

THE ACADEMY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY  
CHARTER SCHOOL

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Rebecca Watson  
Principal

2009-2010

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Dear ACT Scholars:

Congratulations! By being here each day and taking your learning seriously, you have put yourself one step closer to achieving your goal of going to and succeeding in college. We, the faculty and staff of ACT are fully invested in your scholastic victory and are here to help you achieve it! In the pages that follow, you will find information that details the way “school happens” at ACT.

Please read and consider each piece of information carefully. It is your responsibility, as a member of this learning community, to exceed the expectations that have been set with your success in mind. Know that we are all here for YOU! We will challenge you. We will push you to be better. We will hold you accountable. We will support you.

Remember that EVERYTHING YOU DO MATTERS! You will be successful! You will graduate from college! You will achieve your dreams! The sky is the limit.

*THIS IS COLLEGE PREP. THIS IS LIFE PREP. THIS IS ACT....*

Welcome,

*Ms. R. J. Watson*

Ms. R. J. Watson, Principal

**Be excellent.**

**ACADEMY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY  
CHARTER SCHOOL**

**2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR**

**AUGUST**

M	T	W	Th	F
10	11	12	13	14
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
(24)	25	26	27	28
31				

**SEPTEMBER**

M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
<b>7</b>	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

**OCTOBER**

M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	[9]
<b>12</b>	(13)	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

**NOVEMBER**

M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	<b>11</b>	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
30				

**DECEMBER**

M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	[18]
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

**\*\*Winter Break\*\***  
**December 21 – January 8**

**JANUARY**

M	T	W	Th	F
				1
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
(11)	12	13	14	15
<b>18</b>	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

**FEBRUARY**

M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	<b>12</b>
<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

**MARCH**

M	T	W	Th	F
<b>1</b>	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	[26]
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		

**\*\*Spring Break\*\***  
**March 29 - April 9**

**APRIL**

M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
(12)	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

**MAY**

M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
<b>31</b>				

**JUNE**

M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	[18]

**\*\*Summer Break\*\***  
**Begins June 21**

**JUNE**

M	T	W	Th	F
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

**JULY**

M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

**AUGUST**

M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

LEGEND

(Beginning of quarter)..... August 24, October 13, January 25, April 12  
 [End of quarter]..... October 9, December 18, March 26, June 18  
 Dates in bold indicate no school for students..... See holidays and staff development days  
 Dates with shadow are half days, 12:45 dismissal ..... Oct 6-9, March 23-26, May 19-22  
 January 11-22

**2009-2010 HOLIDAYS**

September 7 – Labor Day	January 1 – New Year’s Day	May 31 – Memorial Day
October 12 – Columbus Day	January 18 – MLK’s Birthday	
November 11 – Veterans’ Day	February 12 – Lincoln’s Birthday	
November 26, 27 - Thanksgiving	February 15 – President’s Day	

## Calendar Continued

New teacher orientation - August 5, 6

All teachers return - August 17

August staff week – August 17-21

Student Orientation – August 24-26

Winter break begins for support staff – December 21

**Winter break begins for students December 21 – January 8**

Winter staff week – January 4-8

**Spring break begins for students March 29- April 9**

Spring Staff week – April 5-9

**Summer break begins for students June 21**

Summer staff week – June 21 - 25

S1 – 17 weeks - 80 calendar days  
**(Semester 1)**

S2 – 21 weeks - 100 calendar days  
**(Semester 2)**

### **Student Led Conference**

### **Final Exams**

Student-Led Conferences – October 12-15	Final Exams – December 15-17
Student-Led Conferences – January 12-14f	Final Exams – June 8-10
Student-Led Conferences – April 13-15	
Student-Led Conferences – June 15-17	

## **STUDENT SCHEDULES – Will be distributed during Orientation Week**

Middle School Schedule

High School Schedule

### **MISSION**

ACT's mission is to provide a **college preparatory education** to urban youth preparing them to take their place in society as confident, competent, creative and compassionate citizens of the world. Our small school is about building *capacity*: capacity to earn a living, capacity to make sound life decisions; capacity to continue learning.

ACT's curriculum focuses on a four key areas:

- **College Preparation** – challenging courses designed to prepare students to be successful in college.
- **Communication Arts and Technology** – art, computer applications, speech, and photography electives to help students develop their creative intellect.
- **Service learning** – a commitment to giving back to the community in which students live and work.
- **Field Experience** – field trips, internships designed to connect our classroom learning to its real life applications and real life responsibility.

### **School Responsibilities**

ACT's responsibility as a school is to provide a quality educational program for all students. This includes implementing curriculum which prepares students to be successful in their next educational experience and to do well on standardized tests. Specific school responsibilities include:

Create and maintain a safe school climate

- Maintain a safe environment within the school to enable students to focus on their academic work.
- Provide schedule changes and policy changes in writing.
- Provide clear written policies regarding student behavior at the beginning of each year.
- Inform parents when a child is referred to the office for a disciplinary issue.
- Provide students an opportunity to be heard before decisions are made (due process).
- Be available to hear parent concerns and questions.

Deliver high-quality instruction designed to position students for college matriculation and success

- Challenging and engaging lessons each day and in each class
- A variety of assessments of learning including projects, tests, quizzes, and other assignments
- Daily homework assignments that help solidify learning and push your thinking
- Responsive intervention and academic supports to help students in academic need
- Offer regular opportunities for academic enrichment

Regularly inform parents of student academic progress

- Provide regular progress reports of the student's academic work.
- Keep student grade information on Powerschool regularly updated.
- Be available for conferences at the parent's request.
- Host student-led conferences at the mid-point of each trimester.

Provide opportunities for parents to learn more about supporting their student's academic work.

- Provide workshops on ways to support student academic work.
- Provide workshops on unique ACT classroom and promotion procedures.
- Provide workshops on college the application process and paying for college.
- Offer classes and workshops to assist parents in learning new skills.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the parent to be a proactive advocate for his/her child. It is important that parents regularly inquire about his/her child's educational progress. Support the school's efforts to create a strong educational climate. Develop a strong positive relationship with the school staff so we can act as partners in working with your child.

Take advantage of the many opportunities the school offers to connect with teachers and your child's academic work. Parents must also prepare themselves to support their student as they transition to college.

Legally, Illinois requires all students under 16 to attend school and holds parents responsible for their child's compliance with this law.

Regularly inquire about student's academic progress

- Attend all quarterly student-led conferences.
- Check your student's grades, attendance and fees on power school at least once a week.
- Make an annual visit to your child's classroom.

Support school climate/develop a strong relationship with school staff

- Attend school events such as the Back-to School BBQ, Back-to-School night and Family Night to meet teachers and show your support for your student's accomplishments.
- Be receptive and ask questions– teachers and staff call parents after they have tried several options for redirecting behavior. It is important that students know their parents and teachers are on the same team.
- **Call the school or send a note to inform us when your student is absent.** Unexcused absences negatively impact students' academic status. Missed academic work cannot be made up for unexcused absences which will negatively impact your student's grades. .
- **Make sure your student comes to school in uniform each day.**
- Pay all school fees on time.
- **Keep contact information updated with the school.**

Prepare for your student's success and future

- Attend at least one workshop on the ACT Exhibition and Defense process to learn how to assist your student in progressing toward graduation.
- **Attend at least one workshop about college application process and financial aid/paying for college.**
- Take an adult class in our after-school program.
- Get involved as a volunteer to make ACT better.

### Student Responsibilities

1. **Commit to succeeding in college.**
2. **Come to school ready for the day - WELL RESTED AND FED and BELIEVING THAT YOU ARE AN INTELLIGENT, SUCCESSFUL SCHOLAR.**
3. **Treat all students and staff with respect** – addressing people by their proper name including staff and visitors. Make eye contact when speaking with someone and offer a firm handshake.
4. **Be respectful of yourself and others at all times** throughout the day. Think before you speak and choose your words carefully.
5. **Follow all instructions given by staff at the time they are given.** Any concerns about what you are being asked to do should be addressed to Mr. Davis during lunch or after school – **once you have done what was asked of you.**
6. **Come to all classes PREPARED** with
  - PAPER/PEN AND PENCIL,
  - your STUDENT PLANNER,
  - your class binder/notebook or folder
  - the appropriate BOOKS and SPECIAL MATERIALS,
  - your completed HOMEWORK.
6. **Be attentive and productive in class.** You must come prepared and do what is asked of you in class. Put forth 100% EFFORT at all times. SEEK HELP from staff members when you run into problems; we can't help you if we don't know.

### Student Rights

1. The right to an education. (Students should be free to learn without being interrupted by inconsiderate or disruptive students.)
2. The right to be safe in school and have personal property respected.
3. The right to be free from any kind of abuse – physical, mental or emotional – such as name calling, intimidation, harassment, or vulgar language.

4. The right to be free of segregation or teasing because of race, gender, religion, physical strength, friendship groups, age, culture, handicap, clothing, etc.

## **Academic Information**

### **Parent Conferences**

ACT encourages parents to stay in close contact with the school. Parents should communicate directly with each of classroom teachers when requesting class related information or a conference. Additionally, your scholar's advisor can also be contacted to find out academic or behavior progress. Classes cannot be interrupted for parent conferences, but ACT welcomes parents to come and sit in classes that are in progress (as observers or volunteers).

### **Homework Policy**

Homework will be assigned and evaluated in all classes. Assignments will be well-planned and challenging.

Homework is a useful instructional tool for the following reasons: 1) It helps develop independent learning habits; 2) it enables the student to practice the kind of thinking and analysis he/she does in class prior to taking a test; 3) it allows the class to cover more material; 4) it helps to reinforce recently learned material; 5) it is necessary in order for students to complete long-term projects.

Students should keep a written record of all assignments and budget their time so they will be able to turn in all their assignments on the date are due. Also, it is the students' responsibility for getting assignments when they are absent or excused. Late work will not be accepted, except the case of an excused absence.

### **LATE WORK**

Teachers will not accept late work from students except in the cases of excused absences. Any work which was not submitted at the time it was assigned cannot be made up at the end of the marking period or later in the year.

Teachers are not required to give extra credit assignments. Students must do the work that is assigned when it is assigned.

### **There are three main areas of requirements:**

### **Coursework, Collections of Work (COW) and Additional Projects, and Oral Defense**

#### **Coursework**

Students must successfully complete all of the courses listed under their Division on the summary page in order to be promoted to the next grade.

#### **Failures**

Students who fail a course must make up the credit by attending at summer/evening school.

#### **Summer/Evening School**

Students who make up a course during summer/evening school must provide the written report card from that school attended to receive the appropriate letter change on a student's transcript at ACT.

#### **Grading**

Students will receive letter grade evaluation based on the quality and quantity of their submitted work, using the school-wide grading scale. The teachers will distribute their individual grading criteria along with for each class August. Students are expected are expected to sign the tear-off receipt portion and return it via your advisory teacher. The following grading system has been established at ACT Charter School:

#### **Grading Scale**

- A 91 – 100
- B 81 – 90
- C 71 – 80
- D 61 – 70
- F 0 – 60

Students are enrolled in six classes in middle school - Humanities, Math/Science, Advisory, Reading, Math skills, and an art elective (Art, Photo, PE, Video). High school students have seven classes per trimester – Advisory, Humanities, Math, Science, and two electives (chosen from art, photo, PE, and world language).

**COWs (culminating projects from classes) and Projects**

ACT staff members assign a culminating project at the end of each semester in each subject area, in addition to a final exam. These projects are designed to show proficiency on the Illinois Learning Standards or College Readiness Standards. At least one culminating project from each class is stored in a binder called the Collection of Work at the end of the school year. There are six main subject areas from which projects must be included collections: Humanities, Math, Science, Arts/Technology, Health/ Physical Education, and World Language.

There are also additional projects in four areas designed to prepare student for life after high school – research, career exploration, future planning, and service learning. All COW items and projects are assigned as part of a student's regular class work and must achieve a grade of C or better. As students successfully accomplish their class work they will BOTH earn credit toward course completion AND fulfill required COW items. **THE KEY TO SUCCESS AT ACT IS TO DO YOUR SCHOOLWORK EVERYDAY IN CLASS AND COMPLETE ALL HOMEWORK, both at high levels of excellence.**

**Oral Defense**

All students must also defend a portfolio of their work at the end of middle school (8<sup>th</sup>) and high school (11<sup>th</sup>). The defense portfolio is meant to represent the work a student is most proud of either because he/she demonstrated high quality work (PRIDE), revised it well (REVISION) or because it shows their growth as a student (GROWTH). All COW items included in the Defense Portfolio must achieve a grade of C or better.

*Student's defense portfolios must include:*

- Middle school - 8 COW items
- High School - 12 COW items

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**PROMOTION AND GRADUATION Requirements**

**Middle School Promotion**

Middle school promotion is determined at a meeting of the grade level teachers for each grade by considering a student's completion of courses (grades), Collection of Work requirements, test scores (including interim assessments), attendance and academic skills. At the end of each year, the grade level team will recommend each student for promotion, promotion after summer school or retention.

Students should complete courses and COW items according to the following schedule:

Grade	Credits	Projects	COW projects
7	Humanities Math/Science Reading Math skills 2 electives – one for each half of the year	Career Exploration and Investigation & Service Learning	At least one in each subject from 7 <sup>th</sup> grade – total of 6 or more items in binder
8	Humanities Math/Science Reading Math skills 2 electives – one for each half of the year	Research & Service Learning	At least one in each subject from 8 <sup>th</sup> grade – total of 12 or more items  Defense portfolio and Oral Defense

### High School Graduation Requirements

High school promotion is determined by accumulated credits toward graduation as well as completion of Collection of Work requirements. Students who are missing credits must make them up in summer school or evening school in order to be promoted to the next grade. Students must accumulate at least 6 credits per year for a total of 24 to graduate.

Students should complete courses and COW items according to the following schedule:

Grade /Test	Credits	Projects	COW projects
9 Explore	English I U.S. History Algebra Scientific Methods and Research Reading Spanish I Elective	Career Development Workshop  Field Experience  Service Learning	At least one in each subject from 9 <sup>th</sup> grade – total of 6 or more items in binder
10 PLAN	English II Cont. American Hist. Geometry Biology Reading Spanish II PE/Health/Driver's Ed	Field Experience  Research	At least one in each subject from 10 <sup>th</sup> grade – total of 12 or more items in binder
11 PSAE (ACT)	English III World History Algebra II/Trig. Chemistry Reading 2 electives	Service Learning  Senior Institute Proposal  Research	At least one in each subject from 11 <sup>th</sup> grade – total of 18 or more items in binder  Defense portfolio and Oral Defense
12	English IV Sen. Social Science Coll. Algebra or other math Physics Reading 2 electives	Post-graduation plan  College Preparation  Research  Internship	COMPLETED

## Progress Reports

**Student academic progress reports will be distributed at the midpoint of each grading quarter.**

## Honor Roll

The Honor Roll lists all students who have attained a 3.0 grade point average and who have not received any F grades.

Honors award assemblies are held annually. Honor rolls are determined at the end of each quarter.

## Principal's Scholars

A special honor roll is maintained for students who maintain a 3.74 grade point average or better. These students receive special recognition at the Awards Assembly.

## Requirements for Admission to College

College entrance requirements differ with each college. Students who plan on continuing their education in colleges or universities should be acquainted with specific entrance requirements of the school they hope to attend and should choose high school subjects which will enable them to meet those requirements. A library of college catalogs is maintained by the counselor for the use of every student.

The School Counselor urges students to make inquiries concerning specific college requirements even during their freshman and sophomore years. Minimum requirements to most colleges and universities are:

1. Graduation from an accredited high school with fifteen credits of acceptable high school work in academic subjects.
2. High school work including at least four credits in English (literature and traditional writing courses), three credits of mathematics, three credits of laboratory science, two credits of foreign language and three units of social science. ( Add 1 to 2 credits each for selective colleges)
3. Scholarship rank in the upper fifty percent of high school graduating class.
4. Above average test scores on national examinations such as American College Testing Program (ACT), or College Entrance Examination Board (SAT).

In addition, selective colleges look at the type of courses students take such as Advanced Placement courses, honors levels courses, etc., as well as involvement in co-curricular activities which will demonstrate such qualities as leadership ability, intellectual curiosity, and special abilities. A computerized College/Career Center is available in Room B. This facility provides students with access to locate resources for several hundred colleges and universities. Information regarding specific academic programs, description of the student body, admissions requirements and costs are contained in the database.

## Requirements for Admission to Most Public Universities in the State of Illinois

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Total Credits</i>
English	4
Social Science	3
Mathematics	3
Science (Lab)	3
Foreign Language	2

## College Placement Tests (ACT/SAT)

All students should plan to take the ACT on a National Test Day in addition to the PSAE. It is mandatory that the ACT and/or SAT be taken in the spring of the junior year. If necessary, SAT should be taken in senior year. ACT and SAT are offered during various times throughout the school year.

All information and manuals regarding these important tests are available in the counselors' offices during the entire year. It is the student's responsibility to pick up such materials and register for tests which he/she must take.

## **DIVISION I (MIDDLE SCHOOL) REQUIREMENTS**

### Courses

- 2 Humanities
- 2 Math/Science
- 2 Math skills
- 2 Reading
- 4 Elective classes

### COWs

Include one culminating project per year (2 total) from each of the following classes:

- Humanities
- Math
- Science
- Reading
- Arts/electives

### Projects

- Research
- Career Exploration and Investigation
- Service Learning
- Defense Portfolio and Oral Defense in 8<sup>th</sup> grade

## **DIVISIONS II (HIGH SCHOOL) REQUIREMENTS**

### Courses

ENGLISH and HISTORY/SOC SCI

- Humanities IIA  
(English I and US History)
- Humanities IIB (English II and Contemporary Amer. History)
- Humanities IIIA  
(English III and World History)
- Humanities IIIB  
(English IV and Sr SS Seminar)

MATH

- Algebra
- Geometry
- Algebra II/Trig
  
- College Algebra or other Math

SCIENCE

- Scientific Methods and Research
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS

- 2 years of World Language
- PE/Health/Driver's Education
- 5 Electives with a focus on one major

### COWs

Include one culminating project per year, 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades from each of the following classes:

- Humanities-4
- Math-4
- Science-4
- Reading-4
- World language-2
- Arts electives-6

### Division II Projects

Research & Analysis Proj. (5-7 pgs.)-11<sup>th</sup> grade  
Career Development Workshop-9<sup>th</sup>  
Field Experience-9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grades  
Service Learning (10 hrs. per year)  
Defense Portfolio-11<sup>th</sup> grade  
Oral defense-11<sup>th</sup> grade

Research & Analysis Proj. 8-12 pgs.  
Post Graduation Plan  
Service Learning (10 hrs. per year)  
College Preparation  
Internship (13 weeks)

The ultimate goal is for all ACT students to attend college. Each of the requirements is designed to prepare students to be successful in college. The time needed for students to complete each division may vary. Students may require more time than is traditionally expected because of the challenging nature of the ACT curriculum. We believe all students are capable of college work with the right effort and preparation.

## DISCIPLINE CODE AND EXPECTATIONS

The **Way to ACT** is a set of 5 personal characteristics that we encourage ACT scholars to practice. As they are working on developing these characteristics and corresponding habits, students must meet the minimum student responsibilities described below at all times while at ACT.

### THE WAY TO ACT

- **Integrity**
- **Initiative**
- **Perseverance**
- **Creativity**
- **Teamwork**

#### CPS Student Code of Conduct

ACT uses the Student Code of the Conduct of the Chicago Public Schools as a guide for disciplinary action. ACT demands a school environment of safety, trust and responsibility. The following behaviors are considered major offenses to our school culture and will be dealt with very seriously:

*fighting or rough play, stealing, gang activity, vandalism, profanity and/or language intended to harm another person, bullying, teasing, harassment, or intimidation, sexual harassment, cheating and plagiarism*

Scholars are responsible for obeying the laws of the city, state, and country in which they live. The following behaviors will not be tolerated under any circumstances:

- *use of drugs and/or alcohol*
- *sexual misconduct*
- *possession or use of weapons*
- *assault and battery*
- *false fire alarms or bomb threats*
- *threats of mass violence*

#### Disciplinary consequences

ACT may assign consequences for infractions against the Student Code of Conduct, Dress Code or other school policies. These consequences include conferences with the student, parents, teacher and/or administration, detention, suspension from class or school.

#### Dress Code

A major part of the A.C.T. mission is preparing students to become professionals. The reputation of a school is based to a great extent upon the behavior and appearance of its student body. Student dress should reflect the importance that education plays in every student's life. All students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly and modestly in clothes that are appropriate for an academic environment. Attire (*what we wear and how we wear it*) therefore; we insist that students adhere to the following requirements:

**Shirt:** All students must wear a uniform shirt each day. Only a white undershirt may be worn underneath the uniform shirt. There may not be any words, logos, or pictures on the undershirt. Students may wear nothing over their uniform shirt except an ACT sweatshirt. If the sweatshirt is worn over the top of the shirt, the collar of the school shirt must be turned down over the sweatshirt. **Shirts MUST be tucked in to the pants and remain that way throughout the day.**

**Middle School students (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades)** must wear white or purple school issued shirts – short or long sleeved – with the ACT emblem on the front.

**High School students (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades)** wear black or teal school issued shirts short or long sleeved – with the ACT emblem on the front.

**(12th grade students must wear the uniform 45 consecutive days & upon approval will be granted free dress if they remain in compliance)**

All seniors must follow the following guidelines:

1. All pants must be belted and must be worn at the waist – **no shorts.**
2. Skirts must be long enough to reach the knee.
3. All shirts must have sleeves and reach below the waist line.
4. Clothing must NOT have holes that would attract attention and cause a distraction.
5. Students are not allowed to wear athletic gear including: any clothing items with college or professional sports team logos. Students may not wear warm-up suits of any kind including velour sweat-suits.
6. No flip flops or open-toed shoes are allowed.

#### **Pants/skirts/shoes (all grades)**

- Must wear light khaki colored dress pants with no designs – and no additional pants underneath
- NO loops or straps on pants
- NO pockets below mid thigh
- NO zippers/ detachable pants
- NO shorts
- Pants must not be baggy or tight
- Students may wear their own shoes, but limited to no gang logos, or offensive markings.
- NO flip-flops or shoes with open toes. ie: house slippers, crocs.
- Pants must be worn that allow for belts
- Black or brown belts must be worn at all times (except with girls' skirts sold without loops) and may not hang down
- Pants must be an appropriate fit and size

#### **Girls only**

- May wear light khaki colored skirts
- Pants must be full length – Capri pants are **NOT** allowed
- Skirts must be knee length or longer, NO slit may come too high
- Skirts must not be baggy or tight

#### **Additional Dress Code Expectations**

These requirements must be followed by **all students** including 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

1. **Scholars MUST be in uniform attire upon arrival at ACT – students who are not in uniform attire will be sent home.** Scholars may not change clothes before or after school, inside or in front of the building.
2. Heavy coats **MUST** be stored in the scholar's locker throughout the instructional hours of the day.
3. ALL headgear should be stored in your locker at the beginning of the day and may NOT be worn or carried around the building. This includes – hats, do rags, bandanas, scarves, wristbands, headbands, etc.
4. Scholars must have neat hairstyles.
5. Only prescription glasses may be worn on the eyes. **Sunglasses** must be stored in the scholar's locker for the day.

6. **All electronic devices must be stored in your locker at the beginning of the day and may not be worn or carried around the building, including: PAGERS, CELL-PHONES, CD PLAYERS, MP3 PLAYERS, HEADPHONES, ETC. If these items are carried around the building they will be confiscated.**
7. Jewelry must be tasteful. Earrings or pendants with guns, gang symbols or marijuana leaves are prohibited. **No visible body piercing (e.g. lip rings, nose rings, etc.).**

### **Field Trip Etiquette**

Class field trips are a valuable part of the learning experience. Therefore, as often as possible, we organize trips to enrich classroom learning. When we go out into the world, it is important to represent the school well and leave a good impression. Students must:

- Dress neatly and in uniform if required.
- Show respect to each other, ACT staff, and all new people we meet including the bus driver.
- Leave everywhere we visit in better condition than we find it.

The students at ACT are intelligent and professional. We expect that students will behave this way not only in school, but also on field trips and other educational activities. ***Students who behave in an unscholarly manner will not be allowed to attend field trips.***

**All Chicago Public School Student Code of Conduct policies are also in effect when on a school related field trip.**

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **ACADEMIC GOOD STANDING**

ACT Students have a number of rights and privileges available to them.

Privileges are given or taken away based on a student's status of Good Standing or Not in Good Standing. A student's status will be updated once a marking period. This status is determined by examining four criteria.

1. Attendance – students must not have less than 95% attendance for the previous marking period and no more than 10 cumulative absences for the year.
2. Discipline- Students may not have any suspensions or UPA's in the previous marking period. In addition, they may not have more than 2 office referrals in the previous month.
3. Responsibility- Students must have served all detention hours in the previous marking period.
4. Grades- Students must have no more than one failing grade on the most recent marking period.

### **ADMISSION POLICY**

The ACT Charter School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin. Students must be residents of Chicago. Applications submitted by the lottery deadline will be chosen for admission randomly. Those submitted after the deadline will be wait-listed in the order received.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

The ACT Charter School provides computers and network capabilities to students for the purpose of enhancing instruction through technological resources. The ACT Charter School may make access or electronic mail available to students on the ACT Network as educational resources. It is a general policy of the ACT Charter School to promote the use of computers in a manner that is responsible, legal, and appropriate. Student use of the ACT network is a privilege. A student's failure to adhere to the Student Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will result in the revocation of the student's access privileges. To gain access to these network privileges students must complete the AUP agreement and pass the AUP quiz as well as have the AUP signed by themselves and their parent or guardian. Should a student's access privileges be revoked, there shall be no obligation to provide a subsequent opportunity for access to the ACT Network.

### **AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

The SPACE Center is ACT's extra-curricular program, sponsored with funding from CCAP. The SPACE Center incorporates an After-School Program that is designed to increase participants' academic achievement and improve their attitudes about themselves and their future; to provide a safe and healthy environment in which to spend non-school hours; and to create a greater sense of community by involving parents and other adults. The After-School Program reinforces school curricula by encouraging students to attain competency in reading, writing, and math through a program of tutorial services and recreational, health, and cultural activities. Students should be picked up by 6pm. **Any students who are repeatedly at school after 6pm may be excluded from the after-school program.**

### **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

The ACT Charter School follows all Illinois High School Association (IHSA) eligibility rules. According to IHSA, a student must pass twenty credit hours of high school work per week. Twenty credit hours is the equivalent of four 1/2 credit courses. A student must have passed and received credit toward graduation for twenty credit hours of high school work for the entire previous semester to be eligible at all during the ensuing semester. IHSA rules and policies are available at [www.ihsa.org](http://www.ihsa.org).

At ACT this means, students must pass at least 4 classes (Humanities counts as 2 classes) in the previous semester to be eligible for their season. This is determined by looking at the report card. Students must have a C or better in at least four classes.

Eligibility for fall and winter sports – football, cheerleading, basketball, volleyball – will be determined by the report card of the previous school year, or a student's grades from his/her previous school.

Eligibility for spring sports – baseball, softball, track, soccer – will be determined by the report card.

Once the season begins, students must maintain eligibility through a weekly progress check signed by all of his/her teachers. If a student has more than one F (low points or grades) on the progress report they will be ineligible to play for the following week (Monday to Saturday). Humanities and A&E count as two classes and cannot receive an F.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

#### **Student/Parent Responsibility**

All students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. Absence from school (classes) is the greatest single cause of poor achievement. **The basic responsibility for the regular attendance of the student lies with the student and parent.** The state Compulsory Attendance Law specifically states that the parent is obligated to see that the student is in school.

**PARENTS MUST REPORT EXCUSED ABSENCES** with a phone call to the main office or note within one day of the absence. Family vacations should be scheduled during school breaks. According to the State of Illinois there are only four legitimate reasons for student absence:

1. Death in the immediate family (mother, father or siblings).
2. Illness (For consistent absences due to illness a doctor's statement may be required).
3. Religious Holiday
4. Family Emergency

It is also VERY IMPORTANT for students to be on-time to all classes. **Students are expected to arrive at school by 8:20 daily** all classes begin at **8:30am**.

#### **Absences**

All absences **MUST** be explained with a note signed by a parent/guardian with a phone number where he/she can be reached, or a phone call to the main office - (773) 626-4200 x.221 - in order for the student to return to classes. The note should be submitted to the student's advisor.

#### **Excessive Absences**

Parents may not keep students home to baby-sit, run errands, or for non-emergency family business (Doctor's appointments should be scheduled after-school or on school holidays). Such absences are unexcused and are defined by the State as neglect. Eighteen (18) unexcused absences are considered chronic truancy. This will lead to failing grades and can be prosecuted by the State. When students return to school, it is their **responsibility to ask**

**teachers for any work missed.** If students do not return with a note, **teachers do not have to give missed work.**

### **Tardies**

Students who enter class tardy are a disruption to learning – our policies are designed to minimize the number of class interruptions. The Chicago Public Schools considers three tardies to equal 1 absence. Chronic tardiness may lead to school failure.

1. Students who arrive to school after 8:30 will be marked tardy sign the tardy log and be given a tardy pass. Tardy students are to report to class immediately and deliver the tardy pass to their advisor.
2. All students who arrive to school after **8:30am** must sign the tardy log and may be asked to show their school ID.
3. Parents/guardians will be contacted for **all** scholar tardies and/or absences.
4. Parents who drive their students to school **MUST** drop them off by 8:15am – getting a ride to school is **NOT** an excuse for tardiness.
5. Student must arrive on-time to classes throughout the day. If they are late they **MUST** have a pass from the adult who held them overtime. Without a pass, students are subject to detention or other consequences from their classroom teachers.
6. Students who are habitually late will be required to attend Saturday morning workshops **WITH THEIR PARENT/GUARDIAN.**

### **Excessive Tardies**

Tardies to school are cumulative for the entire school year. The following procedures are followed when a student has excessive tardies:

- A student receives one hour of Saturday detention for every four tardies to school after the first four.
- Saturday detentions are held one Saturday per month and students will serve all required time for cumulative tardies in that month.
- When a student accumulates 20 tardies a parent/guardian will be required to attend a conference at school.
- Students with unserved Saturday hours will be excluded from graduation/promotion activities.

### **Early Dismissals**

All students are expected to remain at school for the entire day unless they are ill or there is a family emergency. If students **MUST** leave school early for these reasons, the following procedures **MUST** be followed to ensure the safety of your children:

1. A parent/guardian must come pick-up the student.
2. A parent/guardian may send an adult family member (21 years or older) in their place – if we can reach the parent by telephone to confirm that the person is acting on the parent's request (ID may be required).
3. **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE SCHOOL BUILDING UNLESS THEY ARE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT.**
4. Parents/guardians must stop in the main office and sign the student out for the day.
5. **When a student returns to school it is the student's responsibility to ask teachers for any work missed.** If students do not return with a note, **teachers do not have to give missed work.**
6. An early dismissal after noon is considered a half day absence. An early dismissal before noon is considered a one full day absence.

### **CLOSED CAMPUS POLICY**

ACT operates a closed campus. In other words, students are required to stay on campus at all times during the school day – including lunch. Students who violate this policy will be suspended. The only exception to this rule is for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who are permitted to leave campus for lunch. Students who abuse this privilege may lose the opportunity to leave campus during lunchtime. An annual permission form is required for off campus lunch. The ACT Charter School is not liable for students while they are off campus, but students are required to follow the discipline code to and from school.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES- Emergency Closing**

In case of severe weather or other emergency, the ACT Charter School may close. The ACT Charter School follows

the Chicago Public Schools decision to close school due to a weather related or other emergency. The following stations provide school closing information: WMAQ 67, WGN 720, WBBM 780, FM US99, and TV-32

### **Fire Drill Procedures**

When the fire alarm sounds, students must quickly and quietly line up to exit the building. Wait for instructions from your classroom teacher before leaving the classroom and stay with your class after exiting the building.

During a fire or fire drill, students must exit the building immediately WITHOUT stopping at coatrooms or lockers to retrieve coats or belongings.

Students using the north exit will walk EAST toward Kildare and wait in front of the church. The following classrooms will use the North exit (front door):

A, B, C, lunchroom, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, main office

Students using the Southeast door will exit into the alley behind the school and walk EAST toward Kildare. Students should then walk south on Kildare toward Madison and wait alongside the fence until signaled to return. The following classrooms must use the Southeast exit – rear door: D, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 20.

### **Tornado Drill Procedures**

In case of a tornado, the school administration will sound the warning signal. All students should line up quickly and quietly and wait for instructions from their teacher. When told, they will leave the classroom and kneel against the wall or lockers in their assigned area:

Rooms 1 and 2 - Students are to line up in the first floor hallway south of the double doors.

Rooms 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 - Students are to line up South of the classroom door in as many rows as necessary to ensure that all students are safe from harm.

Rooms 9 and 10 - Students are to line up in east-west hallway at the rear of the building on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

Room 11 - Students are to line up in the second floor hallway south of the double doors.

Room 13, 14, 15, 16, and 18 - Students are to line up south of the classroom door in as many rows as necessary to ensure that all students are safe from harm.

Rooms 19 and 20 - Students are to line up in east-west hallway at the rear of the building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

Basement classrooms - Students are to line up in the hallway between the lunchroom and rooms C and D (where the purple tile is located).

Students are expected to sit quietly until the drill is completed. Listen to the instructions of your teacher.

### **FIELD STUDY POLICY**

Field Study is an important part of the educational process at ACT Charter School. The ACT Charter School asks parents/guardians to allow students to attend these field experiences. [Students will be given information in writing when trips require a fee.] By signing the handbook signature page parents/guardians allow their student(s) to attend school related field trips, agree to be fully responsible for their child's behavior, and will not hold the ACT Charter School liable for incidents resulting from student misconduct.

### **HEALTH POLICIES**

#### **Home Schooling**

If a student is out of school for more than 10 days because of health or physical impairment and resides in the immediate area during the absence he/she shall seek home or hospital instruction. To be provided home instruction from the school a note from a doctor must be provided explaining the duration that home instruction is necessary.

#### **Illness**

If you do not feel well during the school day, you should inform your teacher and ask permission to go to the main

office. The school secretary will contact your home to find out if someone can come pick you up. If your parent/guardian cannot be reached and there is no emergency, you must return to class. If you are feeling too sick to go back to class, provisions will be made for you to rest at school.

### **Immunization**

In order for a student to remain in school and in compliance with the Illinois State Law Chapter 122, Section 27-8, the student must have on file at ACT Charter School the following: a current physical examination, immunization record of diphtheria-tetanus vaccine (3 doses), polio vaccine (3 doses), rubella-measles-mumps vaccine (2 doses), and a full series of hepatitis vaccine (3 doses). The ACT Charter School can provide information to families on local medical clinics. The ACT Charter School is not liable for any related medical services. Students who are not in compliance may not be permitted to attend school until medical records are fully updated.

### **Medical Conditions**

Students with major health related issues (such as asthma, seizure disorders, heart conditions, et cetera) should provide the school with medical documentation from a physician concerning any restrictions needed in a school setting.

### **Prescription Medicine**

Those students needing to take prescription medications in school must have a doctor's note requesting it to be given at school. These forms may be obtained from the main office. Prescription medicine must be stored in the main office.

### **LATE WORK**

Teachers will not accept late work from students except in the cases of excused absences. Any work which was not submitted at the time it was assigned cannot be made up at the end of the marking period or later in the year. Teachers are not required to give extra credit assignments. Students must do the work that is assigned when it is assigned.

### **LUNCHROOM PROCEDURES**

**Middle School** - When entering the lunchroom all students must be seated at their assigned table. Students will be called to the lunch line one table at a time. Students will be excused from the lunchroom with their Reading teacher once the lunchroom is clean.

**High School** - Students may go through the lunch line or purchase snacks for the first 20 minutes of the period. Students will be excused when the lunchroom is clean.

In the lunchroom ALL students must:

- Choose one seat at the beginning of the period and remain seated until dismissed from lunch.
- Hold conversations quietly.
- Throw all trash in the garbage cans before leaving the lunchroom.
- Clean up any spills.
- Sit with their feet under the tables to keep the aisles clear.
- Take turns wiping down lunchroom tables at the end of the period.
- Treat all students and staff with respect.

### **School Meals**

Applications for free or reduced-priced lunches are available at the beginning of the school year. Once processed the student's lunch application status will be coded on the back of their student ID card. **Students can only receive lunch by presenting their Student ID card.** Students who lose their ID may purchase a replacement in the main office for \$5. Breakfast is served from 8:00am to 8:25am each day.

Students may bring their own lunches. However, they may NOT bring glass bottles to school. Lunches must be stored in a student's locker until lunchtime.

### **PARENT ORGANIZATION**

The ACT Charter School has an active Parent Organization who meets monthly. Every parent or guardian of an ACT Student is automatically a member of the Parent Organization. As part of this membership parent/guardians are expected to participate in service to the ACT community.

## **REPORTS OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### **Report Cards**

Grade reports will be issued at the conclusion of each quarter. Grade reports are to be picked up by a parent/guardian during Student Led Conferences.

### **Progress Reports**

Progress reports will be issued during the half-way point of each trimester. Progress reports will be mailed home and given to students, in-hand.

### **Student Led Conferences**

Student Led Conferences are a way for students to take responsibility for explaining their work their parent/guardian and teacher. These occur after each quarter.

### **Power school**

The ACT Charter School utilizes power school which is a web-based program where parents/guardians can gain access to see updated grades for their child. At the beginning of the year parent/guardians will receive their username and password. Go to <http://powerschool.actcharter.org/public>. If students or parents lose their login information please call the main office to request it.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

ACT believes that its facility contributes to its mission to prepare students for college. Therefore, proper care of school property and facilities is especially important. Students who damage school property through misconduct or carelessness will be required to pay for repairs and subject to disciplinary action. In addition, all textbooks loaned to students must be returned in useable condition. The cost of replacing lost or damaged books will be charged to the student.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

School phones are not for students' personal use. Students may request to use school phones only if there is a serious emergency. The school will NOT accept messages for students unless there is an extreme emergency. Arrangements for rides should be made before arriving at school.

### **Cell Phones**

According to a City of Chicago ordinance, students are not allowed to bring cell phones or pagers to school. Schools may make exceptions if a parent requests such an exception for family reasons. This request must be made in writing at the beginning of the school year. At ACT, students who are given such exceptions MUST store their cell phones in their lockers, turned off for the entirety of the day. If a cell phone is seen by a teacher, it will be taken and given to the Dean of Students and can only be retrieved by the parent. **After a second incident, the phone will not be returned until the end of the school year.** This policy will be strictly enforced.

## **TRANSCRIPTS AND TRANSFERS**

### **Transcripts**

Requested in the main office, transcripts will be mailed directly to the requesting school. Transcripts include trimester grades and attendance record. The first transcript requested is free of charge. Subsequent transcripts carry a \$3.00 fee. A transcript request will be processed within 48 hours.

### **Transfers**

Transfers will be issued only after the parent/guardian signs a transfer request form. All obligations must be met before a transfer can be processed including any fees or debts. A transfer request will be processed within 48 hours.

## **NOTIFICATIONS**

### **ASBESTOS PUBLIC NOTICE**

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). This law requires all schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade, to be inspected to identify any asbestos-containing materials. The law further requires the development of a Management Plan, based upon the findings of the inspection, which outlines our intent in controlling the potential for exposure to asbestos fibers in our school.

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating and fire retarding capabilities. Virtually any building built before the late 1970's contain at least some asbestos in pipe insulation and structural fireproofing. We too, have asbestos-containing building materials within our school. The primary concern arises when these materials begin to deteriorate or become damaged.

Pursuant to the requirements of AHERA, an inspection has been performed and some asbestos-containing materials were identified in the building. The school's Inspection Report and Management Plan has been completed and submitted to the Illinois Department of Public Health. It outlines in detail the methods we will use to maintain the materials in a safe manner. Building employees attend training when hired to successfully administer this program. ACT Charter School is committed to minimizing the potential for exposures to asbestos within our school and shall assure that the provisions of this plan are met. A copy of the inspection report and management plan is on file at the Administration Office at 4319 W. Washington Blvd. in Chicago, IL for your review, if you so desire .

### **MODEL RELEASE**

By signing this handbook form, parents/guardians are granting the ACT Charter School the right to use and publish photographs, academic work or other materials of your student for purposes of advertising or trade or other purposes in any medium. Signing the handbook page releases the ACT Charter School and their legal representatives of liability of related materials.

### **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**

The Federal act "No Child Left Behind" signed into law on January 8, 2002, sets new standards for teacher qualifications and hiring. The Act requires that all parents be notified of your right to request information from your child's school regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers, including the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met State criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification criteria have been waived.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

You may request this information by contacting the school.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

ACT is committed to offering a high quality education to every scholar at our school. Based on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a parent of a student who is receiving or may be eligible to receive special education and related services may request a copy of their rights. Parent/guardians may submit this request to the ACT Charter School administration at any time.