

**NECCS** Newark Educators'  
Community Charter School

**Family Handbook**

17-19 Crawford Street  
Newark, NJ 07102

Table of Content	Page #
Principal's Message	3
Mission Statement	4
School Calendar	5
Snow Days / School Closing	6
Early Dismissal	6
Attendance	6
Excused Absence	6
Late Arrival / Leaving Before Dismissal	7
Discipline Policy	7
Prohibited Conduct	8
Penalties & Enforcement	9
In-school Suspension	9
Suspension	9
Expulsion	9
Address & Telephone Number Changes	9
Dress Code	9
Health Records	10
Illness	10
Permission Slips	10
Cell Phone Policy	10
Homework Policy	10
Report Card Schedule	11
Promotion / Retention Policy	12
Parent Conferences	12
Parent Conferences Schedule	13
Parent / Guardian Visits	13
Role of Families	14
Notes	15

Dear Parents, Grandparents, Guardians and Caregivers:

This Parent/Caregiver Handbook was created especially for you. It contains essential information that governs our school. The guidelines outlined throughout this handbook are written to encourage and promote a healthy school culture, the key ingredient in achieving the highest degree of academic success among our student body.

Please take time to read this information and familiarize yourself with the expectations of The Newark Educator's Community Charter School. The more you, as parents and caregivers know about these expectations, the more you will be able to support our efforts and assure that we meet the teaching and learning needs of each student.

Throughout our 2009-2010 school year, you will be informed of school informational meetings and school events. We are sure that you will demonstrate your support by attending, knowing that it will mean a great deal to your child. Remember, you are always welcome in our school.

Please call or visit whenever you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely yours,

Joyce Ann Kornegay  
Principal

# **Newark Educators' Community Charter School**

## **Mission Statement**

The Newark Educators' Community Charter School's (NECCS) mission is to create a rigorous learning community that supports the academic, social and personal growth of children and the ongoing professional growth of educators. The School staff will provide opportunities for learning—where children will learn to see the connections between school and the world, and where educators will hone professional practices. The School is a community of educators: school leaders, teacher educators, teachers, families, and community partners. It is a place where culture, community, and professional knowledge come together to support student and teacher learning, thereby improving student achievement outcomes and teacher retention in mutually supportive ways.

Students at the Newark Educators' Community Charter School are a part of an educational community where rigorous curriculum is made engaging and accessible, and where students meet high expectations by being given the support they need and deserve. We offer an educational plan that addresses the individual needs of students, to insure that all students meet their potential.

## School Calendar 2009 -2010

Dates	Descriptions	Students	Staff
September 1	Opening day for staff		
September 7	School Closed – Labor Day		
September 10	Opening day for students		
September		15 days	21 days
October 12	School Closed		
October		21 days	21 days
November 6	School Closed - Staff Retreat		
November 11	School Closed – Veteran’s Day		
November 25	1:00 Dismissal		
November 26 – 28	School Closed		
November		17 days	18 days
December 23	1:00 Dismissal		
December 24 - 31	School Closed – Holiday Break		
December		17 days	17 days
January 1-3	School Closed –Holiday Break		
January 4	School Resumes		
January 18	School Closed – Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday		
January		19 days	19 days
February 15 - 19	School Closed – Winter Break		
February 22	School Resumes		
February		15 days	15 days
March 12	School Closed – Staff Retreat		
March		22 days	23 days
April 2 - 9	School Closed – Spring Break		
April 12	School Resumes		
April		16 days	16 days
May 31	School Closed – Memorial Day observed		
May		20 days	20 days
June 25	Last Day of School – students		
June 30	Last day of School - Staff		
June		19 days	22 days

Total days for students: 181

Total days for staff: 192

## **Snow Days/School Closings**

NECCS is happy to inform you of the procedures that are in place, in the event of severe weather conditions or other emergency. A special announcement will be made on TV Channel 12 and radio station WOR 710 A.M. between 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 A.M.

In the event of a change in school hours, you will receive as much advance notification as possible, either written or by telephone. All procedures for any delayed opening or early dismissal will be sent home separately during the school year. During a delayed opening, school will begin at 10:00 A.M., unless notified in advance.

## **Early Dismissal**

The administration of the NECCS realizes that there may be opportunities in which a child may need to leave school before the end of the day. If this becomes necessary, the administration would ask parents / guardians to please report to the school and sign your child out in the main office. However, the administration would like to discourage early dismissal, as it takes away valuable instructional time from your child's education.

## **Attendance**

School attendance is required every day, and parents are encouraged to ensure that their child attends school everyday. If for any reason your child is absent, we ask that you please contact the school at (973) 273-0020, to inform us of the absence, or send a note to your child's teacher.

## **Excused Absences**

Certain absences may be excused. They are:

1. Illness, with a doctor's note presented when your child returns to school.
2. Religious holiday and/or
3. Death in the family.

## **Late Arrival and Leaving Before Dismissal**

The administration encourages all parents / guardians to ensure that their child report to school on time each day. If a student is not in his / her seat by 8:00 a.m. he / she is considered tardy. Three tardiness will be counted as one unexcused absence except for the following reasons:

1. Medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours
2. Medical disability
3. Religious holiday and/or
4. Family emergency

The school recognizes that from time to time compelling circumstances will require that a student reports to school late or may need to leave before the end of the school day. If a child is tardy, the parent / guardian must report to the main office, to make sure that attendance information is updated, and to ensure that his / her child is delivered safely to the classroom. If a child needs to leave before the end of the day, the parent / guardian must report to the main office and sign his / her child out before leaving the building. Students who develop a pattern of tardiness, excused or unexcused, will be offered counseling with an appropriate staff member to determine the cause of the tardiness.

No student shall be permitted to leave the school before the close of the school day unless they are met in the school office by their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or a person authorized by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to act in their behalf.

## **Discipline Policy**

Newark Educators' Community Charter School is committed to establishing a safe environment where students are able to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. NECCCS' values preventative measures as a means to creating a safe, connected, supportive environment, and will continue to cultivate and reinforce appropriate social values through The Responsive Classroom Approach.

At Newark Educators' Community Charter School respect for oneself and others will be modeled by all staff. Students will be expected to practice appropriate behavior in the school building, on school buses, and outside the school building when they are representing the school, i.e., on school field trips. Appropriate behavior will be modeled, discussed, and reinforced in every classroom, as well as in other areas of the school building.

In addition, our students will learn to care for themselves and care for each other. Our students will learn to be independent, establish a role in a group, collaborate with partners, and learn the language and skills set they need to resolve problems peacefully and productively through The Responsive Classroom Approach.

The School will have clear expectations as well as clear consequences for its students. The school staff will ensure that parents and students are well informed of these policies presented as a Code of Conduct.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

It is expected that no student, either singly or with others, shall:

- Willfully cause physical injury to any other person, or threaten to use force, which would result in such injury.
- Neither physically restrain or detain any other person, nor remove such person from any place where he or she is authorized to remain, except as necessary to maintain the established educational process.
- Willfully damage or destroy school property, nor remove or use such property without authorization.
- Without permission, express or implied, enter into any private office or classroom of an administrative officer, teacher, or staff member.
- Enter or remain in any building or facility for any purpose other than its authorized use or in such a manner as to obstruct its authorized use by others.
- Without authorization, remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed, nor without permission enter any building or facility prior to its normal opening.
- Refuse to leave any building or facility after being required to do so by the Principal or an authorized administrative officer or his or her designee.
- Willfully obstruct or interfere with the free movement of persons and vehicles.
- Deliberately disrupt or prevent the peaceful and orderly conduct of classes, lectures, and meetings or deliberately interfere with the freedom of any person to express his or her views, unless such disruption is necessary to maintain order of the educational process.
- Possess on school property any rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver, knife, chain, club or other weapon, whether or not the person has a license to possess such weapon. Furthermore, it is the duty of the Principal to inform the police of the presence or use of any such weapon or implements used as weapons on school property.
- Commit acts that threaten the safety and welfare of persons on school property.
- Violate any federal or State statute or regulation, local ordinance or school policy.
- Possess, use or distribute alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- Harass or coerce any person.

- Refuse or fail to comply with a lawful order or direction of a school official in the performance of his or her duty.

### **Penalties and Enforcement**

Violations deemed serious or habitual will be addressed with the following steps:

**In-school suspension:** Though students will continue to receive instruction, staff will place them in another classroom or location designated by the Principal. Students will be separated from the regular classroom, but will always have adult supervision.

**Suspension:** Where deemed necessary, students will be suspended from school for one to five days, depending on the severity of the infraction. The Principal or designee will notify the parents in advance and they will be required to meet with the Principal or designee. Following this meeting, the child will return to his / her classroom.

**Expulsion:** Violations deemed serious or habitual will be addressed with expulsion if the Principal determines that all other options have been exhausted without the desired effect, or the expulsion is mandated by law. A hearing will be arranged with the School Board President, the Principal, the parents and the student. The hearing could result in a recommendation to the Board for student expulsion. The Board has the final authority for expulsion decisions.

## **Address and Telephone Number Changes**

We are all aware that an emergency may arise at any time. With this, the administration knows how important it is that we have updated contact information on your child at all times. If at any point your contact information changes, please make every effort to notify the school immediately.

## **Dress Code**

Students learn best when they are in comfortable, clean and appropriate attire. The school will provide all parents with the uniform attire selected for the school, and how to contact the company that will provide the school adopted uniform.

## **Health Records**

The State Department of Education requires that all medical forms be completed. This includes completed records of immunizations. Please check with the school nurse for all health records questions.

## **Illnesses**

If your child has a contagious infection (for example ringworm or pink eye) please inform the teacher and the nurse (973-733-6927). If the nurse sends a medical note home regarding a contagious infection, please send your child back to school with a signed physician's note, medically clearing your child.

## **Permission Slips**

On occasions, and as part of our academic program, school trips will be organized for the students. As such, the administration is asking parents to sign a permission slip that will cover all class trips via various modes of transportation or via walks in the neighborhood. These permission slips will be provided at the opening of the school year, and will be kept on file throughout the school year.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

In this day and age, the administration knows how important it is for parents to be able to contact their child, in case of an emergency. Therefore, if you desire your child to carry a cell phone to school, we will provide you with a User Agreement. This User Agreement must be completed by you and returned to the main office. This agreement identifies the cell phone, and serves as an acknowledgement that the school is not responsible for any loss or damage that may occur to the phone. During the school day, the phone must be turned off, and not used while your child is in the school building. We also ask that parent not call or text your child during the school day, as it will disrupt the instructional program. Just imagine if three – four students' phones are ringing or vibrating while the classroom teachers are instructing. Just imagine your child turning his / her focus away from instruction to answer his / her phone.

## **Homework Policy**

Homework gives students the opportunity to practice at home the tasks covered in class, and helps students work towards improving academic skills. It also helps children to become confident and independent in their learning, which will help throughout their time at school and in adult life.

At The Newark Educators' Community Charter School, homework will take many forms: reading to a parent or family member for at least 20 minutes each night, responding to a reading assignment, interviewing a family member and recording the answers, constructing a project overtime in various subjects, working on a writing sample overtime, completing open-ended questions, researching a topic, and recording important information, working on word study activities, conducting a science project, etc.

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to set up a routine and provide their child with a quiet place to complete his / her homework. After your child has completed his / her homework, please review it and return it to school in your child's book bag or homework folder.

## **Report Card Schedule**

During the school year, the NECCS teachers will send report cards to parents four times per year. Report cards will indicate: areas where the student performed above, below, or at expected levels, specific plans to address any concerns, ways in which the parent may help the student achieve success, things the student can do to improve performance; and a student self-assessment, if age appropriate.) Following each report card distribution, parents must sign and return the report card to the school with his / her child.

Please refer to the schedule below for dates that report cards will be sent home.

### **Report Card Distribution Schedule**

Marking Period	Report Card Distribution
September 10 – November 13 2009 (45 days)	November 20, 2009
November 16 - February 5, 2010 (48 days)	February 11, 2010
February 8 - April 23, 2010 (43 days)	May 6, 2010
April 26 - June 25, 2010 (44 days)	June 25, 2010

## **Promotional / Retention Policy**

The Newark Educators' Community Charter School promotion standards require each teacher to provide written notice to the Principal during the final quarter of the year a list of students' academic, emotional and/or social progress, which might merit a decision to retain the student in the same grade for an additional year. The Principal then convenes a series of meetings with the school staff best positioned to make recommendations and with the parent/guardian and select staff as appropriate. The Principal will make final decisions in consultation with classroom teachers on all promotions and retentions

Newark Educators' Community Charter School will establish and follow reporting requirements for informing and meeting with parents of children who are in danger of not meeting promotional criteria; plans will be established early on to help students who are at risk of not meeting promotional criteria. Family Conferences (teacher/student/parents) will be held at least twice a year to assess student's progress towards meeting promotional criteria. The following will be taken into account when reviewing a student's eligibility for promotion:

Promotion for students will be based on meeting the following criteria:

- Maintains 90% attendance or higher
- Mastery of Newark Educators' Community Charter School Exit Outcomes, aligned with NJCCCS, as determined by homework, class work, and internal assessments

## **Parent Conference**

The administration and staff will provide three formal parent conferences during the school year. These parent conferences will take place during a specific time period that will be agreed upon by parent and teacher. During these conferences, the teachers will once again review the school's instructional program, as well as the progress that a student has made during specific points in the school year. *(The student may also be present at these conferences, if appropriate.)* The teacher will discuss a child's academic and social development. She / he will apprise the parents of his / her child's strengths and / or areas in need of improvement in all subjects. The teachers will review the students' work folders and projects with the parents, and explain how they were assessed. The teacher will explain the school's technology program, and how a student was assessed. The teacher will share results of ongoing assessment results, formal and informal, and compare them with the school's benchmarks. Of course, parents will utilize this time to share their thoughts about their child, and ask what more could they do at home to support their child's progress.

**Cycle and Parent Conferences Schedule**  
**Parent Conference appointments will be scheduled between**  
**3:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

	Cycle Dates	Parent Conferences
Cycle 1	Sept. 10, 2009 November 13, 2009	November 17, 2009
Cycle 2	November 16, 2009 February 5, 2010	February 9, 2010
Cycle 3	February 8, 2010 April 23, 2010	April 27, 2010
Cycle 4	April 26, 2010 June 25, 2010	

Parents/caregivers are also encouraged to schedule conferences at other times during the school year to discuss their child's academic and social progress or any specific need or concern. If you wish to schedule a conference with a teacher please send a note in with your child, or simply telephone the main office and leave a message for the teacher.

**Parents/Caregivers Visits**

Classroom visit can be a fun time for parents / guardians, and you are encouraged to visit your child's classroom, to observe lessons and/or participate in special activities. Please keep in mind that a classroom visit is *not* the appropriate time to discuss concerns about your child; this can be done by scheduling a parent/caregiver conference. Please use the visits to participate in classroom activities, assist the teacher, or quietly observe. It is mandatory that *all* visitors entering our school show a valid form of **ID** and sign in by the security desk before entering a classroom or other areas of the building.

## The Role of Families

Families at Newark Educators' Community Charter School can support the school by actively participating in their children's education. Parents may support the school by:

- getting your children to school on time every day
- either feeding your child a nutritious breakfast at home or bringing him / her to school with sufficient time to eat breakfast and get to his / her classroom on time
- supporting your child in completing all homework assignments
- returning school phone calls, mail responses, or emails in a timely manner
- building community by communicating with children, staff and other families
- completing annual input on school-wide surveys
- calling the school if your child is going to be late or absent and
- volunteering in your child's classroom, and in other areas of the school

**Note: The Newark Educators' Community Charter School understands that families will not be required to sign an agreement or attend informational sessions as a condition to enrollment.**

# Notes