

**DEMOCRACY PREP
BATON ROUGE**



**SCHOLAR & FAMILY
HANDBOOK**

WELCOME TO THE DPSS TEAM AND FAMILY!

2017-18

**Democracy Prep
Baton Rouge
Middle School**

Democracy Prep Baton Rouge
4055 Prescott Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70805

www.democracyprep.org

For information about
the Democracy Prep
Public Schools, please email:
DPSSinfo@democracyprep.org

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MESSAGE TO OUR FAMILIES

Welcome to Democracy Prep Public Schools! As a part of our team and family, you have joined a community of people who have dedicated their professional lives to helping all children reach their full potential.

The mission of Democracy Prep Public Schools (sometimes referred to herein as “DPPS” or “Democracy Prep”) is to educate responsible citizen-scholars for success in the college of their choice and a life of active citizenship.

The motto of Democracy Prep Public Schools is: *Work Hard. Go to College. Change the World!*

As is the case with any family, the DPPS network needs a set of rules and guidelines to help us understand and get along with each other. The purpose of this Handbook is to ensure that we have consistent expectations across all of our schools. The network Handbook may not answer all of your questions, but it should provide examples of Democracy Prep’s mission, procedures, expectations and guiding principles.

This Handbook replaces any prior years’ Handbooks, including those for Democracy Prep middle schools. As Democracy Prep always seeks to improve, we reserve the right to amend, modify or change the provisions of this Handbook. We will of course provide all scholars and families notice of any significant changes in the policies reflected in the following pages.

Please note that where we refer to “parents” in this Handbook, that term is meant to include both parents and legal guardians even where we do not specifically refer to guardians.

OUR SCHOOLS

Democracy Prep Charter School

Grades 6–8: 2230 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10037

Grades 9-12: 222 West 134th Street
New York, NY 10030

Democracy Prep Harlem Charter School

Grades K-4: 2005 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10035

Grades 6-8: 207 West 133rd Street
New York, NY 10030

Grades 9-12: 212 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027

Democracy Prep Endurance Charter School

Grades 6-8: 250 West 127th Street
New York, NY 10027

Grades 9-11: 240 East 123rd Street
New York, NY 10035

Democracy Prep at the Agassi Campus

Grades K-12: 1201 West Lake Mead Boulevard
Las Vegas, NV 89106

Freedom Prep Charter School

Grades K-12: 1000 Atlantic Avenue
Camden, NJ 08104

Democracy Prep Congress Heights PCS

Grades Pre-K-3-8: 3100 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20032

Bronx Prep Charter School

Grades 6-12: 3872 3rd Avenue
Bronx, NY 10457

Harlem Prep Charter School

Grades K-5 & 9-10: 240 East 123rd Street
New York, NY 10035

Grades 6-8: 232 East 103rd Street
New York, NY 10029

Democracy Prep Baton Rouge Charter School

Grades K-2, 5-8, 1, 4
4055 Prescott Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70805

OUR MISSION, VISION AND CORE VALUES

Our Mission

The mission of Democracy Prep Public Schools is to educate responsible citizen-scholars for success in the college of their choice and a life of active citizenship.

We will achieve our mission through:

- • rigorous college-prep academics
- • frequent use of data and assessment
- • more time to learn
- • a respectful and structured school culture
- • exemplary teachers

Our Vision

Democracy Prep will provide a rigorous academic program focused on the knowledge, skills and character necessary to master core academic subjects in preparation for success in college. Scholars will receive highly structured civic and leadership education, preparing them to be active citizens in our democratic society.

Our Core Values: D.R.E.A.M.

Discipline. Our scholars, teachers, and staff understand that discipline is the key to success. We have clear rules and high expectations. We expect all adults and scholars in our community to meet these expectations so that our scholars can learn in a safe and orderly environment. Our teachers and staff continuously reinforce these expectations in order to empower our scholars to do what's best for their education and for our community, and supporting our scholars as they build the internal discipline necessary to do the hard work that it takes to get them to and through college. Discipline means staying focused, following rules and instructions, studying and reading every night, and establishing and adhering to personal routines that will lead to success.

Respect. Our community is built on respect. Teachers respect scholars by expecting them to achieve great things and by treating them with dignity and fairness. Scholars respect all teachers and staff because they understand the importance of their education and the need to preserve precious learning time. Scholars respect each other because we are a team and family who work together to achieve our goals. Each member of our community treats every other member with respect in everything we do and say, creating a productive and supportive school environment that brings out the best in all of us.

Enthusiasm. When you work hard, it is essential to find joy in your work. We believe in teaching our scholars how to be joyful in their learning by approaching it with curiosity, gratitude, and spirit! We also believe in creating opportunities for our scholars to earn the ability to play together as a team, as working and playing hard creates enthusiasm. Enthusiasm means actively participating in every moment of class, asking questions even when you are confused, adding juicy details in writing or solving a math problem with several different strategies, walking with urgency to and from classes, taking a risk to try something difficult, staying positive and keeping your head up even when faced with a challenge, and finding ways to show that you love what you do.

Accountability. Accountability is the conscious and public act of taking responsibility for something you have done, good or bad. In order to work in a community with high expectations, respectful conversations, and positive attitudes, scholars, teachers, and staff will hold each other accountable for our words, actions and decisions. Accountability means accepting the consequences of our decisions, accepting praise, being



proud of amazing accomplishments and hard work, acknowledging and apologizing for mistakes, changing hurtful behavior into supportive behavior, and letting an adult know if someone in our community is not upholding our values. Accountability shows that we are honest and responsible with ourselves and with each other and are therefore prepared to achieve our fullest potential.

Maturity. Maturity is modeling compassion and perseverance in our school and our community. It is connecting our words and actions with positive or negative outcomes. To be mature means that you find ways to be kind to your team and family – even toward the people that you may not know or like. Maturity means that you work hard and put forth 100% effort because your future is important to you.

TEAM AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY CODE

Teachers, Administrators, and Staff: We fully commit to Democracy Prep in the following ways:

- We will arrive at Democracy Prep each day at the time determined by our school leader and stay until the end of the workday, ensuring before we leave that our classrooms and lessons are prepared for our scholars' success on the following day.
- We will work harder and longer than others because we will do whatever it takes for our scholars to achieve excellence.
- We will dress professionally at all times in order to convey a seriousness of purpose and to create a learning environment characterized by maturity.
- We will make ourselves available to scholars and parents by phone, email, writing, and in person, and we will respond respectfully to any concerns they have.
- We will always protect the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom.
- We will prepare engaging and rigorous lessons with meaningful homework assignments and frequent assessments.
- We will use data from assessments and assignments to make sure every scholar succeeds.
- We will fulfill all of our school-wide obligations — including upholding hallway expectations and performing necessary coverage duties — in order to foster a cohesive, unified team dynamic.
- We will provide individual and small group tutoring to ensure our scholars succeed.

Failure to adhere to these commitments can lead to our removal from the DPPS Team and Family.

Scholars: I fully commit to Democracy Prep in the following ways:

- I will arrive to school each day, on time, in full uniform, with all the necessary materials, and ready to learn.
- I will remain at school until dismissal.
- I will complete my homework every evening and to the best of my ability.
- I will attend required tutoring sessions, and detentions, and homework club after school as assigned and on Saturdays when necessary.
- I will attend Summer Academy in June if it is necessary for promotion or success.
- I will share reports of my academic and behavioral progress with my family whenever I am asked.
- I will study the DPPS Handbook and abide by the rules contained within this DPPS Handbook.
- I will ask appropriately for clarification if I am confused about why something is important. I will remember that my teachers and my school want what is best for me, even when I do not always understand how.
- I will use DISCIPLINE to complete my homework, prepare for assessments, arrive at school on time, and wear the proper uniform.

- I will act with RESPECT towards my peers, my teachers, all community members, and all school property.
- I will show ENTHUSIASM in all that I do — learning in class, participating in after-school activities, attending a field trip or lecture, or presenting in front of the school.
- I will show ACCOUNTABILITY by admitting when I have made a mistake and by not blaming other people for my actions.
- I will strive for MATURITY in my actions and thoughts, which means figuring out the right thing to do and doing it even when no one is watching.

I am responsible for my own behavior and I will follow my teachers' directions. I understand that failure to adhere to these commitments can lead to the imposition of appropriate consequences and, including the loss of privileges.

Families: We fully commit to Democracy Prep in the following ways:

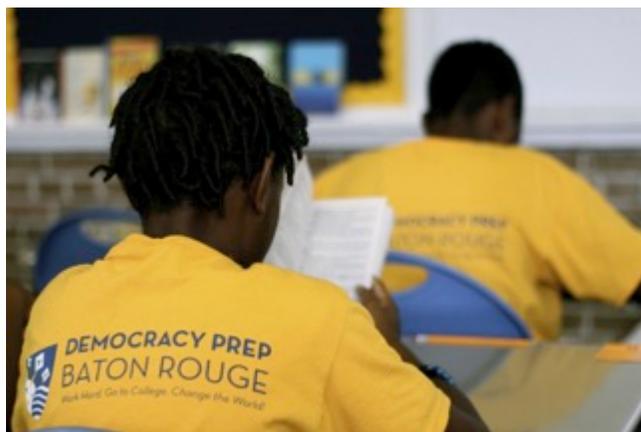
- Our family will ensure our child arrives at school on time or before the start of the scheduled school day Monday through Friday, and for any required Saturday Academy.
- We will pick our scholar up on time each day (if applicable).
- We will make arrangements so that our child can remain at Democracy Prep until he or she is dismissed.
- We will make arrangements so that our child can attend any and all required after school activities and provide documentation when necessary family affairs conflict with detention or school events.
- We will ensure our child attends Summer Academy if deemed necessary by the school.
- We will check homework logs nightly and always help our child to learn in the best way we know how.
- We will review all communication from the school and the teachers, check and assist with homework and review planners nightly, allow our children to call his or her teachers for help when necessary, and make sure that our child reads every night.
- We will call our child's teachers when we have a concern about our child's academic or behavioral performance or progress.
- We will support the school's civic initiatives by being a registered voter (when eligible), attending advocacy events, and attending at least one civic activity.
- We will make ourselves available to the school, attend as many school events as we are able, and be in close contact with our child's teachers.
- We will volunteer and support the school in every way possible.
- We will provide the school with our most up-to-date contact information.
- We will allow our child to participate in field trips if he or she has earned them.
- We will ensure our child understands and follows the school's attendance, tardiness, and uniform policies.
- We will do whatever it takes if our scholar is struggling socially, emotionally, or academically, including, but not limited to, sitting in our child's classroom, picking up our child in an emergency, and getting outside medical care or evaluations.
- We will support Democracy Prep in enforcing the school rules so as to protect the safety, interest, and rights of all individuals in the classroom. We, not the school, are responsible for the behavior and actions of our child.

By working with Democracy Prep, we are building a partnership that prepares my child for success in scholarship and citizenship. Failure to adhere to these commitments can cause our child to lose various privileges at Democracy Prep.

BASIC OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS AT OUR SCHOOLS

Arrival and Dismissal

Arriving to school on time and dismissing from school when the day is complete are crucial to laying the foundation for academic success. Being on time also communicates important values. We expect all of our scholars to prioritize punctuality and to adopt the belief that participating in the entire school day shows accountability, discipline, and respect. Scholars are always expected to arrive on time for school and for school events, and must immediately enter the school building upon their arrival. Once scholars arrive on school grounds by bus, car or walking, they must go directly inside and may not leave school grounds. Tardiness will not be tolerated. A scholar will receive an appropriate consequence each time he or she is tardy. Repeated infractions will result in further consequences.



WEEKDAY	ARRIVAL	DISMISSAL:
Monday-Thursday	Scholars may arrive between 8:30 a.m. and 8:50 a.m.	4:45 p.m.
Friday	Scholars may arrive between 8:30 a.m. and 8:50 a.m.	1:30 p.m.

Scholars arriving after 8:50 a.m. are considered tardy. *Please note that scholars arriving late will not have time to eat a full breakfast.*

Scholars will be dismissed Monday through Thursday at 4:45 p.m. and on Friday at 1:30 p.m. Scholars taking the bus must board the bus immediately after leaving the building.

Staff will be positioned in the classrooms, in the hallways, and outside to ensure the safety and proper dismissal of scholars. Staff members are available to scholars if a problem should arise at dismissal time. Should a scholar need to call a parent/guardian, he or she should ask a teacher outside to use a cell phone.

If a scholar misses the bus, he or she will be directed to the main office where they will be able to contact a parent to be picked up. If a parent is late in picking up a scholar, the scholar will again be directed to the main office to make the appropriate phone calls. All scholars who must wait for a parent after a phone call will be placed in a staff-supervised room. The parent must report to the main office to sign out and pick up the scholar.

Staff members will check the building and the school grounds after dismissal to ensure that all scholars have left the building and surrounding area. Only those scholars with parental permission to participate in after school programs or detentions will remain in the building.

Scholars not actively engaged in an authorized school activity *may not* remain on the school grounds after dismissal. This policy is in place because staff members are scheduled to leave the building at 5:15 p.m. and

will not be available to supervise scholars after that time. Appropriate consequences will result from a scholar remaining in the building or on school grounds after school hours.

Democracy Prep scholars are expected to live the DREAM values all of the time, including on their way to and from school. If Democracy Prep receives reports of a scholar's inappropriate behavior on the bus or within the local community that negatively and substantially impacts the school environment, consequences will be applied as appropriate.

Transportation

Democracy Prep will help to ensure safe transportation to and from school for any scholars who reside in East Baton Rouge Parish. All requests or concerns regarding transportation must be submitted in writing. The school will provide busing for scholars to travel to/from school if required under an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

At Democracy Prep, our high expectations for scholar behavior extend to the school bus as well. Democracy Prep buses are not an entitlement; they are a privilege that can be earned and taken away. School rules as embodied in the Code of Conduct included in this Handbook, still apply. Scholars are also expected to work with the school bus driver to ensure that all scholars have a safe bus ride home. A violation of the rules of the bus may result in disciplinary action including a scholar's permanent removal from the bus. These measures are designed to establish a safe environment so that every child gets to and from school safely.



Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance is vital for the educational well-being of individual scholars and the school community. Parents and guardians are expected to ensure that their child attends school every day and are strongly discouraged from scheduling appointments for their children during school hours. **If your scholar must be absent due to illness or an emergency, please contact the school with as much advance notice as possible, and no later than 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence.** Scholars will be responsible for making up class work for all absences, whether excused or unexcused, so arrangements should be made to pick up homework.

Different types of absences may affect a student differently for the purpose of receiving grades, earning credit for work completed, or truancy.

Excused Absences

In order for the absence to be “excused,” you must both afford the school as much advance notice as possible and also provide documentation following the absence explaining the nature of the illness or emergency (e.g. a doctor's note or a detailed letter including the date(s) and reason for the absence).

A scholar's absence may be “excused” for the following reasons:

- a. Personal illness;
- b. Serious illness in the student's immediate family;
- c. Death in the student's immediate family not to exceed one week;
- d. Travel for education that is approved in advance;
- e. Natural catastrophe and/or disasters; or

- f. Visit with parent prior to parent’s military overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting or during parent’s leave, not to exceed five school days. See La. R.S. 17:226.

In addition, a scholar may be temporarily excused from attendance due to the following enumerated extenuating circumstances that are verified by the school leader:

- a. Extended personal physical or emotional illness in which a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days as verified by a physician or nurse practitioner licensed in the state;
- b. Extended hospital stay in which a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days as verified by a physician or dentist;
- c. Extended recuperation from an accident in which a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days as verified by a physician, dentist, or nurse practitioner licensed in the state;
- d. Extended contagious disease within a family in which a student is absent for three or more consecutive school days as verified by a physician or dentist licensed in the state; or
- e. Observance of special and recognized holidays of the student’s own faith.



Scholars granted excused absences for the above reasons shall be allowed to make up any school work which was missed.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are never acceptable. Excessive unexcused absences (more than 10) in a year may lead to no credit and a zero percent average in each class for the trimester and/or year, may require scholars to attend Summer Academy in order to secure promotion to the next grade, and may possibly result in retention. Further, every three tardy arrivals to school equal one absence. A record of all absences and absence notes will be maintained by the school and consulted if retention becomes a possibility.

Excessive absences, even when documented and verified, will result in parents and guardians being asked to meet with school officials. Democracy Prep may contact appropriate authorities if a scholar is repeatedly absent from school. Democracy Prep also reserves the right to require scholars who have accumulated in excess of nine absences during the school year to make up all lost instructional time during Summer Academy irrespective of whether the absences are documented. Scholars who are absent will not receive DREAM Dollars for missed days.

Attendance – Consequences for Absences

While scholars with stellar attendance records receive recognition for their discipline, accountability and maturity, those who fail to meet expectations receive appropriate consequences.

No Absences in a Trimester: The scholar and family are congratulated and recognized for exceptional attendance and commitment to their education.

Three Absences in a Trimester: If a student is absent three times in a Trimester, the school reserves the right to notify the scholar’s parent/guardian, and further steps such as requiring families to attend formal meetings and creating attendance “action plans” may be required.

Five Absences in a Year: Democracy Prep considers five absences over the course of a school year a serious issue. When this occurs, the school reserves the right to call or send written notification to the

scholar's parent/guardian to meet with the social worker and/or school leader. At the meeting, the problem will be discussed and an attendance action plan will be developed.

More than Nine Absences in a Year: If a scholar is absent more than nine times in a year, the scholar may be considered a truant. When this occurs, the scholar is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade. The parent will be called to the school to meet with the social worker and school leader. Any scholar with more than nine absences will be required to recover any lost instructional time in excess of nine days during Summer Academy. The school leader reserves the right to retain any scholar who misses more than nine days of school. In addition, a report may be filed with the Truancy Assessment and Service Center office of the East Baton Rouge Parish Family and Youth Service Center ("TASC").

Fifteen Absences in a Year: If a scholar is absent fifteen times in a year, the scholar may be considered a habitual truant, and the school may request that the student be discharged for non-attendance. At this point, the school administration may file a written complaint with a relevant court or child services agency alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family has service needs. The Board of Directors or its designee will submit an annual report to the TASC that reports the number of habitual truants at its school.

Attendance – Tardiness

Getting to school on time is a key to each scholar's success — at school and in life. Late scholars miss academics and tardiness in general is a bad habit. At Democracy Prep, learning begins the moment scholars walk in the door. Scholars who are late miss essential instruction, disrupt the learning of other scholars, and risk falling behind on our ambitious curriculum.

Definition of Tardiness

Our doors open at 8:30 a.m. each morning. Scholars must arrive between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. Scholars arriving after 8:50 a.m. are considered tardy. In cases when a school bus arrives late, those scholars riding the bus are not considered tardy.

Consequences for Tardiness

The following is an outline of consequences for tardiness:

No Tardies in a Trimester – The scholar and family are congratulated and recognized for being “on time” and for their true commitment to education.

Three Tardies in a Trimester – If a scholar is late three times in a Trimester, it is considered a serious issue. Should this occur, the school reserves the right to call the parent/guardian to discuss the problem and develop an action plan.

Seven Tardies in a Year – If a scholar is late seven times in a year, it is considered a serious issue. Should this occur, the school reserves the right to call the parent/guardian to the school to meet with the social worker and/or school leader. At such a meeting, the problem will be discussed and an “On Time” plan will be developed, or — if such a plan is already in place — will be modified or reinforced.

Excessive tardiness is also a truancy problem, and may place a scholar at risk of not being promoted to the next grade. Scholars with excessive tardy arrivals may also be considered habitual truants. In such cases, the school administration may file a written complaint with a relevant court or child services agency alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family has service needs.

Educational Neglect

Habitual absences significantly harm a scholar's educational progress. Democracy Prep is required to file a report with the State Central Registry when a parent fails to ensure his or her scholar's prompt and regular attendance in school or keeps a scholar out of school for impermissible reasons to the detriment of the scholar's education. Scholars left at the school or on school grounds one hour after dismissal time without any parental contact will be referred to the appropriate state agency and/or the police department will be notified to hold the scholar until parental contact can be made.

Compulsory Attendance Law

State law requires that every parent, tutor or other person residing within the state of Louisiana having control or charge of any child from that child's seventh birthday until his or her eighteenth birthday shall send such child to a public or private day school, unless the child graduates from high school prior to his or her eighteenth birthday (La. R.S. 17:221). Additionally, any student who is a juvenile and who is habitually absent from school or is habitually tardy shall be reported to the TASC as a truant child (La. R.S. 17:233).

Excessive absences, even when excused, documented and verified, will result in parents and guardians being asked to meet with school officials. Democracy Prep may contact appropriate authorities if a scholar is repeatedly absent from school. Democracy Prep has implemented the following system to provide notification to parents/guardians regarding truancy:

Days:	Intervention:
1 to 4 Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School documents outreach efforts to reach out to parents and/or legal guardian.• When the number of unexcused absences increases, refer case.
5 or more Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School sends written notification to parents and/or legal guardians.• School refers to local parish policies regarding any additional requirements.
15 Unexcused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School requests that the student be discharged for non-attendance.

Until a student transfers to another school or is declared truant by a local court, the student will continue to be enrolled at Democracy Prep.

School Closings

Democracy Prep generally follows the same calendar for holidays (with some exceptions) and weather-related emergencies as the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Families will receive an automated call from the school notifying them of any weather-related closings or delays. In the case of inclement weather after arriving at school, Democracy Prep will implement the crisis plan.

Food and Meals

Democracy Prep participates in the National School Lunch Program, which provides free or reduced-price lunches to eligible scholars. Applications and eligibility criteria are provided to all parents, and applications are required to be completed by all families every year.

A healthy breakfast and snack is available each day for DPPS scholars. Scholars must adhere to the school rules regarding appropriate time and place to eat any food items not provided by the school.

Lunch is available for scholars on all school days. Lunch choices and cost may vary by school. Scholars whose families meet the eligibility requirements and complete the requisite paperwork will receive free or reduced-price lunch.

The following items will be immediately confiscated and not replaced if brought onto school grounds:

1. Gum
2. Candy
3. Sunflower Seeds
4. Hot Fries/Hot Cheetos
5. Soda
6. Fast food

Parents are responsible for informing the school of any allergies that their scholars may have **prior to the school year.**

Scholar Uniform

Uniforms create a sense of unity, professionalism, and discipline for the scholars and for the school. All Democracy Prep scholars must come to school every day, including required Saturdays, wearing the required uniform. They must also wear the required uniform on all school field trips. Scholars must be in *full uniform* when they arrive at school, when they leave, and at all times in between.

The Democracy Prep Middle School Uniform

1. Official Democracy Prep light blue button-down oxford shirt with DPPS logo (long or short-sleeved)
 - a. Shirt neatly tucked into pants.
 - b. Uniform shirts must be fully visible at all times within the building.
2. Full-length gray pants with belt loops
 - a. Pants may not have pockets anywhere on the leg (no carpenter or cargo pants).
 - b. Pants may not have any visible logos.
 - c. Pants may not be made of jean or corduroy material.
 - d. Pants may not be too loose or too tight.
 - e. Pants must be worn at or above the hip line.
3. Solid white short-sleeved undershirt
 - a. No tank tops are permitted.
4. Solid black dress shoes
 - a. No sneakers, no boots, no logos, no markings and no other colors are permitted.
5. Solid black or white socks
 - a. Any length are permitted.
 - b. No logos, no markings and no other colors are permitted.
6. All black belt
 - a. Gold or silver buckles are permitted.
 - b. No studs, designs, or extra notches are permitted.
7. Official Democracy Prep sweatshirt (optional)
 - a. The Democracy Prep uniform shirt should always be worn under a Democracy Prep sweatshirt.

Additional Regulations Regarding Scholar Dress:

- All hair must be professional and natural color.
- All nails must be professional and (if applicable) have non-distracting colors/designs.
- Glasses must be worn for scholars who need glasses.

- For safety reasons, large necklaces, chains, chokers, multiple finger rings, and large dangling earrings (larger than one inch in diameter) will not be permitted. Necklaces must be worn underneath the shirt.
- Scholars will be asked to remove any headwear and/or hair accessories that are excessive and/or distracting.
- Scholars may not wear hats, caps, do-rags, or other head coverings in the school, unless explicitly allowed by the school leader or allowed for a religious purpose.
- Scholars may wear winter-related headgear and outerwear to school, but not in the building. Scholars will be asked to remove jackets, hoodies and winter hats upon arrival in the building.
- Scholars may not wear excessive make-up.
- Scholars may not have any visible tattoos, fake tattoos or any sort of visible writing on the skin.

On days where scholars are permitted to wear Democracy Prep or College t-shirts, they must be worn with uniform pants and all other component parts of the Democracy Prep uniform. Slacks and jeans (on special days) may not be excessively baggy or so long that they drag on the floor.

Scholar Supplies

Democracy Prep makes every effort to equip scholars with the individual supplies they need for the start of the year. In order to successfully complete nightly homework, DPPS recommends that **families provide the following supplies at home:**

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| ○ pencil sharpener | ○ crayons and markers | ○ scissors |
| ○ many pencils | ○ wide ruled lined paper | ○ erasers |

Scholars should not purchase any individual in-school supplies for the beginning of the school year, but may be required to replace any supplies that become worn down or depleted throughout the year. Scholars will be given a list of *optional* supplies for the beginning of the school year during Registration, which will be collected and shared.

Scholars must maintain their binders, folders and other organizational supplies with high standards of neatness and cleanliness. Democracy Prep expects its scholars to show respect for their belongings, whether they were purchased by their family or by the school. Scholars are allowed to have rolling book bags, but for safety reasons, book bags may not be rolled inside the building.

Scholars must be prepared each day with the required supplies, including homework and handouts, appropriate writing utensils and independent reading books. The school will provide independent reading books, which should be transported from school to home in book baggies. Failure to be prepared with materials will result in appropriate consequences.

SCHOLAR EXPECTATIONS AND RIGHTS

Personal Belongings

Democracy Prep is a rigorous instructional setting. Therefore, personal belongings that distract from the safe, respectful and fast-paced instructional environment are not permitted.

Examples of items not allowed in Democracy Prep schools include:

- gum and candy of any kind;
- permanent markers of any kind;

- real, toy, or model weapons including pocket knives, X-acto knives, box cutters, water guns;
- excessive amounts of cash;
- any illegal substance (including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, hookah pens, alcohol, or any other substance not mentioned directly here);
- toys including, but not limited to fidget spinners, stuffed animals or dolls;
- materials (e.g. songs, papers, lyrics, art, or notes) that contain inappropriate or offensive language, images or suggestions;
- fireworks, sparklers, poppers, snappers, fountains, bottle rockets, and any other explosive devices; and
- stuffed animals, dolls, and toys including but not limited to fidget spinners or playing cards (unless used in accordance with a documented behavior plan).

Any of the items in the list above may be confiscated at the discretion of the school principal and not returned until a parent or guardian meets with the school leadership.

Note: Radios, iPods, portable gaming systems, smartwatches and other non-instructional electronic devices must be turned off and put away before entering the school property. Any electronic equipment used without permission may be confiscated and not returned until a parent or guardian meets with the school leader. Failure to comply with these rules will result in appropriate consequences and will escalate with repeated offenses.

Cell Phones

Scholars may bring cell phones to school for safety reasons, and are required to turn in their phones immediately upon arrival at school to a designated staff member to be safely stored each day. Phones may never be turned on or used in the school building without explicit permission and supervision from a DREAM team member.

Note: Any cell phone not turned in or used without permission may be confiscated and not returned until a parent or guardian meets with the school leadership. Failure to comply with these rules will result in appropriate consequences and will escalate with repeated offenses. School staff are not responsible for the damage and loss of any electronic devices that have not been confiscated by a school administrator.

Scholar-Family Contact During the Day

Scholars can neither receive messages from parents nor to transmit messages to parents during the school day except in the case of an emergency. Scholars will only be given permission to use the school phone in cases of emergency or at the school's discretion.

Search of Scholar Belongings

Democracy Prep must maintain a safe and orderly environment for all our scholars and staff. In order to do so, the school reserves the right to search any and all persons or belongings on school property for illicit material. Such searches can be either random or with reasonable suspicion and may include a scholar's person, backpack pockets, lockers, cell phones, other belongings, etc.

Book Borrowing at Democracy Prep Public Schools

Democracy Prep is extremely proud of how much our scholars love books. We are also proud of our book collections. In order for the collections to be maintained, they must be respected. Scholars must be accountable for any books they have borrowed and must return them in a timely manner and in the same condition as when borrowed. Damage to books may result in loss of book borrowing privileges, financial responsibility for the book, or community service.

Computer/Internet/Email Acceptable Use Policy

This policy outlines guidelines for responsible use of Democracy Prep’s Information Technology, and is designed to protect Democracy Prep’s information and scholars from the possible consequences of inappropriate use of Democracy Prep Information Technology. The term “Democracy Prep Information Technology” as used herein includes, but is not limited to, Democracy Prep computers (desktop and laptop), networks (wired and wireless), telecommunications devices (fixed and wireless), facsimile machines, photocopiers, printers, software, storage media (disks, CDs, USB drives), and other technologies that may be provided to Users by the Democracy Prep for use in the course of Democracy Prep business. The guidelines provided in this policy apply to all Democracy Prep employees, or any other persons who are provided with access to Democracy Prep Information Technology in the course of providing services of any kind to Democracy Prep (“Users”).

Democracy Prep Information Technology provides critical support to Democracy Prep and its scholars in the achievement of the Democracy Prep’s mission, and all Users of Democracy Prep Information Technology are expected to use it responsibly and in compliance with Democracy Prep policies and applicable law.

Privacy and Monitoring

Users should have no expectation of privacy while using Democracy Prep Information Technology. All communications sent, received, transmitted or stored on Democracy Prep Information Technology are the property of Democracy Prep. In order to implement the Democracy Prep information security program effectively and enforce Democracy Prep policies, Democracy Prep must have the ability to monitor the use of Democracy Prep Information Technology. Democracy Prep may monitor any activity on Democracy Prep Information Technology and Users should use Democracy Prep Information Technology accordingly. Authorized Democracy Prep staff may disclose, monitor, access, review, copy, store, move, edit, delete, or otherwise manipulate any electronic information residing on Democracy Prep Information Technology as is necessary to allow for the proper functioning of Democracy Prep Information Technology, compliance with Democracy Prep policies and applicable law, or for any other appropriate purpose.

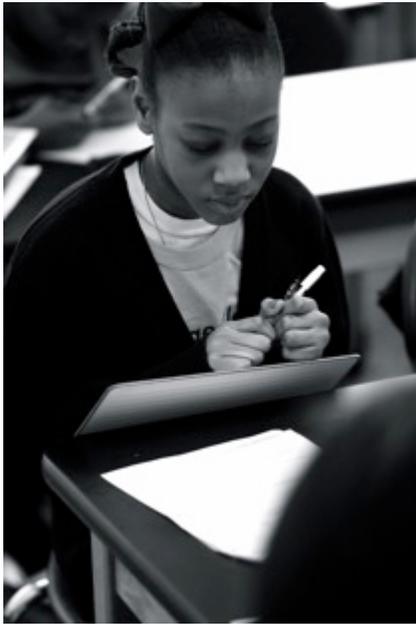


Prohibited Activity

Democracy Prep Information Technology shall not be used to engage in illegal, threatening, discriminatory, defamatory, slanderous, obscene, or harassing activity, including cyberbullying. “Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted by the use of any electronic device, including, but not limited to, a computer, telephone, cellular telephone, text messaging device and personal digital assistant. Democracy Prep Information Technology may not be used to solicit for any reason, or for sending mass emails (“spamming”).

Intellectual Property and Licensing

Users of Democracy Prep Information Technology must not infringe on intellectual property rights, copyrights, trademarks, or other licensing restrictions. Users must not illegally copy software, data, or other information without the express permission of its owner. Users who have questions about the licensing arrangement for any Democracy Prep Information Technology should direct questions to the Information Technology department.



Software Installation

Only software approved by Democracy Prep may be installed on Democracy Prep Information Technology. Users who wish to have software installed on Democracy Prep Information Technology should direct requests to the Information Technology department and should not install any software on Democracy Prep Information Technology without express permission.

Malicious Code and Viruses

Users may not knowingly create, execute, forward, or introduce any malicious computer code (e.g., viruses, Trojans, worms) into Democracy Prep Information Technology. Democracy Prep provides software tools that are designed to assist in the protection of Democracy Prep Information Technology from malicious code, but Users still must be alert and take appropriate steps to limit the risk of malicious code attacks. Users may not disable any anti-virus or any other security software. If a User suspects a malicious code attack, he or she should contact the Information Technology team immediately.

Use of E-mail and Instant Messaging Technology and Electronic Communications

Electronic communications such as e-mail and instant messages (collectively, “Electronic Messaging”) must be treated carefully. These electronic messages can be misdirected or misinterpreted causing damage to Democracy Prep, its employees, students, and others. Democracy Prep e-mail and instant messaging technology do not provide data privacy while in transit over other, non- Democracy Prep networks. Users are not to use Electronic Messaging, other than those that are internal to Democracy Prep, to send or receive sensitive information that requires privacy protections.

Users should consider the following guidance when using Electronic Messaging:

- demonstrate the same respect when using Electronic Messaging as you use communicating verbally or in a more formal written document such as a memorandum or letter;
- do not forward chain or “spam” messages;
- keep personal messages to a minimum, and be mindful of the fact that even personal messages from Democracy Prep accounts may be viewed as statements authorized or made by or on behalf of Democracy Prep, particularly when Democracy Prep’s name or a User’s title appears in the message’s return address or in its closing; and
- do not send hateful, angry, or otherwise inappropriate messages.

Protection of Credentials

Users should exercise their best efforts to protect their Democracy Prep passwords from disclosure and prevent unauthorized access to Democracy Prep Information Technology. Accounts and passwords are for individual use only.

Enforcement

Appropriate action may be taken against a User if it is found that the User violated this policy. Discipline may range in severity as provided elsewhere in this Student & Family Handbook. Further, if appropriate, a User’s privileges regarding and access to Democracy Prep Information Technology may be revoked or limited without notice at the sole discretion of Democracy Prep.

Internet Content Filtering Policy

Undesirable Materials

Democracy Prep will take all possible precautions to restrict access to undesirable materials including, but not limited to, installing content filtering software/hardware solutions on its network or using an Internet provider that uses content filtering software on its equipment to screen all Internet websites by URL and/or by keyword search. However, scholars must also accept responsibility for restricting their own access to these materials. Scholars who gain access to undesirable Internet materials must report these materials to their teacher immediately.

Security

Scholars must not allow others to use their network accounts. Designated school officials may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect files stored on school servers to be private. Democracy Prep has the right, but not the duty, to inspect, review, or retain electronic communication created, sent, displayed, received or stored on and over Democracy Prep's Computer Information Systems (CIS) and to monitor, record, check, track, log, access or otherwise inspect its CIS. Passwords and message delete functions do not restrict Democracy Prep's ability or right to access such communications or information. Democracy Prep further reserves the right to allocate filespace as it deems appropriate.

SCHOLARS SHOULD HAVE NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY IN ANYTHING THEY CREATE, STORE, SEND, RECEIVE, OR DISPLAY ON OR OVER DEMOCRACY PREP'S CIS, INCLUDING THEIR PERSONAL FILES OR ANY OF THEIR USE OF THESE SYSTEMS, OR WHILE PRESENT ON DEMOCRACY PREP GROUNDS.

Democracy Prep reserves the right to access, view, record, check, receive, monitor, track, log, store, and otherwise inspect and utilize any or all Democracy Prep CIS, and to monitor and allocate filespace. Users of Democracy Prep's CIS who transmit or receive communications and information shall be deemed to have consented to having the content of any such communications accessed, viewed, recorded, checked, received, monitored, tracked, logged, stored, and otherwise inspected or utilized by Democracy Prep.

Email

Only school-approved email will be allowed on school premises. Scholars must receive explicit permission from their teacher to engage in any other email activity.

Downloading

Downloading from the Internet without approval from a member of the DREAM Team is not allowed.

Social Media Policy

When used inappropriately, social media can transform from a powerful educational tool that allows scholars to connect, communicate, and access a wealth of informational resources into the source of serious long-term consequences. College admissions officers and prospective employers will not hesitate to use any social media missteps — even those made when a scholar is quite young — when considering an individual's candidacy for admission or employment. For Democracy Prep scholars to succeed in the college of their choice and a life of active citizenship in a hypercompetitive environment, it is imperative that they maintain digital footprints as impressive as their academic records of achievement.

In recognition of both the educational purpose that social media can serve and the necessity of certain restrictions, this policy is designed to foster the responsible and appropriate use of social media at DPBR. DPBR defines "social media" as "any method of communication in cyberspace." For the purposes of this policy, this includes, but is not limited to, any website, program or application that involves Internet forums,

weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, and the sharing or posting of photographs, pictures or videos and the rating or tagging of the same. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, the following examples: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Wikipedia, Skype, Kik, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, Vimeo, Bebo, Friendster, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Musical.ly and other platforms not explicitly listed or yet to be invented.

This social media policy applies any time scholars are on school grounds, using school property, under the supervision of school authority, or using social media anywhere in a manner that endangers a scholar's or staff member's physical or emotional safety, security, or well-being and materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. Such activity may include, but is not limited to:, threats, ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, drug or alcohol related content, content of a sexual nature, and content involving violence. Scholars are responsible for their own behavior when communicating with social media and will be held accountable for the content of the communications that they transmit or post that materially and substantially interferes with the operations of the school. Scholars may not disrupt the school's learning atmosphere, educational programs, or activities, and may not violate the rights of others. What would be considered inappropriate in the school or classroom is inappropriate online. This policy does not apply to a scholar's private use of social media that in no way involves or impacts upon Democracy Prep, staff, or other scholars, though Democracy Prep strongly encourages all scholars to make intelligent and safe choices when using social media.

Democracy Prep expressly reserves the right both to monitor scholar use of social media while present on Democracy Prep grounds, regardless of whether such use is done using Democracy Prep resources or the scholars own personal resources, and to monitor and inspect any device brought onto school grounds for compliance with this policy.

Social media may only be used with the explicit permission of a DREAM Team member and for educationally related purposes while on Democracy Prep grounds. Social media is not to be used, at any time when on school grounds or when participating in a school activity, to fraternize with any other individual or to communicate non-educational messages or information. Scholars are prohibited from posting or publishing any insensitive or inappropriate information or content on any social media and from viewing any insensitive or inappropriate social media content. Should a scholar post, publish, or view such social media content when on school grounds or when participating in a school activity, he or she must notify a teacher or administrator immediately. Immediately reporting the posting, publishing or viewing of such inappropriate content will be given significant weight in considering the level of discipline issued.

Scholars are prohibited from communicating with teachers, administrators, staff members or contracted workers of Democracy Prep via social media. The only permissible electronic method of email communication with a teacher is through emailing the teacher or administrator at his or her Democracy Prep email account.

Scholars are prohibited from impersonating or assuming the identity of any other individual while using social media. Scholars are prohibited from posting or publishing any information about themselves or another individual that is confidential or of a private nature. This includes posting information such as last names, school names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, other contact information, or any other information a scholar might reasonably expect another individual to want to keep private. Scholars are prohibited from using any device capable of capturing video, pictures, or audio to record or take pictures of any other individual without their express consent and permission. Scholars are not allowed to "tag" an individual in a picture or recording without their express consent and permission. Scholars must immediately comply with any request that infringing materials be removed from any social media platform.

The use of social media is a privilege, not a right, and the violation of any provision of this policy will result in the restriction of a scholar's social media access at Democracy Prep and/or the imposition of additional appropriate consequences, and in some cases, may be subject to state and/or federal law.

Scholars should always be mindful of the fact that material posted or published online will be public for a very long time and may perhaps become a permanent part of their record. Scholars should be sensitive of others, should avoid posting or publishing anything distasteful, and should not post or publish anything they would not be willing to say to an individual in person.

Education Records

Federal and state laws provide parents or guardians and eligible scholars (those who are age 18 or older) with rights of confidentiality, access, and amendment relating to their education records. Copies of the regulations detailing these rights are available from the Scholar Registrar. The following is a general overview:

Review and Amendment: A parent or eligible scholar has the right to inspect and review his or child's or the eligible scholar's own educational records and to seek amendment if the parent or eligible scholar believes them to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar's privacy rights.

Confidentiality: Confidential records include grades, evaluations, disciplinary actions, and health records. Release of scholar records generally requires written consent of the parent or eligible scholar. However, the regulations provide certain exceptions. For example, staff members and employees of the district have access to records as needed to perform their duties. Scholar records will also be sent to schools as required by Louisiana law and regulation. *Please note that at Democracy Prep scholar work and results are prominently displayed in classrooms and in the community as part of our educational program.*



Student Employment

Democracy Prep scholars are not allowed to work during any times that interfere with school hours, including tutoring and required Saturdays. We encourage eligible scholars to only work during the summer and on Sundays whenever possible, as being a scholar at Democracy Prep is a full-time job. The registrar should be contacted for all Permission to Work forms. The school may require a family conference if the scholar has failing grades or an unacceptable attendance record.

HEALTH POLICIES AND ATTENDANCE IMPLICATIONS

Scholars must be in attendance in order to achieve academic success. To that end, Democracy Prep has strict policies regarding absences, late arrivals, and early dismissals for appointments. Democracy Prep strongly encourages all doctors' appointments to be scheduled outside of school hours, as every late arrival, early dismissal, and absence will have a detrimental effect on a scholar's academic grade. If a scholar has a doctor's appointment for which he or she must leave the school early, the parent or guardian must notify the school with as much advance notice as possible (no less than 24 hours) and provide proper and adequate documentation to the school upon the scholar's return.

Scholars may not miss a full day of school for a doctor's appointment. **In the event that a doctor's appointment cannot be scheduled after school or on an early dismissal day, scholars must come to school prior to and following all appointments.** Excessive absences will be considered a violation of the Commitment to Excellence.

Whenever a scholar has missed a school day or a single class due to a doctor's appointment or required family affair, the school requires advance notice before the absence and official documentation after the absence. Democracy Prep does not have excused or unexcused absences. Missing school for illness or for a family event has the same effect: missed instruction. Families must always provide documentation for any absence. Frequent absences may result in required Summer Academy or retention.

Medication While at School

Without written approval from the licensed healthcare practitioner and parental consent on the Medication Administration form, scholars are not permitted to self-administer medication. Parents must ensure that all medications are transferred into the custody of either the school nurse or a trained school employee along with an Authorization to Dispense Medication form. If a scholar requires medication of any kind, including both prescription and over-the-counter medication (such as, but not limited to: asthma inhalers, prescription drugs, insulin, Sudafed, Benadryl and generic equivalents, Tylenol and generic equivalents, Advil and generic equivalents, aspirin, stomach remedies):

- Parents must submit a Medication Administration form including authorization from a licensed healthcare practitioner.
- Prescription medications must be given to the nurse or to a trained school employee by a parent or responsible person in the original container with the prescription label.
- Over-the-counter medications must be given in the original sealed container or box. The school cannot accept partially used or opened over-the-counter medications.

(Over the-counter medications can have adverse effects and are therefore subject to the same restrictions as prescription medications.)

If school personnel find any scholar in possession of medication, such medication shall be promptly delivered to the security guard, and the scholar's parent will be contacted to retrieve it or transfer the medication to the custody of the nurse or trained school employee using the aforementioned process. The scholar may be subject to disciplinary action for being in possession of unauthorized medication.

Any student who is required to carry an emergency asthma inhaler, an epinephrine auto-injector, or insulin, glucagon or other diabetes supplies with him/her must provide:

- A Medication Administration form stating that the student needs to carry the inhaler, injector, or diabetes supplies with him or her and is permitted to self-administer if applicable; and
- A second inhaler, injector, or diabetes supplies to be kept in the nurse's office.

Illness-Related Dismissals

If a child becomes ill or injured during the school day and is not well enough to stay in class, or the scholar will be sent to the nurse and the parent will be called to pick up the child. It is necessary to have updated emergency contact numbers on file in the school office in case no one can be contacted at home. If a child has an emergency, we must be able to reach a parent. No scholar will be sent home unless a parent is notified, and no scholar will be sent home on foot, by cab, or on public transportation.

Immunization

State law where applicable requires that all children entering school must provide proof of immunization against DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis), IPV/OPV, MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Meningococcal Disease, Varicella (chicken pox), and the annual Influenza vaccine. State law where applicable requires that all children entering school must provide proof of immunization as provided in La. R.S. 17:170, unless compliance is waived pursuant to the statute. Failure to comply with immunization requirements may result in exclusion from school and missed school days, classified as unexcused absences.

SCHOLAR LIFE

Advisory

Each scholar at Democracy Prep has an advisor or homeroom teacher. This teacher may serve as the primary contact person for families with academic or behavioral concerns.

Academic Program

The Democracy Prep Public Schools Core Curriculum includes:

- **READING:** A robust reading program that includes both small group differentiated instruction and whole-class instruction using an on-grade-level text.
- **MATH:** Over an hour of Math each day focused on fluency and automaticity with math facts, problem solving, logic, and critical thinking.
- **WRITING:** Scholars practice writing throughout the curriculum and benefit from a dedicated time each day during shared writing, independent writing, and handwriting practice.
- **SCIENCE:** Scholars will engage in a variety of hands-on, inquiry-based lessons that explore such topics as earth sciences, life sciences, physical sciences, and technology.
- **CIVICS:** Every scholar at Democracy Prep will study geography, government, and history.
- **SPECIALS:** Every DPPS Middle Scholar participates in electives such as Music, Performing Arts, and Physical Education on a regular basis.

Our Instructional Model

Our success as a network of schools lies partially in our clear and structured routines found in every Democracy Prep classroom. Our instructional model consists of measurable aims, direct instruction, guided practice, and independent practice. Additionally, each class has regular and frequent assessments that measure each scholar's level of mastery with the content and skills.

Homework

Homework is an important element of our model and is essential for academic success. In addition to completing daily homework assignments, scholars must have an opportunity each night to practice the skills and content learned in class. Democracy Prep staff holds scholars to high levels of accountability with regards to homework, evaluates homework based on neatness and accuracy, and checks homework completion each day. Homework is evaluated and contributes to a scholar's final evaluation or report card.

Parents must sign their scholars' homework logs and reading logs on a nightly basis.

At home, scholars must have a quiet place to complete homework and review class work. Democracy Prep staff members are available in person during regular school hours and via email and cell phone up until 8:45 p.m. each evening to answer homework questions.

Democracy Prep believes that the reward for hard work is an opportunity to be challenged even more. Scholars who show they are capable of excelling in one area will be challenged to excel in other areas.

Scholars are accountable for completing all assigned work. A scholar’s ability to make up work and receive credit may be conditioned on the documentation surrounding an absence.

Scholars who do not turn in homework or who turn in incomplete or unacceptable homework will be required to attend lunch detention.

Academic Assessment

At the middle and high school level, Democracy Prep issues numeric grades that correlate to the listing below:

Grading Scale:

A+ = 97-100	B = 83-86	C- = 70-72
A = 93-96	B- = 80-82	F = Below 70
A- = 90-92	C+ = 77-79	
B + = 87-89	C = 73-76	

NOTE: Democracy Prep does not give Ds. We are aware that the lowest grade most colleges and universities will accept for entry is a C-. Because our mission is to send every DPPS student to the best colleges and universities, we align our grading practices with these standards.

External Assessments and Standardized Tests

Democracy Prep prepares students to succeed on standardized tests required for promotion, high school graduation (State Tests), and college (SAT/ACT). As other measures of student progress, DPPS also administers the MAP examination at the regular intervals. Standardized test scores are used to help DPPS teachers develop strategies to improve the academic achievement of each student.

Internal Assessments

Internal Assessments	Purpose
Midterm exams in each subject	To assess mastery and growth of subject specific skills and content as aligned with the state and national standards for that subject
Unit tests (may double as midterm in some cases)	
Regular quizzes and/or exit tickets	
Trimester exams in each subject	
MAP Assessment – Nationally-normed Computer-based adaptive exam in core academic subjects	

Town Hall

Once a week, each school has a special schedule for Town Hall. Town Hall is a weekly celebration of academic achievement, team building and competition. Scholars participate in school-wide cultural routines such as school pledges, chants and songs, compete against their peers and teachers in academic and problem-solving situations, and celebrate their accomplishments as a student body.

The purposes of Town Hall are to:

- celebrate students' academic achievement;
- recognize individual student accomplishment;
- build community through performances, skits, songs, and chants;
- bring parents, families, and members of the Democracy Prep community together to see what our students are learning and mastering each week; and
- build school identity and cohesiveness.

Parents are often welcome to attend Town Hall. Invitations and open dates will be provided to families.

After-School Activities:

Democracy Prep Public Schools is committed to providing a college-prep education to its scholars. To this end, each school may offer activities that foster team building, leadership, athletics, and fine and performing arts.

If applicable, detention will always take precedence over after-school activities. A scholar may never skip or reschedule a consequence to attend an after-school event. Scholars must remain in good academic and behavioral standing in order to participate in after-school activities. Scholars who wish to remain after school to participate in an approved extracurricular activity may only do so when the faculty member responsible for the activity is present. Scholars who remain after school in this way, must remain in the specific areas of the building where the activity is held. Scholars must follow the Code of Conduct during after-school activities and may be removed and/or issued consequences for failure to do so.

Participation in Arts & Athletics

All scholars who participate in an after-school arts or athletic activity will have their academic progress monitored by their respective teacher/director frequently during the season(s) of participation and must satisfy eligibility criteria established by school leadership and Democracy Prep arts and athletics directors.

Promotion to the Next Grade

Democracy Prep has rigorous promotional standards. It is not automatically assumed that a scholar will pass from one grade to the next: the scholar must earn promotion by demonstrating mastery of the essential knowledge and skills in his or her current grade level. Scholars may not be promoted if they are performing significantly below grade-level standards. Promotion decisions will be based on a scholar's grades, attendance, homework completion record, Word Count, reading level, adherence to DREAM values, and other measures including teacher observations. A scholar may be retained if he or she misses more than 10 days in a school year, misses a significant amount of instructional time, or if the scholar has persistent trouble completing assignments.

To be considered for promotion, scholars at Democracy Prep must score a minimum of 70 percent in each class. Scholars must also make adequate growth as reflected by MAP testing. Criteria that also influence a scholar's prospective promotion include maintaining an attendance rate of 90% or above and consistently adhering to the DREAM values and Democracy Prep behavior standards. Scholars who fail three or fewer combined comprehensive exams and classes may be eligible to attend Summer Academy in order to earn promotion to the next grade. If a scholar fails more than three classes and exams combined, he or she will not be promoted and, accordingly, will NOT be eligible for Summer Academy.

Consequences for Not Meeting Promotional Criteria

Scholars who do not meet the criteria for promotion may be retained or required to attend Democracy Prep Summer Academy. At the conclusion of Summer Academy, a final decision for promotion will be made and communicated to the family by the school leader.



Academic Support and Enrichment

Democracy Prep Public Schools is committed to seeing substantial growth and achievement in every scholar. Therefore, Democracy Prep provides many opportunities for academic support and enrichment. These opportunities may include:

Opportunity Days: To improve his or her academic performance, any scholar may be required to attend tutoring or study sessions on Opportunity Days (non-school days including Saturdays and holidays) at the discretion of the school leader and the classroom teachers. Opportunity Day sessions are mandatory and allow for individualized, targeted instruction. All absences require prior notification and documentation. Failure to provide documentation will result in an appropriate consequence.

After-School Tutoring: Targeted instruction for individual scholars who need extra support in any of their academic areas. Teachers may select scholars based on various criteria: classwork, homework, quizzes, or exit tickets.

Enrichment may be available to those scholars who are in good academic standing as determined by school leaders. At the middle-school level, enrichment may include project-based art, theater, and P.E. classes as well as *Accelerated Math*, *Khan Academy*, and language and culture clubs.

Reading Intervention/Support: Scholars may be selected to participate in a phonics or reading program based on their needs.

Tutoring and Required School Activities: To improve their academic performance, students may be required to attend tutoring or study sessions at any time during the day, after school or on a Saturday at the discretion of the school leader and the classroom teachers. Whenever your child is unable to attend a required school event, it is imperative that the school receives a phone call from a family member informing the school of the absence and documentation justifying the need for the absence.

Special Needs & English Language Learners

Democracy Prep provides special education services and services for English Language Learners in accordance with state and federal special education laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the regulations implementing those laws. The Academic Collaborative Team (ACT):

- maintains all special education records in accordance with state and federal laws;
- schedules all annual IEP reviews;
- organizes professional development for teaching staff; and
- supports teachers in making appropriate curriculum and instruction modifications.

Although Democracy Prep offers Special Education and ELL scholars accommodations befitting their needs, we modify promotional criteria based on a scholar's classification only in isolated circumstances.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Democracy Prep is committed to having families contribute to the academic success of their scholars. As such, we use a variety of methods of communication. Communication may include:

- **Regular Progress Reports:** A progress report that includes academic and behavioral updates as well as a brief overview of important school events.
- **Automated Phone System:** Parents may receive a pre-recorded message from Democracy Prep for the following reasons:
 - to issue school-wide reminders and updates,
 - to alert families to weather-related school closings,
 - to notify families that their scholars have been assigned after-school detentions,
 - to remind families of important documents requiring signatures, or
 - to inform families of meetings for parents or scholars.

Opportunities for Family Involvement

Democracy Prep is a partnership made up of the school leadership, teachers, scholars and families. Although the job of making decisions about school policy belongs to the school leaders, the superintendent, the CEO, and the Board of Directors, family involvement is not only welcome but also absolutely necessary for the success of the school. The Family Leadership Council (FLC) is the family involvement organization at each Democracy Prep school. The mission of the Family Leadership Council is to promote family involvement, to advocate politically for our community, and to support the school's DREAM Team (includes all teachers, leaders, and staff members), our scholars, and their families. The FLC organizes volunteer opportunities and creates ways to support our scholars in their achievements. There are regular meetings of the Family Leadership Council; all families are welcome and encouraged to get involved. Additionally, we rely on our families, under the leadership of the FLC, to support our efforts for civic engagement through:



- registering to vote (if eligible)
- assisting with voter registration drives
- joining scholars and the DREAM Team for primary and election day activities

Expectations for Families

Teachers may request mandatory family conferences with families of scholars who are in need of academic and behavioral support. All families are invited to schedule appointments to connect with their scholars' teachers. As teachers and leaders are extremely busy during the school day, family members who stop by without having scheduled an appointment are not guaranteed an opportunity to speak with a DREAM Team member immediately upon their arrival.

Democracy Prep families must:

- reinforce Democracy Prep academic and behavior standards at home,
- check homework nightly for completion,
- help with homework,
- call teachers with concerns,
- read and sign all notices sent home by the school,
- read and respond to family communications when necessary,

- respond promptly to disciplinary and academic calls,
- attend school-wide events,
- pick up report cards and attend trimester conferences, and
- reinforce the Democracy Prep Commitment to Excellence

Phone Calls

Every member of the Democracy Prep DREAM team publishes his or her cell phone number at the beginning of the year. Scholars and parents are encouraged to call teachers. If a teacher does not return a message within 24 hours, the school leader should be informed. Abuse of the phone numbers of the DREAM team will result in serious disciplinary action.

Gift Giving

Outside of Teacher Appreciation Week, Democracy Prep discourages parents from giving gifts to individual teachers. In lieu of a gift, a handwritten note from a scholar is a more appropriate and powerful way to show appreciation and gratitude. Parents wishing to give to the school should see the Family Leadership Council for creative ways to show appreciation.

Birthdays

The Democracy Prep community celebrates birthdays enthusiastically at Town Hall. Out of fairness to all of our scholars and our desire to ensure an academic environment free of distraction, we ask that parents refrain from visiting scholars on their birthdays and from bringing gifts, balloons and, in light of potential allergies, food for the class. Likewise, we suggest that parents wishing to invite scholars to birthday parties invite the entire homeroom (invitations may be sent to the homeroom teacher to be distributed via the homework folder). Scholars are required to be in uniform on their birthday.

Procedures for Resolution of Parent Concerns

Democracy Prep is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between its teachers, staff, scholars and families. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we welcome your input and encourage you to contact the appropriate staff member at the school. We are committed to addressing the concerns of our families and seeking a resolution that first and foremost benefits the academic development of your child toward success in the college of his or her choice.

Informal Complaint Process. If a parent or guardian has a concern or disagreement about a classroom event, curricular or disciplinary decision, or other academic issue, he or she should first contact the teacher to attempt to resolve the disagreement through *informal* discussion. If the concern is not adequately resolved, the parent or guardian should request a further meeting. The teacher will contact the school leader and schedule the follow-up conversation. All Democracy Prep staff members are expected to make every effort to respond to a parent complaint as quickly as possible.

Formal Complaint Process. If the informal complaint process fails to produce a satisfactory resolution, a parent or guardian may initiate a *formal* complaint by submitting a letter in writing to the school leader outlining, in detail, the events, policies, or decisions at issue. The school leader will promptly conduct a thorough investigation into the matter and issue a response in writing detailing his or her findings and recommendations. If the parent or guardian is still not satisfied, he or she may appeal the school leader's determination to the Executive Director of Democracy Prep Baton Rouge.

Board of Trustees. If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent or guardian may write to the Board of Trustees to request a review. An item will be placed on the Board's agenda during its next regularly scheduled meeting, at which time the parent will have an opportunity to address his or her concerns. The

committee will issue a report on its findings to the Board prior to the next regular meeting, and the Board may take action as appropriate based on the committee's recommendations. A parent wishing to attend a Board meeting will be permitted to speak but will be asked to limit his or her comments to 3 minutes. If additional time is necessary for public participation and comments, an extra 30 minutes will be allotted at the end of the Board meeting. A parent or guardian may address the Board at any meeting without going through the informal and formal complaint processes outlined above, but the Board encourages these constructive conversations with the relevant parties prior to direct outreach to the Board. The Board has the power and duty to take action as appropriate.

Authorizer. If, after presentation of the complaint to the Board of Trustees, the parent or guardian believes that the Board has not adequately addressed the complaint, the parent or guardian may present the complaint to the school's authorizer, which may investigate and respond. The authorizer may take remedial action as appropriate.

Contact Information for Authorizer:

Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)
1201 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
225.342.5840

Mail to: P.O. Box 94064
Capital Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804



DREAM PRIVILEGES

Although everyone at Democracy Prep works hard for the sake of going to college and changing the world, we also believe that hard work should pay off in opportunities to have fun and enjoy life! Scholars who exhibit the DREAM values every day and who have earned DREAM dollars will have the opportunity to redeem those dollars through amazing celebrations, trips, college visits and other fun experiences.

In-school privileges may include:

- Dress down days
- “Helper” privileges
- Earned field days
- Other earned privileges, rewards and recognitions

Extended opportunities may include:

- Earned local, fun field trips
- End-of-the-year trips, which begin small and become increasingly more distant, complex, and exciting. Trips have included:
 - Local museum visits
 - Picnics at universities
 - Local college tour
 - Out-of-State college tour

These opportunities work as positive motivators for our scholars to continue working hard, both on their academics and their behavior. Scholars who regularly live the DREAM values will earn these great opportunities. More importantly, scholars who regularly show DREAM values are learning and practicing the behaviors that will lead to college and life success.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Democracy Prep is committed to providing a safe and orderly school culture in which scholars can improve their academic achievement. Scholars whose conduct does not meet the school community’s clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others. Therefore, every misbehavior will result in an appropriate consequence. This is the basis of our scholar Code of Conduct. Consequences may vary based on the age and grade level of the scholar, the severity of the incident and the frequency with which the incident takes place.

DEMOCRACY PREP CODE OF CONDUCT:

1. Disrupting the School Environment

1.1 Arriving late to school or class: Scholar tardiness disrupts class, inconveniences others, and often results in academic difficulties. Scholars may not be late to school or class.

1.2 Choosing NOT to attend required school, school functions or school support: Scholars are required to attend all academic and enrichment classes, assigned consequences, and assigned support opportunities. Scholars are not permitted to leave the building without permission.

1.3 Misbehaving on the way to or from school: Our scholars, while in uniform, are our ambassadors to the community and should embody the DREAM values of Democracy Prep. Scholars may not misbehave while traveling to or from school or while engaged in school-sponsored activities, such as field trips or after-school activities. Misbehavior includes, but is not limited to, using inappropriate language, making excessive noise, touching other scholars, being disrespectful to others, and instigating, encouraging, recording, or promoting others to fight and/or engage in criminal or otherwise inappropriate behavior.

Scholars who misbehave on the way to or from school may have to be escorted by a parent or guardian, in addition to other consequences.

1.4 Access to the Building: Scholars are not permitted to block access to any room or part of the school building. Scholars may not leave the building through any exits except those officially marked.

1.5 Leaving the Building Without Permission: Once a scholar has arrived on campus, he/she may not leave campus without permission.

1.6 Violating the Dress Code: Scholars will not be permitted to attend class when not in proper uniform. Only designated clothing items are allowed to be worn in school and must be worn appropriately (according to the school's Dress Code). Parents may be required to pick up children who are not properly dressed for school or to bring the missing Dress Code item to the school. Scholars will not be permitted to return home to retrieve the necessary items.

1.7 Gum, Food, and Beverages: Scholars may not chew or carry gum at any time at Democracy Prep. Scholars may not eat or drink at unauthorized times or places at Democracy Prep.

1.8 Hallway Behavior: Scholars may not disrupt the instructional environment while in the hallway. As a result, hallways at Democracy Prep schools are silent.

1.9 Disrupting Class and Preventing Teaching: Democracy Prep can fulfill its mission only if classrooms are safe and teaching is uninterrupted. Scholars may not disrupt class.

1.10 Arriving to Class Unprepared: When class begins, scholars must be prepared and have all necessary materials (books, pencils, portfolio, paper etc.).

1.11 Entering or Leaving Classrooms Without Permission: Scholars may not enter a classroom without permission, nor may they leave a classroom without having obtained a pass. Scholars must report to locations as directed by staff, and remain in a designated location.

1.12 Failing to Complete Homework: Completing homework is essential to the success of individual scholars and the classroom community. Scholars are expected to complete all of their homework assignments on time.

1.13 Cheating, Plagiarism, and Copying Others' Work: Cheating or copying the work of others (or allowing other scholars to copy work) is unacceptable. This includes any and all talking during exams irrespective of whether the chatter is in reference to the exam. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, both the scholar who copied and the scholar who allowed the copying will receive zeros on the assignment. This offense may result in long-term suspension or expulsion.

1.14 Failing to Submit a Required Signature: Scholars are required to secure the signature of a parent/guardian on homework, class assignments and forms when requested by any school staff member.

1.15 Forgery: Scholars may not forge a signature.

1.16 Using Objects as Projectiles: Scholars may not throw or kick objects inappropriately in school.

1.17 Lying to a Staff Member: Honesty is an essential element of personal character and is necessary for the school to support the DREAM values. Scholars are not permitted to lie or attempt to conceal the truth.

1.18 Being Disrespectful to a Staff Member: A school cannot function properly if scholars are permitted to be disrespectful towards adults. For that reason, scholars may not be disrespectful towards a staff member or any other adult associated with the school. Scholars may not purposely disobey or ignore a staff member's directions.

1.19 Ignoring or Refusing to Follow a Staff Member's Directions: Scholars are expected to follow the directions of any staff member the first time and respond in a respectful manner. Ignoring, delaying, or refusing to respond to a staff member's directive is considered defiant and disrespectful.

1.20 Being Disrespectful to a Scholar: If scholars do not feel physically and emotionally safe in school, teaching and learning are made more difficult. Therefore, scholars may not be disrespectful toward other scholars.

1.21 Possession of Inappropriate Property: Scholars cannot possess any electronic music or game devices in school. Scholars may not possess any printed images, text, or lyrics that are vulgar, profane, or sexually explicit, or any other items inappropriate for school.

1.22 Gambling: Scholars may not bet money or wager anything on the outcome of a game, contest, or other event.

1.23 Filming and Distribution of Media Depicting Code of Conduct Violations: Scholars may not take, share, or post photographs, pictures, or videos depicting a violation of this Code of Conduct.

1.24 Violation of the Computer/Email/Internet Acceptable Use Policy: Scholars may not violate the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy set forth in this Handbook.

2. Physical or Verbal Harm, Inappropriate Touching, and/or Threats

2.1 Causing Bodily Harm: Scholars may not cause physical injury to a scholar, school employee, or another person. Scholars are not permitted to harm or attempt to harm a scholar, school employee, or another person with a weapon or dangerous object.

2.2 Causing or Intending to Cause Physical Injury: Scholars may not cause or attempt to cause physical injury or behave in such a way that could reasonably cause physical injury to any scholar, school employee, or other person.

2.3 Fighting, Unwanted Physical Contact, or Verbal Altercation: Scholars may not fight with other scholars from Democracy Prep or persons not enrolled at the school. Harassing, pushing, touching, or any form of unwanted physical contact is not tolerated regardless of the cause of the disturbance. Scholars may not engage in verbal altercations, including but not limited to insults, yelling, or words that are reasonably likely to incite a verbal or physical confrontation.

2.4 Play-fighting and Threatening: Play-fighting and/or the use of threats harm the safety of the community. Scholars may not play-fight and/or threaten others.

2.5 Setting off False Alarms or Making a Threat: Scholars may not intentionally set off a false alarm or make a destructive threat.

2.6 Engaging in Sexual Activity or Inappropriate Touching: A scholar may not engage in sexual activity of any kind or touch himself/herself or others inappropriately.

3. Possession or Use of Firearms, Weapons, and/or Dangerous Objects

3.1 Possession or Use of a Firearm: Scholars may not possess or use a firearm.

3.2 Possession or Use of a Mock Firearm: Scholars may not possess or use mock firearms

3.3 Using or Possessing a Weapon or Dangerous Object: Scholars are not allowed to bring a weapon of any sort to school, use any object in a dangerous or threatening manner, or have a weapon on him/her or his/her property.

3.4 Arson: Scholars may not set a fire or possess any form of fire-making material, including lighters, matches etc.

4. Possession, Use or Distribution of Controlled Substances, Alcohol, or Tobacco

4.1 Using or Possessing Drugs or Alcohol: Scholars may not use or possess any non-prescribed controlled substance, narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Prescribed and over-the-counter drugs must be delivered to the Nurse or trained school employee by a parent or responsible person with a doctor-signed Authorization to Dispense Medication Form. Scholars may not be in possession of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs.

4.2 Selling, Possessing, or Transferring Drugs or Alcohol: Scholars may not sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell or distribute prescribed or non-prescribed controlled substances.

4.3 Selling, Possessing, or Transferring Tobacco Products: Scholars may not sell, distribute, or possess with intent to sell or distribute cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or other tobacco products.

4.4 Selling or Possessing Mock Controlled Substances, Alcohol or Tobacco: Scholars may not sell, distribute or possess mock controlled substances, alcohol or tobacco.

5. Harassment and Violation of Civil Rights

5.1 Violating the Civil Rights of Others: Scholars may not violate the civil rights of others—the fundamental rights of freedom and equality that belong to everyone.

5.2 Harassment: Scholars may not make unwanted sexual advances towards or commit sexual harassment of any member of the school community. Harassment or intimidation of any members of the school community on the basis of their racial or ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability is not permitted.

5.3 Abusive or Profane Language or Treatment: Scholars may not use abusive, threatening, vulgar, coarse, or degrading language (including racial epithets or sexist or homophobic remarks) in speech or in writing.

5.4 Bullying and Intimidation: Scholars may not physically, verbally (through speech or writing), or use technology and/or social media in order to intimidate or bully any member of the school community.

6. Theft or Vandalism

6.1 Theft, Loss or Destruction of Personal or School Property: Scholars may not steal, lose, or damage property belonging to someone else or to the school.

6.2 Mistreatment or Inappropriate Use of School Technology or School Property: Scholars must treat computers, printers, and other technology with care. Democracy Prep does not tolerate attempts to access the school's files or other inappropriate uses of technology or the Internet. Scholars do not have the right to use school computers to access chat rooms or emails or to access web sites or files that contain profanity, sexually explicit language or pictures, excessively violent themes, and/or other material inappropriate for minors. Scholars are prohibited from using school telephones. In the event of an emergency, scholars may be allowed to use the school telephones, but only at the discretion of school staff members. Scholars must not mistreat other school property including but not limited to text and reading books. Writing or marking on any desks or school property is strictly prohibited.

7. Gang-Related Activity: Scholars may not engage in any gang-related activity, which shall be defined as any act(s) that promotes gangs or gang-related activities including, but not limited to, (1) communicating either verbally or non-verbally (hand signs, gestures, handshakes, drawings, etc.), to convey membership or affiliation with a gang; (2) defacing school or personal property with gang-related graffiti, symbols or slogans; (3) requiring payment of protection, insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang-related activity; and (4) soliciting others for gang membership

8. Failure to Comply with School-Imposed Consequences: Scholars must comply with school-imposed consequences. In order for the school to maintain high expectations and a safe and respectful school environment — two vital parts of our school culture — scholars must comply with all consequences assigned including any suspension or disciplinary action.

9. Repeated Violations of the Code of Conduct: As outlined below, repeated violations may result in consequences of greater severity or length at the discretion of the school leader. Repeated inability to adhere to the school's rules may result in the scholar's removal from the Democracy Prep community.

THE DREAM DOLLAR SYSTEM

Democracy Prep establishes and maintains a scholar and teacher community that is efficient and orderly, warm and productive. The DREAM Dollar system is one way that our staff, families, and scholars can measure their success in internalizing the school's DREAM values. The DREAM Dollar system is a merit-based system in which scholars are "paid" \$10-\$20 DREAM Dollars each day they arrive to school on-time, in uniform, in possession of the necessary materials, and prepared to demonstrate DREAM values. Scholars who go above and beyond the school's expectations may also earn additional positive DREAM Dollars.

When scholars fall short of the expectations established through the DREAM Dollar system (the Code of Conduct), they lose a certain amount of DREAM Dollars as a consequence.

The DREAM Dollar system is adapted appropriately based on the emotional and intellectual development of the child. The expectation is that our scholars are participating appropriately in our community and contributing to our efficient, orderly, warm, and productive environment. DREAM Dollars are introduced in Kindergarten; each year thereafter, the concept of DREAM Dollars as a measure of behavioral success adapts to the grade-level abilities and needs of our scholars. For example, as scholars develop the ability to manage their own engagement in a classroom setting, scholars are held accountable for remaining engaged in a lesson through eye contact and asking and answering questions. As scholars grow older, expectations for engagement may change. What remains constant is our expectation that scholars show the DREAM values; what changes is the specific indicator of that value. Below is a list of specific behaviors that may be expected from Prep scholars, depending on their grade level.

DREAM Value	Expectations
Discipline	Follow specific directions the first time given.
	Remain silent and focused during instructional and independent work time.
	Adhere to a consistent study schedule at home.
Respect	Be respectful with your body language and attitude.
	Be verbally polite to those around you even when you are given a direction you do not like.
Enthusiasm	Use STAR posture. (Sit straight up and tucked in behind your desk, Track the speaker, Ask and answer questions, and Raise your hand throughout the school day)
	Move quickly from place to place and from task to task.
Accountability	Apologize and take responsibility for mistakes that you might make.
	Come prepared and organized to school each day.
Maturity	When no one is looking, still behave as if all of your teachers and family were in the room watching and listening to you.
	Be a responsible role model and leader for yourself and your classmates.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS

At Democracy Prep, we are committed to serving all scholars, while simultaneously protecting the strong culture that makes our academic gains possible. All scholars are taught the DREAM values and are held accountable to them throughout the year. As stated above in the general Code of Conduct, misbehaviors at Democracy Prep result in consequences. If negative behaviors persist, or if scholars have not adequately fulfilled the given consequence, more serious consequences may be put in place. Consequences vary based on the grade level of the scholar, the severity of the action, and the frequency of the incident. Such consequences may include:

- Scholar reflection on community violation (may be written, private or public);
- Removal of school privileges (including school trips, in-school privileges, etc.);
- Lunch or after-school detention;
- School/community service;
- In-school suspension;
- Short-term out-of-school suspension;
- Long-term out-of-school suspension; and
- Removal from the school community.

To preserve valuable instructional time, Democracy Prep strives to keep its scholars in school and in classrooms. However, allowing the same scholars to commit the same infractions in the same situations can have a deleterious effect on the culture of our schools. Therefore, when a scholar's actions are detracting from the ability of other scholars to learn in a safe, value-added environment, it may be necessary to remove the offending scholar from the classroom and eventually from the school. If a scholar's consequence involves being sent home or suspended for any period of time, a parent or guardian may be asked to meet with an administrator regarding the scholar's behavior prior to his or her return to school.

Please note that suspended scholars who are sent to school notwithstanding the consequences outlined in their suspension letters will receive escalating consequences for violating Section 8 of the Code of Conduct (Failure to Comply with School-Imposed Consequences).

Tiered Behavior Responses

While Democracy Prep strives to implement our behavior system consistently, we also recognize that some scholars' needs may be best met through customized behavior plans. While Democracy Prep aims to remain consistent in the way we execute our behavior system, we do customize behavior plans in an attempt to help scholars succeed should they need that flexibility. We also seek to tailor consequences to the severity and frequency of the unacceptable behavior and the scholar's individual circumstances. Both the severity of consequences and the scope and depth of structured, proactive support provided by the DREAM Team to troubled scholars will increase commensurate with the severity and frequency of the violations. As the consequences become more severe, we will notify and seek the involvement of families to help design and implement response plans. Democracy Prep's response to behaviors will escalate as negative behaviors escalate, with the most serious infractions of the Code of Conduct receiving the most serious consequences. Violence directed to other scholars or staff will lead to the most serious consequences.

All scholars facing out of school suspension are entitled to due process. For a short-term out of school suspension (i.e., a suspension for less than ten days), the scholar will, prior to the suspension, be told by the principal or school leader the basis for the suspension, the evidence supporting the consequence, and will be able to give his or her side of the story. For a suspension longer than ten days, a scholar will have the opportunity to present evidence to the school leader in a more formal proceeding, is entitled to be represented by counsel, will be provided the evidence supporting the suspension, and will be given the opportunity to confront the evidence against the scholar and to present evidence as well. The scholar can be removed from the school immediately if a danger to others and the school environment. In appropriate circumstances the scholar may also be referred to law enforcement authorities.

The most serious consequence, if all else fails and in extraordinary circumstances, will be expulsion from the Democracy Prep. A scholar facing expulsion and his or her parents will be afforded all due process protections required under applicable laws and regulations including a full and fair hearing.

Being Proactive

It is the school's job to connect the dots for scholars and families on exactly why we work so hard and why we hold high expectations for every scholar. This messaging must come through:

- new scholar enrollment;
- Family Orientations;
- Prep Academy;
- Coffee and Conversations;
- official school notifications; and
- ongoing informal communication and meetings with staff, scholars, and families.

Alternative Instruction

Democracy Prep provides scholars with alternative instruction if they are suspended or expelled (until enrolled in another school, or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first). During the period of their removal or suspension, scholars must be provided with alternative instruction, which includes, but is not limited to, classwork and homework assignments. Additionally, scholars will be permitted to take any citywide or state examinations that are administered during the suspension period for which no make up examination is permitted by the testing authority, as well as to make up school examinations that may affect their academic records. Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family for the delivery of services, pick up/delivery of work, and the making-up of any missed assignments and classroom instructional support. All alternative instructional materials will permit the scholar to make adequate academic progress and must be completed satisfactorily for the scholar to return to school. Nonetheless, alternative instruction cannot replicate all the benefits of full classroom instruction and participation by the scholar.

Alternative instruction will provide the scholar with an opportunity to continue to earn academic credit and must be appropriate to the individual needs of the scholar. All IDEA mandates must be followed for scholars with disabilities. In determining the alternative instruction for a scholar with a disability and for a scholar who has a 504 Accommodation Plan, consideration will be given to the scholar's IEP and behavioral intervention plan, or 504 Accommodation Plan. In addition, if an IEP scholar has already been suspended for more than an aggregate of (10) school days during the school year due to disciplinary actions that create a pattern of removals as determined by Democracy Prep, the scholar must either be reinstated or assigned to an appropriate setting until a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) takes place.

Due Process Protections

Democracy Prep holds all scholars to high expectations. Scholars with an identified disability as documented by an IEP or 504 Plan are provided with the accommodations necessary to access the curriculum. This includes accommodations that address social, emotional, and behavior concerns.

Scholars with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other scholars, and are afforded due process protections under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its implementing regulations. A scholar with a disability may be entitled to disciplinary measures that align with his/her needs as outlined in an IEP, 504 plan, and/or determinations from an MDR. Scholars for whom an IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with the standard school policy. Re-entry meetings occur when a scholar is removed from the environment for a severe or repetitious unproductive behavior. When a parent's presence is mandated, a scholar may not fully integrate back into the community until a meeting occurs. Failure to meet this request will fall under the vein of failure to comply with school-imposed consequences and may lead to extended disciplinary action.

When a scholar with an IEP has been removed from school for either 10 consecutive days or for more than 10 cumulative school days in a school year based on conduct that forms a pattern of removal and results in a change in placement as determined by the school, he or she is entitled to a prompt review of the causal relationship between his or her disability and the behavior that precipitated the school's disciplinary action. The MDR is designed to determine whether (1) the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the scholar's disability; or (2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP. The manifestation team will consist of school officials, the scholar's parent or guardian, and relevant members of the multidisciplinary team. Parents or guardians will receive written notification prior to any manifestation team meeting. This notification will inform the parent or guardian of (1) the purpose of the meeting, (2) the names of the individuals expected to attend, and (3) his or her right to have relevant members of the multidisciplinary team participate at the parent or guardian's request.

The MDR will include a review of all relevant information in the scholar's file including his or her IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent or guardian. If the manifestation team determines that the scholar's conduct was a manifestation of his or her disability, the multidisciplinary team will (1) conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan; and (2) return the scholar to the placement from which the scholar was removed, unless the parent or guardian and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan. If the manifestation team determines the conduct in question was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP, the school will take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies. Lastly, if the scholar's conduct is ruled not to have been a manifestation of his or her disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to scholars with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to scholars without disabilities.

VISITING OUR SCHOOLS

Democracy Prep always welcomes and encourages visitors, both from within and outside of our school community, to observe our scholars and DREAM Team members in action. However, in order to assure the safety and well-being of all scholars and staff, all visitors — including parents and guardians — are required to report to the receptionist. Visitors may be required to have a visitor's pass once they have checked in with the Receptionist. Any visitor who does not report to the receptionist, or is found in the building without authorization and a visitor's pass, will be asked to leave immediately, and the authorities will be called if the request is not heeded.

Democracy Prep maintains an open door policy with our parents and families, provided they are not a distraction to the learning environment. Family members who are over 18 are welcome to come and observe classes and school operation on non-testing days. Parents and family members are also welcome to request meetings with any member of the DREAM Team. Meetings will be scheduled at the DREAM Team member's earliest possible convenience. If requests for a meeting are not met, family members should report the concern to the school leader.

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the receptionist either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact scholars in their classrooms, or attempt to withdraw scholars from the building without notifying and receiving permission from the school.

Please note that while families may visit the school at any time, family visitations to their own child's classroom is generally not permitted during the first six weeks of school. This allows teachers to establish a strong classroom culture that is focused on academic learning and is distraction-free.

Disruptive Visitors & Restricted Access

Democracy Prep works hard to maintain a safe and orderly environment for teachers and scholars. To that end, the school reserves the right to restrict visitors (including family members of scholars and staff) who do not display the DREAM values of the larger community while on school grounds, including during drop-off and pick-up. Examples of disruptive visitors include those who raise their voice, use profanity, threaten scholars or staff, or are physically or verbally aggressive in any way.

If a visitor's access must be restricted due to inappropriate behavior of any kind, s/he will receive a letter outlining the offenses that led to the restricted access and will be notified as to proper procedures for contact and communication with both staff and their scholar while on Democracy Prep property. If a visitor continues to disrupt the learning environment after having received a restricted access letter, Democracy Prep will pursue further measures including notification of law enforcement agencies.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Nondiscrimination

Democracy Prep does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA). In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to Democracy Prep on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. No person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges or access to the courses of study offered by Democracy Prep on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Finally, pregnant scholars are allowed to remain in regular education classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant scholars throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave (Title IX).

Harassment

Democracy Prep is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, scholars, vendors and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. Democracy Prep requires all employees and scholars to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, scholars and all members of the school community.

Public Documents / Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)

Democracy Prep fully complies with all the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and Louisiana's Public Records Law. Any requests for school records or information from the school must be in writing and submitted to Michelle Gieg, Executive Director. Within three business days of receipt of a written request, the school, depending on the requested information, will respond by:

- Making the information available at the school itself during normal business hours to the person requesting it;
- Denying the request in writing; or
- Providing a written acknowledgment of receipt of the request that supplies an approximate date for when the request will be granted or denied.

The school may charge a copying fee for each page requested to be copied. The fee can be no more than the fee allowed by state law.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funding under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

In accordance with FERPA law, parents or students over 18 years of age have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Parents or students over 18 years of age have the right to request that the school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent, guardian, or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. The Chief Executive Officer of Democracy Prep Public Schools or the CEO's designee will first hear the issue. If the parent, guardian, or eligible student is still not satisfied with the decision of the CEO or the CEO's designee, a hearing with the board of directors or a designated subcommittee of the board may be requested. The decision of the Board of Trustees or its designated subcommittee is final.

The school may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. Any parent who does not want such directory information included should contact the school's Operations Manager.

This listing in the DPPS Middle School Handbook serves as the school's annual notification of parents and eligible students of their rights under FERPA.

Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, the school may disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- school officials with legitimate educational interest;
- other schools to which a student is transferring;
- specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- accrediting organizations;
- to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Further, upon request, the school discloses education records without consent of parents or guardians to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

Additionally, parents, guardians, or students over 18 years of age have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Democracy Prep to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Board Meetings

Pursuant to the Open Meetings laws, all meetings of the school's Board of Trustees are open to the public. A schedule of all meetings, including date, time and location will be posted in a prominent space at the school and on the school's website.

Human Services

Below are several emergency telephone numbers that may be useful to parents and students:

Baton Rouge Numbers

Report Child Abuse Hotline	1-855-4LA-KIDS
LA Domestic Violence Hotline	1-888-411-1333
Drug Dependence Hotline	225-925-1906 or 800-768-8824
Mental Health Hotline	225-925-1906 or 800-768-8824
Police/Fire Emergency	911
LA Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
Rape Crisis Hotline	1-888-LAHELPU
Runaway Hotline	1-888-LAHELPU
Suicide Prevention	225-924-3900 or 800-437-0303 or 211

APPENDIX A: ADA POLICIES

DPPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and acknowledges its responsibility to permit scholars and/or other individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in and benefit from school services, programs, and activities. The school shall permit the use of service animals by scholars and other individuals with disabilities when necessary in order to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability in accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) and its implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 35.

Guide Dogs

A service animal is defined as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort, emotional support, well-being, or companionship or whose presence is to provide a crime deterrent effect do not qualify as service animals under the ADAAA or this policy. Under appropriate circumstances and as determined on an individual basis, the school shall make reasonable modifications to its practices and procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, shall not be considered service animals.

Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents the use of such devices. The individual with a disability must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective commands when the use of harnesses or other such devices cannot be utilized due to interference with functional use of the service animal.

Because the school is responsible for the health and safety of school-age minors with and without disabilities who have limited options regarding classroom and school assignments, requests for an individual with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal on school premises or during school-related activities must first: (1) be submitted in writing to the school administration; (2) specify the need for use of the service animal; and (3) identify the work or tasks performed for the individual with a disability by the service animal. Such written request shall be required not less than ten (10) school days prior to the proposed use of the service animal and prior to bringing the service animal onto school property or to a school-related activity. A determination as to whether a service animal is permitted on school property or at school-related activities shall be based on multiple factors and shall be determined on a case-by case basis following procedures approved by the school administration.

Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by a service animal in those areas of school property that are generally open to the public or to participants in school programs, services, or activities.

DPPS reserves its right to request removal of a service animal from its premises and/or its programs, services, and activities if: (1) the animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it; or (2) the animal is not housebroken. Any individual with a disability whose service animal is excluded by the school shall be offered an opportunity to participate in such programs, services, or activities without the service animal.

A service animal shall be considered the personal property of the individual with a disability. The school shall not be responsible for the training, daily care, feeding, healthcare, or supervision of a service animal. Consistent with general policies of the school, an individual with a disability may be responsible for damages caused by his/her service animal while on school property or during school-related activities.

DPPS reserves its right to require proof that all service animals with whom scholars may come into contact while at school have been vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian in accordance with State law and administrative regulations promulgated by the Louisiana Department of Public Health.

Other regulations and/or procedures shall be maintained by DPPS and designated staff. Affected individuals may obtain additional information by contacting the school's Section 504/ADA/ADAAA Coordinator or by visiting the school's official website.

Tape Recorder Policy

Scholars who wish to use audio or video recording devices during any school program and/or activity may do so with the written consent by the teacher and administrator. Nothing in this policy bars a student from using audio or video recording devices pursuant to an IEP or Section 504 Plan. Any student violating this section shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Note Taker Policy

Note-taking assistance may include 1) Receiving copies of course notes (upon instructor's approval); 2) Using a laptop in class; 3) Audio recording lectures and/or 4) Using a peer note-taker. The faculty and/or administration of DPPS reserves the exclusive right to identify and coordinate note-takers for scholars with injuries, learning or physical disabilities, or hearing, motor, or visual limitations. The notetaking service provides scholars with supplemental support. Even if scholars have note-takers, they are expected to attend class and take notes to the best of their ability and are ultimately responsible for the material covered in their courses. Scholars might also record lectures to supplement the notes provided by note-takers and also, on an as-need basis, meet with professors to ask questions about lectures and class discussions. Note-takers will not provide copies of course notes to scholars when they are absent from class, unless the scholars receive approval from a member of the faculty or administration for medical or health reasons or other extenuating circumstances. Scholars and note-takers should not share notes with other class members.

Rights Concerning Discrimination

DPPS shall direct that anyone who wishes to file a complaint alleging discrimination on the basis of disability in employment practices and policies or the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits by the school, shall do so in the following manner:

The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination such as name, address, and phone number of the complainant and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interview or a tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request. A complaint form is available by calling the ADA Coordinator:

Corrie Manieri
Democracy Prep Baton Rouge Charter School
4055 Prescott Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70805
Telephone: (347) 385-2556
Email: Corrie.Manieri@Democracyprep.org

The complaint should be submitted as soon as possible but no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the alleged violation. Within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the ADA Coordinator shall meet with the complainant to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within fifteen (15) calendar days after the meeting, the ADA Coordinator shall issue a written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, such as large print or audio tape.

The complainant may request a reconsideration of the matter if he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration shall be made within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of the written determination issued by the ADA Coordinator and, in writing or by alternative means, to the Principal.

Within twenty (20) calendar days after receipt of the request for reconsideration, the Principal or his/her designee shall issue a written determination concerning the request for reconsideration or in an alternative format, if required. The Principal's or designee's written determination shall be a final resolution of the complaint.

The right of a person to pursue a complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as filing of an ADA complaint with the responsible federal department or agency.

The ADA Coordinator shall maintain the files and records of DPPS relating to complaints filed for at least three (3) years.

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

I fully understand the expectations, standards, and policies set forth in this Handbook and agree to demonstrate my commitment to my education by adhering to the DREAM values in the manner outlined above. I recognize that failure to abide by these standards and policies will result in the imposition of appropriate consequences as described throughout this Handbook. I acknowledge that I am responsible for my own behavior, and I pledge to follow directions issued by my teachers and school leaders. Freedom Prep Charter School is a school of choice. I understand that my parents are free to remove me at any time.

Scholar: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Date: _____