, but for reasons not approved by the principal. Absences due to family excursions, etc. will be considered unexcused absences.

**Excessive absences: Level I**

When a child has a total of 3 unexcused absences or truancies in one year, an intervention shall begin with the contact of the school counselor and be resolved at the lowest possible level, consistent with the severity of the situation. If the unexcused absences continue, the intervention moves to the next level.

**Level II**

After 4 days of consecutive absences or 6 cumulative absences, the school counselor in cooperation with the family, will make an attendance plan. The school counselor shall mail a letter to the parent/guardian and a copy of the letter will be file in the student’s records.

This letter shall:

- Inform the child and parents of the number of unexcused absences to date.
- Inform the parents and child of the School Attendance Act { § 22 - 33- 104 (5) (a), C.R.S.}.
- Inform the parents and child of the District's intent to seek enforcement of the applicable statutes. Inform the parents and child that if ten unexcused absences occur, the matter will be referred to the district truancy office for resolution.
• Invite parent and child to discuss the school's concern and to resolve the child's failure to attend. An attendance plan will be made. This plan outlines specific responsibilities of the student, parent/guardian and the school.

The parent/guardian shall be informed that if unexcused absences continue, DPS policy and State Law requires that an Attendance Filing be initiated in Juvenile Court.

**Level III**

After 10-20 unexcused absences, and the school counselor may, but is not required, to refer the family to a social worker in order to assist the family in following the Attendance Plan. A revised attendance plan will be made with the school counselor.

A letter shall be sent by the school counselor stating that the parent/guardian is subject to a subpoena and subsequently a court order that requires attendance. Violation of this court order may include:

- Mandated community service
- Detention of the student in a juvenile facility
- Monetary fine imposed upon the parent
- Detention in the County Jail
- Referral to the Denver Department of Human Services
- Other such sanctions as deemed appropriate by the Juvenile Court Judge

**Level IV**

After 21 or more unexcused absences, the school counselor and the Vice Principal will initiate an Attendance Filing. If the student has more than 21 truancies during the school year, an attendance filing must be initiated per DPS Policy JE- R. A letter stating that attendance must improve within 5 days, with no further truancies for the school year, shall be completed and mailed to the student's home. If the attendance does not improve in a reasonable amount of time, an Attendance Petition shall be initiated through the DPS Legal Office. The 5-Day Letter shall follow the student from one DPS school to another.
Board of Directors
Highline Academy's Board is comprised of parents/guardians and community members who share a commitment to policy governance, and a specific commitment to Highline's vision and mission. Our current Board members can be found on our website at www.highlineacademy.org.

Child Abuse Reporting
The Colorado Child Protection Act specifically requires school officials and employees to report known or suspected cases of child abuse (including emotional, physical, or sexual abuse) or neglect and circumstances which might reasonably result in abuse or neglect. As an automatic reporting agency, it is our obligation to report any reasonable suspicions (C.R.S. 19-3-307). It is not the responsibility of school employees or officials to contact the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect. Nor is it the responsibility of school officials or employees to prove that the child has been abused or neglected. Failure to report promptly may result in civil and/or criminal liability. A person who reports child abuse or neglect in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability.

Illness Policies:
It is imperative that the health and safety of all Highline Academy Charter School students be protected at all times. Students who become ill or injured during the school day are sent to the clinic, where Highline Academy Charter School offers limited nursing services to its students. Parents are notified, by telephone or note, if a student:

● Has an elevated temperature
● Has visited the office for illness or injury more than once in a day
● Is injured and needs medical attention
● Receives non-routine treatment (routine treatment includes administration of a band-aid, distribution of water, rest, etc.)
● Has a condition which the office and/or nursing staff feels warrants notification

If a student is injured or ill and requires immediate medical attention, 911 will be called. Please help keep Highline Academy Charter School informed by providing the school office with
updated contact information and an emergency phone number for your family. Your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of your receiving a call from the clinic, as there is no place at school to isolate ill students.

- If your child has been absent from school due to illness, she must be fever-free and exhibiting symptoms of illness for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If you have been treating head lice at home, please notify the school so that other children in the classroom can be monitored.

**Medications in School:**

Do not send medications, including over the counter drugs such as Tylenol, herbal remedies, vitamins, or prescription medication with children in backpacks, or give to your child’s teacher. The classroom teacher is not authorized to dispense medication. Therefore, a parent must deliver all medications to the clinic personally with the following:

- All medication must be in its original bottle, properly labeled with a physician's instructions and a student's name.
- A completed DPS medication form with authorization and directions from the doctor who prescribed the medication.

There can be no exceptions made to this request; therefore, prescription medications sent in any other form must be picked up by an adult, or Highline Academy Charter School will dispose of them. Highline Academy Charter School will be happy to provide your doctor with a fax number to receive the information from the doctor.

**Closures and Delays:**

Highline Academy Charter School follows DPS school closures and delays. Broadcasts are usually made by 6:00am on the three major news networks and periodically thereafter until 9:00am. When Highline Academy is closed, all school-sponsored activities, including the before and after school program, are canceled.

In situations where weather may cause a school closure and Denver Public Schools has a planned, non-student contact day (either for a holiday or for teacher in-service) and Highline Academy Charter School is otherwise scheduled to be open, the principal will make a decision
about whether school will be closed. In this case, information about Highline Academy Charter School specifically will be broadcast by 6:00am on the three major news networks on the day of the closure. In addition, room parents will be notified. On delayed start days, the aftercare programs are not available for before school care.

If it becomes necessary for the welfare of our students to close school during the day or to delay a school dismissal, an emergency One Call will be put into effect. We ask families to prepare for this possibility in advance by ensuring your contact information is current either through the Parent Portal or notifying the front office.

**Building Emergency/Crisis/Lockdown Drill:**
Highline Academy has a comprehensive plan for safety and security. If it were to become necessary to invoke a "lock-in", the cooperation of parents would be extremely important. No one would be allowed in or out of the building until a danger assessment was conducted and the situation deemed safe. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

**Fire Drills:**
Highline Academy conducts fire drills each month that school is in session. ALL people in the building, including volunteers and parent visitors, must exit at that time in compliance with fire department regulations. Students are to follow the instructions of their teacher, remain silent, and leave the building single file in an orderly manner. Any deviation from this procedure will result in an automatic detention.

**Tornado Drills:**
A drill for this emergency will be conducted at least once a year.

**Food Services:**
Highline Academy Charter School offers an optional hot lunch program for students. Students also have the option of bringing a cold lunch from home. Highline Academy Charter School participates in the Free and Reduced Lunch program through DPS. All parents are asked to complete a free and reduced lunch application at the beginning of the year. Eligible students will receive a free hot lunch or a reduced price hot lunch.
Parents who send their student with a lunch from home are asked to pack healthy foods. Good nutrition will help your children benefit the most from their afternoon classes. Children will not be allowed to share/swap food items from home.

Each hot lunch includes a small carton of milk. Milk may be purchased separately by students who bring a lunch from home, but would like milk as a beverage. Parents are asked to refrain from bringing fast food to their child for lunch.

When you send your child to school with lunch money, please put his or her money in an envelope and write the student’s SASI number (provided by the school) on the outside of the envelope. You are welcome to pay in advance for a number of lunches (for example, you may write a check for $20.00 to cover lunch for several weeks). All checks should be made out to Denver Public Schools. You may also use the My School Bucks App or website to add money and monitor your child’s lunch account.

All communication regarding unpaid meal amounts will be directed to parents/guardians. Any household with a negative school lunch account balance will be contacted by school staff by email, phone, or letter home to provide information on how to apply for free or reduced-price school meals or to add funds to the school nutrition account (myschoolbucks.com).

Families who submit a school meal benefit application are responsible to make a full payment for lunch until the application is approved.

Because DPS is handling the school’s lunch money, elementary students will not be able to accumulate a negative balance of more than $5.00 on their lunch money account. In other words, DPS will not serve lunches to students who have not paid for more than $5.00 of lunches. (This, of course, does not apply to students who qualify for a free lunch). Middle school students CANNOT accumulate a balance with DPS at all. If your child arrives to school without a lunch from home, without lunch money, or a negative account balance, DPS will provide one school lunch. After that, DPS will not feed your student.

**Grievance Policy and Procedures:**

Highline Academy Charter School values open communication amongst and between members of our school community, including parents/guardians, students, faculty, staff, administration and the Board of Directors. Highline’s grievance policies and procedures pertain to grievances of varied
natures; they regulate how parents and students are expected to express grievances about faculty, staff or administrators, and they regulate how faculty and staff are expected to express grievances about other members of the professional community, including peers, supervisors or the administration. Grievances may pertain to interpersonal disputes, to the violation of other Highline policies and procedures, or to perceived or real discrimination or disparities.

The objectives of the Highline Academy Charter School grievance policy are threefold:

1. to help members of our community resolve conflicts in an open and direct manner;
2. to provide a safe avenue for members of our community to express grievances or report alleged or actual wrongdoing, including behaviors considered discriminatory;
3. to prompt, when necessary, further investigation and outside resolution. Our grievance procedure establishes both a formal and an informal avenue through which community members can express concern or report discrimination without fear of retaliation.

Highline’s procedures for settling differences are designed to support prompt and equitable resolution of disagreements at the lowest possible faculty or administrative level. To assure that all members of our community have the support needed to utilize the grievance process, we offer a neutral 3rd party team, the resolution team, to help resolve disputes and serve as a facilitator. The resolution team will be comprised minimally of one board member and one school faculty/staff to be named each year. While the administration and Board both expect that conflict will be addressed following the fewest steps of the procedures below, should resolution not be obtained at the lowest faculty or administrative level, each member of the school community is guaranteed both substantive and procedural due process.

**Informal Grievance Process:**

Highline’s informal grievance process is intended to provide parties an opportunity to express and resolve grievances at the lowest level possible. The informal process provides neutral facilitation and mediation, with the goal of informal resolution, restitution, and relationship repair. In an attempt to encourage prompt resolution of potential grievances, Highline Academy community members are encouraged to address their disputes directly with the individual(s) involved, with or without the presence or intervention from the school’s resolution team. Should the resolution team be involved, the team will work with the grievant to facilitate a conversation
with those directly involved in the dispute. Specifically, as the first step of making an informal grievance, a grievant should:

- Approach directly the person with whom there is a conflict in an effort to have a direct conversation to seek resolution; or
- Approach the designated contact for the school’s resolution team to begin the process. The designated contact is noted on the contact sheet in the school’s family handbook.

Once notified, the resolution team has 30 days to complete its settlement process, which might include an informal investigation, a restorative dialogue, and/or the creation of a follow up plan. If satisfactory resolution is not realized after a direct conversation between the conflicted parties, the situation should be brought to the attention of the supervising administrator by either the grievant or the resolution team. The supervising administrator, the conflicted parties, and the resolution team (if involved) will address the situation and develop goals for conflict resolution. The administrator will monitor this process until resolution is realized. In the case of grievances with the principal, the grievant or resolution team will inform and involve the chair of the Board. Once notified, the supervising administrators or Board Chair will hold the initial conflict resolution meeting and establish a follow up plan within 15 days.

Informal grievance proceedings will not extend beyond 45 days unless there is a written agreement between all parties to extend the informal process. Should resolution not be reached within 45 days from the informal grievance being registered (step 1), parties are encouraged to use the formal grievance procedure (noted below).

**Filing a Complaint or Grievance with DPS:** Parents or community members may file a complaint directly with Denver Public Schools at any point if they are not satisfied with the school’s response. Families can contact either the Office of Family and Community Engagement and/or the Portfolio Management team, which oversees the charter schools within DPS. The contact information for both are below:

- The DPS Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) FACE@dpsk12.org
- Family & Community Helpline: 720-423-3054
- The Portfolio Management Team: http://portfolio.dpsk12.org/about-us/contact-us-2/ or call 720-
Formal Grievance Procedure:
The formal grievance procedure is intended to provide an opportunity for grievances that are either not resolved via the informal process, or are significant enough in the mind of the grievant to require a formal investigative and resolution process that is documented in writing.

1. To initiate the formal grievance process, a grievant should submit a signed and dated grievance to resolution team member Colin Shaw, Southeast Assistant Principal at cshaw@highlineacademy.org or Abby Arriaga, Northeast Assistant principal aariaga@highlineacademy.org. The written grievance should detail the allegations of dispute, breach of policy, or discrimination and should cite the contract, policy or procedure that has been violated.

2. The resolution team will provide acknowledgement of receipt of the written grievance within five work days. In addition, within 5 work days, the resolution team will provide a copy of the written grievance to the individual(s) named in the grievances, as well as to the direct supervisor of that individual, the Executive Director if it is the principal and the Chair of the Board in the case of the Executive Director.

3. Within 30 work days, the resolution team will conduct its own internal investigation, including conducting interviews with all relevant parties, reviewing pertinent documents, reviewing policy, etc.

4. Within 45 work days of the submission of the written grievance, the resolution team will issue a written resolution plan that might include plans for facilitated conflict resolution meetings, recommendations for change in policy or procedure, or suggested next steps.

Should a grievant not be satisfied with the manner in which the school's resolution team handles the grievance, s/he should bring the matter to the attention of the Board by contacting the Board Chair or Vice Chair. It is important to the integrity of our school that grievances be handled in an informed, direct, fair and equitable manner. The administration and board share responsibility in ensuring the integrity of the vision and its implementation through the system of due process described in this grievance policy. The final forum for conflict resolution, after a grievant has followed the steps outlined above, will be at the level of the Board of Directors.
**Highline Academy Charter School Enrollment Policy:**

Within the time limits and priorities described below, students shall be enrolled at Highline Academy on the basis of lottery, without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, or need for special education services.

Highline Academy sets forth the following non-discriminatory enrollment policy as required by law.

**Lottery Overview:**

Enrollment is determined by a random lottery system via the DPS School Choice process. Once you are accepted into Highline Academy via the lottery, you do not have to re-apply through the choice process. You do however, have to register every year during the registration period just before the school year starts. The registration period will be announced in the weekly updates at the end of the current school year, and will be posted on our website at www.highlineacademy.org. Failure to register may result in the loss of your seat.

**Kindergarten Tuition:**

Highline Academy has two full-day Kindergarten classes. Class size will be 24 students per class with two classes. Classes may be over-enrolled by two students per class to account for natural attrition. DPS now provides fully funds all kindergarten programs.

**Grounds for Denial of Admission:**

Subject to the school's responsibilities under the Exceptional Children's Educational Act and applicable federal, state and local laws, the following will constitute ground for denial of admission to the school:

- Failure to meet age requirements.
- Having been expelled from any school district the preceding twelve months.
- Having engaged in behavior in another school during the preceding twelve months that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other students or of school personnel.
- Failure to comply with the immunization provisions. Families who choose not to immunize their children must sign an immunization waiver.
- Falsification of application or enrollment documents.
Applications are considered complete only if all areas are completed and legible. Neither in-district nor out-of-district students are given priority in Highline Academy enrollment process.

**Time Frame and Public Notice:**
The application period will take place from the first work day of January through the last work day of January each year. Grade level lists will be compiled in February. Once a name is drawn, the parent(s) will be notified by phone and given one week to accept or reject the seat. This offer is only for the grade level where the opening occurred. If the parents(s) cannot be contacted because they failed to make notification of changes in phone number, they shall be removed from the lottery pool.

If the parent rejects an opening offered to their child, that child’s name is withdrawn from the lottery pool and the parent(s) may choose to re-apply at a later date. Openings at Highline Academy will be advertised on our website, and by mailing flyers to targeted neighborhoods.

**Money Collection Procedures:**
Parents may be turning money into the school for a variety of reasons, and it is important to understand to whom money should be turned in so that it gets credited to the appropriate student. Field trip money should be turned in to the classroom teacher, in an envelope, with the student’s name on the outside. Lunch money should be put in an envelope with the student’s name and SA SI number (provided by the school) and turned into the classroom teacher. All lunch money envelopes will then be turned into the DPS lunch staff person who is at the school on a daily basis. Please note that all bounced checks will incur a fee of $10.00.

**Office Notification:**
Please notify the office of any and all changes of information regarding your child's address, phone number, emergency number, parent work numbers, etc., as soon as possible. You may also update any changed information through the Parent Portal. It is vital that the office keeps this information up to date and your prompt notification regarding any changes is sincerely appreciated. If Highline Academy is consistently unable to reach parents/guardians due to inaccurate household information, it may be considered negligence and the Department of Social Services may be called.
**Weather:**
Please dress your child according to the weather. Our students go outside for recess and physical education classes in all but the coldest or wettest weather.

**Withdraws/Transfers:**
Should a student desire to withdraw from Highline Academy Charter School, withdrawal forms must be completed and filed with the school office. In addition the school will not release academic records until all fines have been paid and all school books and property checked out to the student have been returned and/or paid for.

**Family, Student and School Contract:**
Family support is one of the pillars of the Highline Academy Charter School community; you are a true partner in your student’s experience. Highline will need your help and commitment both within the school and outside of the school. In the school, we hope that you participate in volunteer opportunities such as making copies for teachers, getting Thursday folders together, chaperoning field trips, and helping with other Highline events. Outside of school, we expect that you will stay in constant communication with us about your student’s progress and monitor his or her work closely at home.

**Have a great year Highline!**