



**La Causa**, Inc.

Where Children and Families Come First

# FAMILY HANDBOOK 2024-2025



## **Main Campus**

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Milwaukee, WI 53204  
Phone: 414-316-3800  
Fax: 414-902-1676

## **Kindergarten Academy**

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Milwaukee, WI 53204  
Phone: 414-316-4177  
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**<https://www.lacausa.org/charter-school>**

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# La Causa Charter School Administration

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## La Causa Charter School's Purpose

### **Mission**

To provide innovative, foundational, and culturally rich academic programs focused on Fine Arts, Science and Technology, Dual Language Education and English as a Second Language, while engaging the entire family in their children's educational experience.

### **Vision**

Our school's vision is to prepare every student to become a productive member of society by providing them with a successful educational journey within a safe and stimulating environment, while allowing parents to be engaged in daily school activities.

## Family Engagement Policy

La Causa Charter School strongly believes that parents and the community are active partners in the education of our students and commits to developing a full partnership with them. To support our goal of educating all students effectively and increasing student skills so all students will be proficient; our school community must work as knowledgeable partners. Our school, in collaboration with parents, shall establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of our students and families.

- Hold an annual parent meeting where we will share information about our educational plan and the Title I program.
- Provide an annual and monthly calendar of events for parental involvement.
- Build an active school governance council comprised of parents, community members, and school staff, and actively involve the School Governance council in the development and evaluation of the annual educational plan.
- La Causa Charter School will send important school information through Class Dojo. Be sure to see your child's teacher to start the Class Dojo process.
- Work with all stakeholders to develop, use and annually review our school compact.
- Provide support to families so that they may actively participate in the education of their children, and we will work to address various barriers to family involvement.
- Provide families and staff members with various training opportunities to further develop cooperative relationships between school and home.
- Provide a positive and inclusive school climate while involving parents in the creation and implementation of plans to address both special and regular education needs of students.
- Provide support from our school social worker to students and families with attendance and tardiness issue.
- Provide support from our school social worker and school culture coordinator to support the social emotional development and wellbeing of our students.

## School Compact

The La Causa Charter School community, including educators, parents, and children, enter the following compact to provide the most effective educational program for our students.

As an **administrator** in the La Causa Charter School educational community, I agree to:

- 1) Ensure a safe and nurturing school environment.
- 2) Direct and support the education of all children in the school, assuring that the highest quality curriculum and instruction will be provided to all students.
- 3) Promote the physical, emotional, and social health of all students.
- 4) Assist the teachers in providing the best possible education so that each student can achieve the highest level of success, as determined by state standards.
- 5) Provide meaningful communications to the parents regarding current school programs, activities, and adult educational opportunities.
- 6) Support the reading efforts of students, staff, and parents learning two languages.

As a **teacher** in the La Causa Charter School educational community, I agree to:

- 1) Create high expectations for our student achievement and to meet school, district, and state educational goals.
- 2) Keep parents informed of every student's academic and social progress through Class Dojo, twice yearly parent/teacher conferences, and thrice yearly progress reports and report cards.
- 3) Create a positive, welcoming, and open classroom environment in which parents, staff, and students collaborate in the learning process.
- 4) Assume responsibility for the successes, challenges, and progress of students.
- 5) Be organized and prepared to teach in a positive, engaging, and motivational manner each day.
- 6) Acquire teaching strategies that will enhance skills in working with English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students from diverse backgrounds.

As a **parent** in the La Causa Charter School educational community, I agree to:

- 1) Be an active participant in the school community by attending school programs and events, regularly communicating with staff, and actively sharing ideas to improve school culture.
- 2) Establish a safe and encouraging learning environment for homework, enrichment, and parental interaction with my child.
- 3) Be aware of and engaged in my child's physical and emotional health.

- 4) Assure that my child arrives and departs school on time, is prepared to learn, and in the proper uniform.
- 5) Be supportive of the established school policies and work with the administration and staff to ensure my child's educational success.
- 6) Be actively engaged in the school community through parent workshops, chaperoning or classroom volunteering, participating in family input surveys, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), Governance Council, etc.

As a **student** in the La Causa Charter School educational community, I agree to:

- 1) Respect all students, adults, and property.
- 2) Have a positive attitude towards school and learning.
- 3) Complete and return all assigned work on time to the best of my ability.
- 4) Be responsible for effective time management.
- 5) Read every day.
- 6) Wear the appropriate uniform every day.
- 7) Follow our PBIS rules and make positive behavior choices.
- 8) Follow the technology and cellphone policies.

## **School Calendar**

A hard copy of the school calendar can be found online at [www.lacausa.org](http://www.lacausa.org) or at the front desk. One copy will also be provided during registration.

## **How Do I Get Involved in My Child's School?**

### **Volunteering**

Volunteers are always welcome at La Causa Charter School! To help ensure a safe, engaging learning environment the following expectations are in place for anyone wishing to volunteer.

- Every volunteer will be subject to a background check and must be cleared before working with students.
- Volunteers must be over the age of 18.
- Provide contact information including phone number, address, and email to the front office.
- Contact the front office if your personal information changes.
- Be a positive role model for students!
- Engage with students in a positive and supportive manner, respecting their individual needs and backgrounds.

### **Audience Expectations for School Events**

We invite many families and members of the community to be part of our special school events. To have a successful and smooth performance that fully respects our school community, it is important that we abide by these expectations.

- Please be sure that no hats are worn while in the building during any event.
- Everyone is asked to stay seated during the entire program.
- Please be respectful of our speakers and students who are on stage. We ask that you silence or turn off cell phones, refrain from talking during the program, and refrain from using noise makers.
- For Graduations Only: Please be sure to return all caps and gowns before leaving the ceremony. Students may keep their tassels and stoles.

### **Emergency Contacts**

- You must complete an Emergency Contact form that will be kept on file.
- The Emergency Contact form must have the name of the person(s) authorized to pick up your child.
- Your child will not be able to leave school with any person (even if he / she is a relative) without the consent of the parent/guardian of the student and the authorization of an administrator.



- If contact information changes, please contact the school office immediately to update the necessary information.
- Individuals not allowed to have contact with your child must be noted on the emergency card. If a parent or legal guardian is not allowed to pick up the student, a valid court order must be turned into the school.

## Immunizations and Medications

The law requires that students receive a minimum number of immunizations before entering school. The law is meant to prevent illnesses and other vaccine-preventable diseases from returning and preventing learning loss and school disruptions. Families who do not have health insurance can have their children immunized at a city health clinic for free or at low cost. Call the City Health Department at (414) 286-8034 for a clinic near your home. Failure to immunize children will result in children being excluded from school until they are vaccinated.

School requirements starting in the 2024-2025 school year
For entry to kindergarten through seventh grades students need:
• 4 doses of polio vaccine
• 3 doses of hepatitis B
• 4 doses of DTaP/DTP/DT/TD
• 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox)*
• 2 doses of MMR
• 1 Tdap at seventh grade
• 1 MenACWY-containing vaccine at seventh grade ( <b>NEW FOR 24-25</b> )

**COVID Vaccines are not required but strongly encouraged. If your child tests positive or is exposed to COVID-19 and is not vaccinated, they will need to quarantine. Vaccinated children will only need to quarantine if they test positive.**

## Medication

It is best to give your child some medicine at home. However, there are times a child may need to be given medication during school hours. School personnel will only administer medication at the designated time as directed by the medical provider and the parent. If your child is taking medication, you must complete an Authorization to Administer Medication Form which will be kept on file. This will allow designated school personnel to give your child their medicine. All medication prescribed or over the counter (i.e., Tylenol or ibuprofen) and brought to school must be in the original bottle that states the student's name and the required dosage and must be given to the front office.

Students should not carry medications with them or in their backpack during the school day. You may contact school personnel at any time for more information about medications.

## Student Attendance and Truancy

We adhere to the student attendance and tardy policies established by Milwaukee Public Schools and the State of Wisconsin. We work cooperatively with parents or guardians to teach students the importance of daily and timely school/class attendance. Under Wisconsin Statute 118.15, any person having control of a child between the ages of 6 and 18 shall see that the child attends school regularly until the end of the school term of the school year in which the child becomes 18. The State of Wisconsin and the Milwaukee Board of School Directors set policies for student absences, which are summarized below.

### In case of an absence

- It is your responsibility as a parent/guardian to notify the school as soon as possible when your child will be absent.
- Submit a written excuse or phone call to the school within 48 hours of the child's return to class.

**Kindergarten Academy:** 414 316-4177

**Main Campus:** 414-316-3800

- Missing the school bus or having a sibling home sick does not qualify as an excused absence.
- During the school year, your child may not have more than a total of 10 excused absences. After 10 excused absences you must present justification for the additional absences.
- Failure to send your child to school may result in a citation and/or fine from the district attorney's office.
- The following are valid reasons for excusable absences:
  - Personal illness of the child
  - Medical/dental appointments
  - Family emergencies
  - Funerals

### Health Guidelines

Deciding when to keep your child home from school can be difficult. There are three reasons to keep sick children from school:

- The child does not feel well enough to participate in usual activities, with symptoms like extreme signs of fatigue, unexplained irritability, or persistent crying with other symptoms of illness.

- The child requires more care than the school staff can provide without affecting the health and safety of other children.
- The illness is on the list of symptoms or illnesses for which exclusion is recommended (see below).

If any of the following conditions exist, please keep your child home from school:

- Fever (Temperature 100° or higher)
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Heavy nasal congestion or frequent cough
- Blistery rash
- If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease.

The following list gives guidelines and recommendations for exclusion from school due illness.

Illness or Symptom	Should I send my child to school?
COVID-19	<b>NO-</b> A child has symptoms or positive test and direct exposure if they are not vaccinated.
Chicken Pox	<b>NO-</b> A child with uncomplicated chicken pox should stay home until blisters have dried and crusted (typically 6 days)
Conjunctivitis (pink eye with thick mucus or pus draining from the eyes)	<b>NO-</b> Child with conjunctivitis should stay home until 24 hours after treatment starts.
Coxsackies Virus (Hand, foot and mouth diseases)	<b>NO-</b> Child may not attend if the child has mouth sores and is drooling
Diarrhea with illness (Vomiting, Fever, Rash) Diarrhea: Stools that are watery and frequency is twice or more what is usual.	<b>NO-</b> Child should stay home until the symptoms have subsided
Fever with behavior changes or illness	<b>NO-</b> Child should stay home if the fever is above 100 degrees and is accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms of illness (fatigue, rash, sore throat, diarrhea, etc.)

Fifth's Disease	<b>YES</b> —Child is no longer contagious once rash appears.
Head Lice	<b>YES</b> —Child may go to school with hair tied back. Treatment should be started within 24 hours.
Impetigo / Staph / MRSA	<b>NO</b> —Child should stay home until 24 hours after treatment starts. Wounds must be covered with dressing taped on all 4 sides.
Body Rash with fever	<b>NO</b> —Seek medical advice. Any rash that spreads quickly, has open wounds and/or is not healing should be evaluated. Child may return to school with a doctor's excuse when medical provider (not school nurse) determines that illness is not communicable.
Upper Respiratory Complications <input type="checkbox"/> Large amount of thick nasal drainage <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Cough <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme sleepiness <input type="checkbox"/> Ear pain <input type="checkbox"/> Fever (above 100 degrees orally)	<b>NO</b> —Seek medical advice. Child may return when symptoms are improved.
Ringworm	<b>NO</b> —Child should stay home until treatment begins. Area should be covered while in school.
Scabies	<b>NO</b> —Child should stay home until treatment starts. Note from medical provider verifying treatment is being provided.
Strep Throat	<b>NO</b> —Child should stay home until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and 24 hours fever free.
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	<b>NO</b> —Child should stay home until judged not infectious by a medical provider and provide medical excuse. Report all cases to school nurse.
Vomiting	<b>NO</b> —Child should stay home until vomiting resolves or health care provider determines that cause is not communicable. <u>Note:</u> Observe for other signs of illness and for dehydration.

## **Truancy/Attendance**

Truancy is defined as an unjustified, unexcused absence from an educational institution. A student is truant when she/he is absent from school without an acceptable reason for one (1) or more days while school is in session.

Habitual truancy means a student is absent from school without an acceptable excuse for part or all five (5) or more days on which school is held during a school semester under Wisconsin State Statutes.

## **Parent Notification of Absences**

You will receive a certified letter from the school social worker requesting a meeting if your child has had **five** unexcused absences. During this meeting we will discuss any type of resources that could be available depending on the needs of the family. After **ten** absences, you will be required to meet with the school social worker to review and discuss an attendance plan for the student(s). If the student(s) continues to be truant, a District Truancy Abatement Burglary Suppression (TABS) letter will be sent notifying the family of possible fines. If you fail to comply with the school policies within 10 days of the notification, you will be required to meet with the school social worker to sign an attendance contract.

## Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures and Policies

### **Main Campus Drop Off (1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Only)**

If you are dropping your child off by car in the morning, please pull up as far as possible, not going beyond the traffic cones placed on the west side of 2nd Street. Please only allow your child to exit the vehicle in the drop off/pick up lane. Do not double park to drop off students in the driving lane and do not allow your child to cross 2<sup>nd</sup> Street without an adult escort. We have a staff member monitoring the drop-off to ensure that the students safely exit the cars and enter the building.

### **Kindergarten Academy Drop Off (K4 and K5 Only)**

If you opt to drop your child off, please pull up as far as possible on S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, not passing the “No Parking” cones. Staff will be available to help your child exit the car and enter the building. If you opt to bring your child into the building, you must park in a *legal* parking spot and escort your child into the building.

### **Early Arrival – Main Campus Only (1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Only)**

La Causa Charter School – Main Campus has a Morning Club program for families that need to drop off their child at school before 7:10 am. There is a fee per week for this program. Contact the front desk for more details. This program allows families to drop off their child as early as 6:30am. If your child is not a member of the Morning Club, please do not drop off your child before 7:10 am. There is no adult supervision in front of the building until 7:10am. Students will go directly to their classrooms upon arrival.

### **Pick Up – Main Campus (K5 – 8<sup>th</sup> Only)**

If you are picking up your child by car, please form a line behind the cones in the drop off /pick up lane on the west side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Do not make U-turns, do not double park, and do not park in the bus loading zone in front of the building. If you park on the opposite side of the street, please do not allow your children to cross the street by themselves. Walk to the nearest intersection and utilize the crosswalk or crossing guard on duty. Crossing in the middle of the street is an unlawful, dangerous practice that could have negative consequences for you or your child. Violators are subject to a citation.

### **Pick Up – Kindergarten Academy (K4 only)**

If you are picking your child up by car, please park in a *legal* parking spot that does not block bus lanes indicated by the “No Parking” cones. Please enter the building and retrieve your child directly from their classroom.

**The safety of your child is our top priority, and we appreciate you honoring our policies.**

### **Early Dismissal**

Children will not be dismissed from school after 2:00 pm. If you find it necessary to pick up your child before 2:00 pm, please notify the school before 12:00 pm by contacting

the Main Office at (414) 316-3800 or (414)316-4177 for K4/K5. If a parent does not call before 12:00 pm and wants to pick up their child before 2:00 pm, they will need to get prior approval from an administrator. No children will be released until dismissal is completed at 2:35 PM. For your child's protection, no child will be released to an individual not listed on their emergency contact card. Authorized persons picking up students should be 18 years or older and have a form of identification to show upon request. All students being picked up early will need to be signed out at the main office.

### **Regular Dismissal**

Dismissal will begin at 2:25 pm when the school day has ended. If your child is not picked up by 2:35 pm, they are considered a late pick up and will be supervised by our school staff; a late fee of \$20.00 for every 15 minutes will be charged per child. Only authorized individuals may pick up a child. Make sure your emergency contact card is updated.

### **Change of Schedule in transportation and extracurricular activities**

If your child will not be taking the bus home after school or will not be attending their extracurricular activities or has any other change of schedule, you must call the school before 12:00 pm at (414) 316-3800.

## **Tardiness**

School hours are from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm.

### **Tardy Policy**

Please make sure that your child arrives on time. Important instructions for learning are given at the beginning of the school day. Any student that arrives after 7:30 am will be marked tardy and may not be provided breakfast.

Please be aware that minutes of tardiness accumulate during the school year to become additional unexcused absences.

All children arriving at school after 7:35 AM will need to be escorted into the building and signed in at the front office by the adult dropping them off. Adults who must escort their child(ren) into the building will need to be parked in a *legal* parking spot that does not block bus lanes.

### **Why is it important to have a good attendance?**

- Attending school daily has a direct impact on student learning and academic achievement.
- Students with good attendance have higher self-esteem than those with poor attendance.
- Students do not miss important information that is given and are more likely to be and feel successful.

- Students demonstrate a stronger sense of community.
- Students are less likely to get involved in illegal activities in the community and develop a stronger sense of responsibility.
- Students are less likely to drop out of high school and are more likely to find good jobs in the future.

## **Transportation**

La Causa Charter School provides bus transportation services to families that qualify. Pick-up and drop-off locations are based on corner stops that are convenient for the bus company routes. If your child qualifies for transportation, but you refuse bus services for your child, you must sign a waiver prior to the start of the school year that is kept on file in our office. K4 and K5 students must be accompanied by an adult to their stop in the morning and met by an adult at their stop in the afternoon. If there is no adult present the student will not be allowed to disembark the bus.

To request to have your child leave early from school, or if you do not want your child taking the bus for the day, **parents must call the school before 12:00 pm.** You may not arrive at school at 2:25 and remove your child from the bus. Please plan your schedule accordingly.

**Main Campus** 414-316-3800

**Kindergarten Academy** 414-316-4177

### **Parent Guidelines for Bus Services**

The following guidelines will help parents/guardians address any issues with bus services.

- Contact us to request a bus stop or route change. Do not ask the bus driver to change stops or routes.
- Contact the school if a problem arises, whether it is with the bus company, the driver, or the students.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Good conduct is important to bus safety. The school will notify you if your child does not behave on the bus. A student may be suspended from riding the bus if they do not follow the Student Code of Conduct. All students must follow these rules:

- **Be Safe**
  - Remain orderly when getting on and off the bus.
  - Always obey the adult and/or bus driver.
  - Get off the bus only at your regular stop.
  - Always keep your hands, head, and feet inside the bus.
  - Remain seated at all times.
- **Be Respectful**



- Be thoughtful of others on the bus.
- Never throw anything out of the bus windows and do not damage bus property (including but not limited to writing on seats, poking holes in seats, etc.)
- Fighting or pushing on the bus is not allowed.
- Avoid talking loudly or making loud noises. Noises may distract the driver and cause an accident.
- Use of profanity is not allowed on the bus.
- Be quiet when the bus is coming to a railroad crossing.
- Eating, drinking, and smoking is not allowed on the bus.
- Tampering with the bus or its equipment is not allowed.
- Be Responsible
  - Arrive promptly at the assigned bus stop.
  - Go directly to your seat and remain seated.
  - Keep book, lunches, and coats out of the aisles.
  - Animals, glass, or dangerous objects are not allowed on the bus.
  - Exit the bus promptly.
  - Clean up your garbage and keep the bus clean.

### **Negative Consequences**

If a child's behavior jeopardizes the safety of students on the bus, the bus driver has the right to write your child up. La Causa school administration has the right to discipline the child following this method.

1 <sup>st</sup> Offense/Write up	Verbal warning
2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense/Write up	Removing the child from the bus for a limited period and/or additional consequence such as detention or assigned seat.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense/Write Up	Temporary or permanent loss of bus privileges

## Field Trips

Field trips are an extension of classroom activities and part of the planned curriculum at La Causa Charter School. Field trips provide excellent opportunities for our students to take advantage of additional resources and experiences. We expect every child to participate fully in our curriculum by attending all field trips planned for his/her grade level. Your child's teacher will send field trip permission slips home prior to each event. Due to the cost of some field trips, there are times when students will be asked to pay a fee. Students must be in full La Causa uniform for field trips unless otherwise indicated by your child's teacher.

Parents are encouraged to serve as chaperones on field trips but are required to have a background check completed first, which may take up to four weeks to complete. To ensure your background check is completed in a timely manner, it is suggested that parents turn in the necessary forms as soon as possible at the beginning of the school year.

To ensure a safe experience for all students, on occasion parents may be required to accompany their child on a field trip after the background check has cleared.

### Field Trip Rules

#### **Be Safe**

- Stay with your chaperone
- Follow directions given by adults

#### **Be Respectful**

- Use quiet voices
- Enter and leave quietly
- Show appreciation at appropriate times
- Respect others' property

#### **Be Responsible**

- Be on time
- Be prepared
- Turn in permission slips by due date
- Wear appropriate uniform/clothing
- All bus rules must be followed

## Meal Services

We provide a healthy, FDA approved meal service to all our students at no cost to parents. Students can opt to purchase additional items such as extra milk or an additional entrée during the school year. Students will be allowed to bring their own healthy lunches from home if they wish. During regularly scheduled summer school, we offer a full meal program for community children, in addition to our summer school children. Please know that students cannot purchase additional meal items during the summer school programming. Any child under the age of 18 may come and eat breakfast and/or lunch for free. Adults will not be served meals.

### **Meal service includes:**

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner (Afterschool Programs only)

### **Students are expected to:**

- Take their tray of food and eat quietly
- Not share food with classmates
- Clean up after eating
- Talk quietly during meals
- Raise their hand if they need assistance
- Wait to be dismissed by a staff member
- Always follow school rules.

If a student engages in inappropriate behaviors, the school discipline process will be enforced.

In addition, **no unhealthy food will be allowed in the school building.** This includes fast food, sport/energy drinks, soda, chips/Takis and candy before, during, and after school. These items are going to be confiscated by staff and given back to the students at the end of the day.

# Student Uniform Policy

## Uniform Day Policy

Students must attend school in the appropriate uniform on regularly scheduled uniform days. This includes fleeces, cardigans, and vests on cold weather days. Students that come to school without their appropriate uniform are considered in violation of this policy. Parents will be contacted and required to bring a uniform for their child. Repeated offense may result in the loss of the privilege to participate in non-uniform/jeans days.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>BOYS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red collared shirt (all grades)</li> <li>• Navy blue uniform pants</li> <li>• Black dress shoes</li> <li>• Navy blue or black socks</li> <li>• Fleece jacket with school insignia (optional for colder weather)</li> <li>• Navy blue vest with school insignia (optional for colder weather)</li> <li>• Navy blue sweater with school insignia (optional for colder weather)</li> <li>• Navy blue crewneck sweatshirt (optional for colder weather)</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>GIRLS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red collared shirt (all grades)</li> <li>• Navy blue uniform pants</li> <li>• Navy blue uniform skirt or jumper (optional)</li> <li>• Black dress shoes</li> <li>• Navy blue or black socks</li> <li>• Navy blue or black tights or leggings under skirt or jumper only</li> <li>• Fleece jacket with school insignia (optional for colder weather)</li> <li>• Navy blue vest with school insignia (optional for colder weather)</li> <li>• Navy blue sweater with school insignia (optional for colder weather)</li> <li>• Navy blue crewneck sweatshirt (optional for colder weather)</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</u></b> <b>(Only to be worn on gym days!)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical education t-shirt (purchased from school)</li> <li>• Navy blue uniform pants OR navy blue or black jogging pants with no writings or markings</li> <li>• All black athletic/tennis shoes</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>COLD WEATHER</u></b></p> <p>Please provide an appropriate jacket, hat, scarf, boots, and mittens/gloves for colder weather. All students will have outdoor recess as weather permits.</p>
<p><b><u>ALL STUDENTS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorts are not permitted</li> <li>• Skinny pants or jeans are not permitted</li> <li>• Facial piercings must be covered or removed</li> <li>• Only light make up permitted</li> <li>• Hoodies, caps/hats, or bandanas are not permitted</li> <li>• Pants cannot be rolled up and sagging or baggy pants are not allowed</li> <li>• Sandals, flip flops, open toed shoes, or high heels are not permitted</li> <li>• Writing on skin is not permitted</li> </ul>	

## **Non-Uniform Day Policy**

Occasionally, students will be permitted to be out of uniform. These days may include field trips, fundraisers, or other special events. Parents will be informed in advance if students are able to participate in a jeans day or a non-uniform day. On those days, students must adhere to the dress code policy outlined below. If students are unable to participate in a jeans day or a non-uniform day, they must be in the correct school uniform.

- All clothing must be school appropriate.
- Shorts are not permitted
- Jeans/pants must be in good condition with no rips or damage
- Hoodies and hats will not be allowed.
- Shoes must be in good condition and must be able to be securely fastened with laces or Velcro.
- Flip flops, sandals, slippers, crocs, and high heels will not be permitted.
- Shirts may not reference drugs or alcohol or contain obscene language or gestures.
- Shirts must cover a student's body completely. Halter tops, crop tops, low cut tops, tank tops and spaghetti straps will not be permitted.

### **Non-Uniform Violation Warnings**

If a student arrives to school on a non-uniform day in clothes that do not adhere to the above policy, parents will be contacted and asked to bring a change of clothes. Non-uniform days are a privilege, and students may lose the option to participate and/or face disciplinary action if they are regularly non-compliant with the regular school uniform policy. After three warnings, the student may lose the privilege of participating in future non-uniform/jeans day.

# Behavior Expectations

## **PBIS**

The staff at La Causa Charter School believes that optimal student achievement in academics and behavior can be attained by utilizing a proactive approach for creating and maintaining a safe and effective learning environment. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an approach to teaching and supporting positive behaviors and meeting the needs of ALL students. We offer three levels of support for all of our students to succeed. The foundation of PBIS at La Causa Charter School consists of three building-wide expectations:

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

### **BE SAFE**

Strategies to support your child include earning Class Dojo points which can be redeemed in the school store, classroom-based incentives, PBIS field trips each trimester, being recognized for perfect attendance and good behavior, and more.

### **How Can Parents Help Their Students?**

- Review the expectations with your child.
- Ask your child about his/her day at school every day.
- Make sure your child is ready every day.
- Ensure a good night's sleep.
- Provide a quiet time and space for your child to do schoolwork.
- Keep in touch with your child's teacher.
- Encourage your child to use appropriate language and tone.
- Practice positive phrases with your child such as, "Thank you," "Excuse me," "Please," and "I'm sorry".
- Be a visible part of your child's school day. Attend PTO meetings and other school activities as your schedule allows.
- Stay positive and be encouraging!
- Communicate with school staff to build understanding of your child's goals and strategies.
- If your child does not meet their goals, continue to have conversations about how to make better choices.

### **Discipline**

La Causa teachers, staff, and students strive to create a caring, cooperative environment where everyone treats each other with respect and dignity. Adults are expected to model appropriate behavior and will intervene when misbehavior occurs. La

Causa Charter School is committed to provide a safe and effective learning environment by recognizing that:

- Students have the right to learn, and teachers have a right to teach in a safe and orderly environment.
- No individual or group has the right to undermine the goal of providing a quality education for all students.

La Causa Charter School follows the MPS Code of Conduct, Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline guidelines, as well as our own behavior matrix based on PBIS and restorative practices. Students are responsible for their own behavior and will:

- Follow all school and district behavior expectations and rules
- Work toward academic achievement by attending school and classes regularly, bringing classroom materials including books, pencils, and paper, and completing all assigned class work.
- Always communicate respectfully with all staff members
- Resolve conflicts and disputes with others respectfully
- Respect the rights and property of others while going to and from school, at all school-related activities, at bus stops, and on buses
- Act responsibly with school property and replace or reimburse the school for lost or damaged school property, including books and equipment
- Refrain from making threats of violence, joking about violence, or starting rumors of violence against the school, staff, or students; such actions will be quickly and thoroughly investigated

Minor behaviors such as talking out of turn, uniform violations, cell phone use, and leaving the classroom without permission will be handled by the teacher. Consequences may include a loss of privilege, detention, letters of apology, and more. Major behaviors that disrupt the learning of others include repeated minor violations, vaping/drug use, weapons, and sexual harassment are handled by school administration. Potential consequences may include loss of graduation, detention, suspension, in-school suspension, and more. Violations of the Code of School/Classroom Conduct that are dangerous, disruptive, or interfere with a teacher's ability to teach effectively will not be tolerated. Students in grades K4–8 will be subject to discipline according to the school behavior matrix up to and including suspension and central office hearings for expulsion at central office.

Minor behaviors not affecting student learning	
Behavior	Definition
Skipping Class/Leaving Class without permission	Student is not in assigned location without permission or excuse or leaving classroom without permission
Lack of Supplies	Repeatedly reporting to class without necessary materials such as books, laptop, etc.
Inappropriate Dress	Failure to wear appropriate uniform and/or inappropriate dress on dress down days (spaghetti straps, midriffs, holes in pants, etc.)
Inappropriate Personal Property	Possession of property prohibited by school rules such as any item that is not related to learning (lighters, toys, games, etc.)
Inappropriate use of electronics	Repeated offense Capturing, distributing, sharing, and/or posting inappropriate materials using school issued devices
Bullying	Deliberate, one-sided, repetitive behaviors with the intention of causing harm or intimidating (i.e. tripping, name calling, knocking items out of hands, etc.); targeting the same individual in which there is an uneven balance of power  Any physical contact results in automatic parent contact
Fighting	Physical confrontation including slapping, hitting, shoving; no substantial disruption or injury took place; students are willing to mediate
Profanity	Intentional use of profanity, profanity directed at group/individual, ribbing/insults directed at person, or making statements about protected class (i.e. ethnicity, gender, sexual identify, religion, or disability)
Theft	Taking property belonging to another individual including consumables, school property (headphones, school supplies, etc.), or consumables.
Minor behaviors affecting student learning	
Substantial environmental disruption	Engaging in conduct that causes substantial disruption to teaching/learning (i.e. constant talking, yelling, chanting) after refusing initial redirections from staff  First Offense
Disorderly Conduct	Behaviors that cause a disruption – horseplay, verbal arguments, flipping desks/chairs with no injuries, temper tantrums, etc.



	Actions require teacher to stop instruction in address the behaviors.
Personal threat	Verbal threats, instigating a fight, or attempting to get others to join a fight
Sexual Harassment	Unwelcome sexual advances including explicit jokes, sexual graffiti, unwelcome contact, pressuring for sexual favors
<b>Major behaviors not affecting student or staff safety</b>	
Personal Threats	Threats used directly or indirectly toward someone in written form
Sexual Assault	Intentional bodily contact of sexual nature (touching private parts under/over clothing) for sexual gratification with or without consent
Sexual Harassment	Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal conduct of a sexual nature (i.e. unwelcome physical contact or masturbation in front of others)  Repeated over time with interventions in place
Possession of drugs/vapes if confiscated	Possession of drugs/vapes but willing to allow item to be collected
<b>Major behaviors affecting student or staff safety</b>	
Inappropriate use of technology	Live streaming or recording an event on school device that is violent, illegal or viewed as inappropriate in school setting; live streaming or recording an event sexual in nature while under supervision of school staff
Bomb/Weapon/Arson Threats	Written or verbal threat of bomb/weapon/arson  Threat assessment must be conducted
Endangerment of Physical Well-Being	Conduct that directly endangers the safety of others including but not limited to letting others into the building, purposely spitting on someone, pouring foreign objects in drinks or on surfaces, or any other action that would cause a code red.
Assault	A physical attempt to cause bodily harm to another person without making physical contact (i.e. hitting fist in hand, lunging, fighting stance, kicking at a person, etc.)
Battery	Unprovoked/unanswered intentional physical contact without consent that causes bodily harm (point out/knock out, joining a fight, significant injury or requiring ER visit)
Fighting	Physical confrontation including planned fighting, refusal to mediate, or students that do not stop after staff intervention

## **School Board Policy of Milwaukee Public Schools on Weapons and Other Criminal Offenses**

### **La Causa Charter School Student Responsibility**

I have been informed about the rules of behavior in La Causa Charter School and reviewed the School/Classroom Code of Conduct as outlined in this handbook.

I know that:

- Guns and other weapons are not allowed in school or while going to and from school. If a student brings any kind of gun to school, the student may be recommended for expulsion.
- Laser pointers are not allowed in school.
- Students are not allowed to have alcohol or drugs in their possession in school or while going to and from school. Students are not allowed to smoke tobacco or chew tobacco in school. If a student brings or uses alcohol, drugs or tobacco in school, the student may be recommended for expulsion.
- Students are not allowed to have chemical irritants (pepper spray) in their possession in school or while going to and from school. If a student brings to school or uses chemical irritants (pepper spray) in school, the student will be suspended and may be recommended for expulsion.

I have been told about the rules for classroom behavior. I know I could be expelled from school for violating any of those rules. Being expelled means I cannot attend La Causa Charter School or any Milwaukee Public School.

## Class Dojo

La Causa Charter School is using ClassDojo ([www.classdojo.com](http://www.classdojo.com)) to encourage students to learn important skills like working hard and participating in class, to support positive behavior across the school, and to communicate with parents.

### **How does ClassDojo work?**

With ClassDojo, teachers can track the positive behavior of individual students, and can communicate directly with parents or guardians on their cell phones, tablets, or computers. Teachers, administrators, parents or guardians and students also share information safely, securely, and privately. Examples of information include upcoming classroom events or field trips, points a student earns for behavior, pictures or videos of students engaged in classroom activities, and projects or homework that students need to complete.

### **What is my role as a parent or guardian?**

Your role as a parent or guardian is easy! The ClassDojo app is FREE! Simply provide your cell phone number or email address to the classroom teacher when requested. The teacher will send you an invite to join ClassDojo and you will be connected to your child, the teacher and the administrator responsible for that grade level. Your personal information will be kept secure and private.

All information shared between the teacher, the student, the parent or guardian and the administrator is secure and private and **will not** be shared with any other parent or student. If you do not want the teacher or administrator to photograph or video record your child to share with you on ClassDojo, you need to sign the photo release form.

## Parent Guide to Standards Based Grading

At LCCS, we envision a student-friendly report card with clearly defined learning targets aligned to high quality, balanced assessments that will bridge our elementary and middle school grading formats. Our Standards-Based report card seeks to provide meaningful feedback so both students and parents can track student progress toward mastery of key academic concepts, reflect upon strengths and weaknesses, and identify multiple pathways to deeper learning.

### **What is standards-based grading?**

Standards-based grading communicates how students are performing on a set of clearly defined learning targets called standards. The purpose of standards-based grading is to identify what a student knows, or can do, in relation to pre-established learning targets, as opposed to simply averaging grades/scores over the course of a grading period, which can mask what a student has learned, or not learned, in a specific course.

### **How does standards-based grading differ from traditional grading?**

Unlike with traditional grading systems, a standards-based grading system measures a student's mastery of grade-level standards by prioritizing the most recent, consistent level of performance. Thus, a student who may have struggled at the beginning of a course, when first encountering new material, may still be able to demonstrate mastery of key content/concepts by the end of a grading period.

In a traditional grading system, a student's performance for an entire quarter is averaged together. Early quiz scores that were low would be averaged together with more proficient performance later in the course, resulting in a lower overall grade than current performance indicates.

Standards-based report cards separate academic performance from work habits and behavior in order to provide parents with a more accurate view of a student's progress in both academic and behavioral areas. Variables such as effort, participation, timeliness, cooperation, attitude and attendance are reported separately, not as an indicator of a student's academic performance.

### **How are my child's marks determined?**

A student's performance on a series of assessments (both formative and summative) will be used to determine a student's overall grade in a course. Practice assignments (homework) are just that, practice, and thus should serve primarily as a source of feedback and instructional support for both students and teachers. Scores on practice assignments should not be used as a major component of a student's academic grade. Teachers may require students to complete all their practice work prior to allowing them to take, or retake, an assessment.

### **Will my child still receive teacher comments on their report card?**

Yes. Individualized feedback is an essential component of standards-based grading. Effective feedback is a more useful source of information than simply assigning a numeric value or letter grade to student work.

### **What do each of the grades in the 4-point scale represent?**

You cannot really compare a traditional grading system to standards-based grading. It is like comparing “apples to oranges”.

- A score of (4/Advanced) would indicate that a student exceeds a standard by consistently demonstrating an advanced level of understanding and/or the ability to apply their knowledge at a higher level.
- A score of (3/Proficient) would indicate that a student has independently achieved the standard. The student demonstrates mastery of the standard.
- A score of (2/Basic) would indicate that a student is developing an understanding of a standard, but still may need additional instruction and/or support.
- A score of (1/Minimal) would indicate minimal understanding of a standard. The student shows limited evidence of understanding the standard.

### **Is it possible to achieve a grade of 4/Advanced?**

Yes, it is. However, a score of (4/Advanced) indicates performance that is consistently above what is expected for mastery at that point in the school year. Level 4/Advanced work would indicate a much deeper understanding of a standard, the ability to apply that knowledge, make connections and extend learning beyond the targeted goal.

Advanced work reflects higher order thinking, application, connection and extension of targeted goals. While being instructed above grade level is not required to achieve a (4), students who are taught above grade level have consistently shown mastery of a subject at their current grade level. Achieving an Advanced does not preclude a teacher from suggesting areas for improvement in the comment section of the report card. Receiving an Advanced does not guarantee that a students' performance will remain at that level across all reporting periods, or for all course standards.

### **If a student receives 1/Minimal all year, does that mean the student will be retained?**

Intervention classes are in place at La Causa Charter School to support learners who are behind in math and reading. If a student receives Minimal or Basic, it means his/her work is not yet meeting grade level standards. Several academic interventions will be offered to those students who are struggling to meet the established standards. Grade level retention is not a practice that is generally supported by research.

### **How will I know if my child needs help?**

Receiving a Minimal or Basic on a grade report/report card can be a sign that a student needs extra support in the areas where they are receiving low marks. This is one benefit of a standards-based report card, areas in need of support are clear.

### **Where else in the area is standards-based grading being implemented?**

It is important to note that our elementary schools have been utilizing a four-point grading system for several years, so it will not be new to most of our families. It is also under study, or already implemented, in several school districts in the area, including elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

## **Technology and Device Policies**

The mission of the technology program at La Causa Charter School is to create a collaborative learning environment for all learners. This environment will enable and support students and teachers to implement transformative uses of technology while enhancing students' engagement with content and promoting the development of self-directed, responsible life-long learners and users. Students will transition from consumers of information to creative producers and owners of knowledge.

### **Device Purpose**

La Causa Charter School is loaning students a laptop or tablet based on their grade level. All devices remain the property of La Causa Charter School. The supplied devices will provide each student access to required educational materials, including Office 365, Google Classroom, and other curriculum platforms. The supplied device is an educational tool not intended for gaming, social networking, or high-end computing. All devices must be returned at the end of the school year.

The policies, procedures, and information within this document apply to all devices distributed to students, staff, or guests including any other device considered by the Administration to fall under this policy. Teachers may set additional requirements for device use in their classroom.

### **Receiving/Returning Your Device**

Devices will be assigned early in the school year and will remain in your child's classroom. Parents must initial the Summary of Agreements of this handbook, which indicates they understand the technology responsibilities, before any device can be issued to the child.

**Return:** Student devices and chargers will be collected at the end of the school year. Failure to return any of the equipment will result in a replacement cost being assessed to the family.

Any student who transfers out of La Causa Charter School will be required to return their device and charger. If the device and charger are not returned, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for payment in full. If payment is not received, the bill will be turned over to a collection agency to pursue payment.

# **Parent Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

This document outlines La Causa Charter School expectations of student use of technology. We offer optional insurance to help families offset the cost of accidental damage. Lost or stolen devices are not covered under the insurance plan.

## **Responsible Use**

It is important to maintain a family dialogue about educational, recreational, and social use of the laptop/tablet and other devices your student may access. While on LCCS grounds, laptops/tablets are connected to a network that is filtered for inappropriate material, but user responsibility is still the best way to avoid pitfalls in the online world. Remember, laptop/tablet use is continually monitored by the LCCS IT team.

## **Care and Maintenance**

Students are responsible for the general care of their laptop/tablet. The devices are designed for school use and should be treated with care. We will provide device training to all students. Below are our recommendations and precautions:

- Treat your laptop/tablet as you would any valuable electronic device
- When not being used, devices should be stored securely in the charging cart
- Do not place anything on the screen, and be gentle with the keyboard, trackpad, and ports
- Do not add stickers or markings to the device
- Do not eat or drink near the device
- Avoid extreme heat or cold
- Do not lend your device to anyone
- Report any damage to your teacher immediately
- Do not place or store your device on the floor
- Accessing inappropriate content is subject to disciplinary action

## **Educational Resources**

Your student will receive an LCCS student ID number that is used to access the device and educational apps. Your child may use these tools for a variety of purposes in classroom assignments. All Office 365 apps and LCCS email can be accessed from any device or computer with an internet connection.

## **Technology Security**

It is important to LCCS that we keep all student information secure and safe. Part of that security is to make sure that students keep their account information safe, including password and account protections.

- Each student is assigned a password that will allow them to log into their device.



- Students should not share their passwords with other students, families, or friends.
- In the event that the student has lost or forgotten his or her password, please contact the student's teacher.

### **Email and Email Etiquette**

- Each student is assigned a secured LCCS email account and password
  - Students should only use email for internal communication between students and staff
  - **LCCS will not tolerate the use of profanity or the sending of explicit and/or sexual content via the LCCS email servers**
  - Users must not bully, harass, intimidate, or threaten other students, staff, or other individuals ("cyberbullying") via email or any other medium
- \*\*\*Any violation of the above email and email etiquette guidelines will result in immediate email suspension, revocation of technology privileges, and disciplinary up to and including suspension.*

### **Firewall**

Each device is equipped with a firewall. This firewall is set in place to keep students safe from cyber-attacks or accessing inappropriate content inside and outside of the classroom and campus.

*\*\*\*Please be aware that if a student bypasses this firewall LCCS will not be able to fully protect students from accessing inappropriate content and disciplinary actions will be exercised*

## Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Equipment Policy

We at La Causa Charter School understand the importance of parents being able to keep in contact with their child via cell phones. However, in accordance with Milwaukee Public Schools commitment to provide a safe and effective learning environment, the following policy for personal electronic equipment will be enforced. **Please read the information carefully with your child.**

- Cell phones, Airpods or other personal electronic devices, including Smart Watches, must not be used during the school day.
- Cell phones, Airpods or other personal electronic devices must always remain off or on silent in your book bag. They are not to be in your pocket, clipped to your belt or pants or otherwise on your person.
- School-issued headphones/ear buds will be used for academic purposes only. Teachers will inform students when they will be allowed for instruction. Airpods cannot be used for educational purposes
- If a student uses a cell phone to call outsiders to the school to participate in harassing or fighting with another student or staff member, the student can be expelled from all Milwaukee Public Schools and the outsiders can be criminally charged.
- If a student uses a cell phone or other electronic device to videotape other students under any circumstances, the student can be expelled from all La Causa Charter Schools and Milwaukee Public Schools.
- If a student calls or texts a family member to pick them up from school without speaking with a teacher, nurse, or administrator they will be subject to disciplinary action.
- If a student is seen using a cell phone, Airpods or other personal electronic devices, it will be confiscated by school personnel.
  - **First time offense**– the cell phones, Airpods or other personal electronic devices will be confiscated. A parent or guardian will be contacted, and the item can be picked up by the student at the end of the day.
  - **Second time offense**– the cell phone, Airpods or other personal electronic devices will be confiscated. A parent or guardian must pick up the item at the end of the day and be fined \$10 fee. The student will not be allowed to pick it up.
  - **Third time offense** – the cell phone, Airpods or other personal electronic device will be confiscated and fined \$5 per week until picked up at the end of the trimester.

**If your cell phone, Airpods, headphones, or other personal electronic devices are lost or stolen, La Causa Charter School, Milwaukee Public Schools, and all other school personnel will not be considered responsible.**

## Items from Home Are Not Permitted

Students are not allowed to bring items from home to school at any time. Items from home are subject to theft or breakage by other students and pose a substantial disruption to learning. Items that are not permitted include things like toys, Pokémon cards, blankets, sunglasses, hats, stuffed animals/plushies, pets/live animals, air pods, excessive jewelry, etc. This is not an exhaustive list. Any item deemed inappropriate by administration will be confiscated and may or may not be returned at some point to the student. If a student has a medical need to bring an item to school that cannot be provided by the school, a parent/guardian must provide medical documentation, renewable each year, if necessary.

## Library Fines

It is the student's responsibility to return any checked-out books when they are due and keep them in good condition.

- Parents and students will be regularly notified of any missing books.
- Students are required to return library materials and/or pay replacement costs for lost or damaged library books before the end of the school year (in early June).
- *Eighth grade students who owe fees may not be able to participate in the graduation ceremony until library fees are paid.*

## Photo and Video Release Form

I hereby grant the staff of La Causa, Inc. or designee, permission to photograph or videotape my child and/or family while at any school event. I understand these photographs/videos may be used by La Causa Inc./MPS in publications and/or displays representing the organization.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I do give permission for my child to be photographed or videotaped.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I **do not** give permission for my child to be photographed or videotaped.

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date

**This signed form must be returned or sent to the school. Failure to sign and return the consent form within one week of enrolling your child will be interpreted as tacit agreement to all information enclosed in this handbook. One form must be returned for each child. Hard copies are available at registration and the front office.**

## Summary of Agreements 2024 - 2025

*Upon completion of reading the Parent/Student Handbook in its entirety, parent/guardian must read and initial each item below. This form is a copy for your records; hard copies will be available at registration and the front desk.*

\_\_\_\_ I have received a copy of the Parent/Student Handbook for the 2024 - 2025 School Year. I have read and agree with the information and rules stated in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_ I have read the parent/student compact on page 3-4 and understand a hard copy will be provided at Meet the Teacher Night.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the Uniform Policy as stated on page 17-18.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the School Board Policy of Milwaukee Public Schools on Weapons and Other Criminal Offenses on page 23 and understand the consequences of inappropriate conduct on school grounds.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the Technology and Device Policy beginning on page 28.

\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the Cell Phone and Personal Equipment Policy on page 34.

\_\_\_\_ I have read the Photo and Video Release form on page 33.

**Failure to sign and return the signature page within one week of enrolling your child will be interpreted as tacit agreement to all information enclosed in this handbook.**

_____ Name of Student	_____ Grade/Teacher
_____ Printed Name of Parent/Guardian	
_____ Signature of Parent/Guardian	_____ Date

**This signed form must be returned to the school.**