

2008-2009 School Handbook

Community

High

School

Changing the face of education, one child at a time.

Community High School

Sarah Scott Educational Complex
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Mission Statement

Community High School is a small school with a social justice focus. Students become responsible citizens via a rigorous student-centered curriculum and genuine service learning experiences.



CHS - Putting it all together

Who We Are – The CHS Family
Note: CHS is a “teacher-led” school.
All staff serve multiple roles and

share administrative duties.

Our Teaching Staff:

Lynne Archbald
Elizabeth Berrara
Matthew Carrel
Dream Gunther-Nettesheim & Holly Anderson
Willa Lee
Roxane Mayeur
Joel McElrone
Marqurite McCurdy
Kyle McGilligan- Benton
Jason O'Brien
Matthew Poytinger
Chris Race
KC Williams & Arlene Skwierawski

Our Support Staff:

Carmen Figueroa – Head Secretary
Wendell Harris
Milo Lee
Barbara O'Connor
Brenda Windom – Service Learning/Parent Coordinator
Matthew Wytch – Paraprofessional

Course of Study

The faculty at Community High School strongly believes that all children deserve a great education and a bright future. To honor this belief, the faculty deliberately designs curriculum that will maximize students' choices upon graduation. All staff expects students to work toward constant improvement.

Most courses offered at CHS involve college-level coursework or are college preparatory in nature. When faced with an academic challenge, students are expected to make an honest effort. Teachers often offer students at least one opportunity to revise work that is in need of improvement and guide them toward successful completion.

The development of the habits of mind is most important to us. Students graduating from Community High School will have the skills and experiences necessary to choose among multiple paths to success.

Assessment (Grading)

Students will be expected to submit all assignments per instructions from subject area teachers. There will be homework, tests and quizzes as well as project-based activities. Grades will be based in part on these samples of work. Students often will be working on one major project per class, per mark period. The grade in each class will be determined by **OVERALL** performance.

Homework

Yes, there is homework! Students are expected to practice the skills and concepts explored in the classroom. In addition, we strongly recommend that parents enforce "reading time" at home and furnish a quiet area to accommodate this activity.

Service Learning Expectations

Community High School students must participate in weekly service learning and internship opportunities through out their academic career. This commitment to the service of others is at the heart of the mission of Community High School and is what sets our school apart from many others.

Students will be guided through the service learning process their freshman and sophomore year. During the few weeks of school students will explore the need for volunteerism within the Milwaukee community. During this time, the regular school day hours will be followed. CHS faculty will help students discover how their unique talents can be utilized by not-for-profit organizations. Once most students are placed, on Wednesday afternoons students will be dismissed after lunch to report to their assigned areas. There will be NO classes in session once this program comes into effect. Not all students will leave the campus to complete their service assignments. Many will serve within the building and at surrounding schools. Students not involved in community service will be doing internships or service training.

We are proud to report that many students meet or exceed the goal of 100 hours of community service before they graduate.

Remember: Every CHS student is expected to participate in the Service Learning program. * Students with special needs or extenuating circumstances are also expected to participate in the Service Learning Program unless otherwise determined by the child's IEP team or medical professional.

The Service Learning Coordinator along with the students' advisor is in charge of locating a placement that is appropriate for each student. A parent or student may also initiate a placement idea but it must receive approval to assure that the placement qualifies as an appropriate volunteer opportunity. A project or placement that has not received pre-approval may be rejected if it does not meet requirements. Students are encouraged to seek out placements based on interest, proximity to home or school, and personal scheduling issues.

The following are the required qualities of an appropriate placement:

1. The volunteer work is focused on serving the person or persons in greatest need.
2. The student receives no monetary compensation for the service.
3. The service is conducted for a nonprofit agency.
4. The service is completed from June 15 through May 31 of each school year.
5. The service is performed outside of one's family, i.e. babysitting, housecleaning, caring for a grandparent, etc. are not eligible.
6. The work does not qualify as an extracurricular activity.
7. The service offers the student the potential to give and grow.
8. Internships and political campaigns are not considered community service.

Through working and learning together, students are encouraged to reach beyond themselves to serve others in their school, their neighborhood, and their world.

Internship Expectations

Most Community High School students will participate in at least one “on the job” training (internship). As with service learning projects, students will receive help and guidance through this process. The Service Learning Coordinator and faculty advisor must approve internship placements. While internships may lead to paid employment, students cannot receive credit for paid internships.

Students will report to their internship sites on Wednesday afternoons. Internship assignments should provide students with a view of the world of work as well as how this placement serves a social justice function.

CHS Graduation Checklist

CHS is an MPS Charter school, and therefore adheres to the graduation requirements of the district.

22 credits required, 14 of the 22 requirements as follows:

Physical Education 1.5 units

Health .5 units

English/Language Arts 4 units

Speech .5 units

Social Studies 3 units including:

Note: US History 1

World History/Studies 1

Urban Citizenship 1 OR Both American Govt. and
Economics .5 each

Science 2 units including Biology, Chemistry

Mathematics 2 units – at or above Algebra 1

* Foreign Language, 2 units (suggested)

Fine Arts, 1 unit

Community Service and Internships (see previous guidelines)

General Information / Policies

ATTENDANCE

Regular daily attendance is a requirement for all students. All students are expected to be supervised and in their assigned area at all times.

Plan to be here by 7:45* a.m. to ensure starting the school day at 8:00 a.m.

*Note: Breakfast is available from 7:30 – 7:50 in the school cafeteria. We encourage all students to take advantage of a good breakfast.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Students arriving after 8:00 should bring a note from home. A pattern of tardiness will be subject to consequences, such as: parent conference or /and Sunrise Detention (7am-7: 50am) or tardy room, etc.. Tardiness negatively impacts the learning environment.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

A parent should call the school to report student absences and the reason for the absence. It is preferred that the call be made prior to 9:00a.m. on the day of absence.

Legal absences include illness, doctor appointments, and death in the family, court appearance, religious holiday or special family emergencies.

Upon returning, student should bring a written excuse to the school secretary. Without a written excuse the absence will be considered as unexcused.

Students who have excessive numbers of unexcused absences or “chronic truancy” will be referred to the school social worker and possibly the district attorney.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

A note from a parent, indicating the reason and time the student is to be dismissed, is to be brought to the school secretary at beginning of the day. The secretary will call the phone numbers in the students’ file for verification purposes. Please indicate on the note where you would like to be contacted (home, work, cell).

No student under the age of 18 will be dismissed without written and verbal verification from a parent or guardian.

Student must bring a written excuse the day of return.

TRANSPORTATION

All students will receive bus tickets or passes to ride the Milwaukee County Transit System to be used for transportation to and from school as well as any other school-related activities, such as service learning and fieldtrips. Students must keep track of their tickets or pass; no replacements will be provided for lost or stolen items.

Note: Time on buses and bus stops is considered part of school activities and is subject to all school policies. It is expected that all CHS students will behave with respect at all times.

ID CARDS

Students are required to carry their picture ID cards at all times. These are issued during the first weeks of school. Replacements can be purchased for \$5.00.

LUNCH PERIODS

Community High School operates under a closed lunch policy. Students may not leave to eat elsewhere or bring back lunch from a restaurant. Bag lunches must be consumed in the cafeteria, and hot lunch is served in the cafeteria.

RADIOS, PAGERS, ELECTRONIC GAMES

Students are strongly urged not to bring these items to school. These items should be stored in the students' locker. As per district policy if these items are carried on the person they will be confiscated and held by school personnel. Confiscated items will be released only to the parent or guardians. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

CELL PHONES

For safety reasons, the district mandates that no students have cell phones on school premises. We will collect cell phones at the door and return them upon dismissal. Any breach of this policy will result in confiscation, parent involvement and/or other punitive measures as dictated by the circumstance.

Parents - Emergency calls should be made to and from the school office. There is no exception to this rule.

*Note: To limit theft and loss, students should not share lockers or locker combinations.

Community High School Behavior Policy

Expectations and School Climate:

Community High School staff models and encourages the development of self-discipline, respect and tolerance in all members of our school community. With this in mind, students are expected to show self-respect, courtesy and consideration for others at all times. Our Behavior Policy is structured to create and sustain a school climate based on a shared respect. All staff members will assist students in understanding and meeting guidelines, and will counsel students who are not meeting these expectations. Minor infractions will be handled swiftly and fairly. It is the belief of the staff that students need to be in school in order to be successful; therefore, suspensions will only be recommended in extreme cases or as mandated by board policy.

Shared Rights and Responsibilities:

All members of school community have the right to:

- Gain new knowledge and to develop social and academic skills
- Make the most of their educational opportunities
- Be safe and free from harassment
- Be treated with respect
- Expect fair and reasonable behavior
- A clean and intellectually stimulating environment

All members of the school community are responsible for:

- Respecting the rights of others
- Treating others with respect
- Behaving in a fair and reasonable manner
- Respecting property
- Maintaining a clean and intellectually stimulating environment

NOTE: The last page of this handbook, entitled “RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT”, outlines the responsibility of the students, parents and staff at CHS. Please take the time to read through this information with your child and return a signed copy to the school as soon as possible. At your request, we will gladly make you a copy for your records.

Issues of Non-compliance

Non-compliance

Students are always expected to accept the consequences of their actions. If a student is not cooperating in class or at other school activities, they may be sent to the teacher on duty. Teachers and/or advisors will communicate with parents if homework is not completed, if materials are not brought to class or a student shows other non-productive behaviors. Consequences might include making up missed work at lunchtimes or at home; restitution for any damage to property caused by negligence; apologizing or otherwise repairing relationships damaged by thoughtless behavior; or contributing their service by way of restitution for actions which have damaged their own or the school's good name.

Academic Concerns

When the student's progress reports or semester report indicates that an improvement is needed in his/her approach to study, the student and parents may be asked to attend a meeting to work out ways in which the necessary improvements can be made. Documentation will be kept so that the student and family clearly understand the changes needed and consequences of non-compliance.

If a subsequent semester or progress check does not show the required improvement, a further meeting with the parents and concerned staff may take place in which strategies to improve the student's approach to study will be developed and/or reviewed.

If improvements are not made before the next progress check or semester report is issued, a final meeting will take place and a contract will be drawn up with a designated staff member. Breach of this contract will result in referral to the appropriate educational testing personnel within MPS and/or outside.

Excessive Non-compliance

Persistent or serious difficulties may result in the initiation of 'Due Process' (see below). This process will follow a series of consultations and meetings of the student, parents, Community High School staff members, and/or one of the Lead Teachers. A student must also enter Due Process if rules have been breached (such as violence or threats of violence) as outlined by board policy. Students may enter 'due process' when their attitude, approach to study and/or work ethic across a range of learning areas become an ongoing concern to the staff. Behavior that causes a constant disruption of the learning environment will be addressed through this process.

Harassment

Community High School is strongly committed to maintaining a safe, caring environment that respects the rights of all. All members have the right to safely pursue activities. We strongly encourage any student that feels they are being harassed in any way report it to someone on staff immediately. All CHS staff will follow through on any situation brought to their attention.

Computer Ethics

To support our belief in the ethical use of computers, the school has established a set of Common Conditions, which apply to all users of our facilities.

Each user is required to sign an agreement accepting the conditions and also the consequences of breaching the agreement. Our program at school focuses on the use of computers for research, constructive and creative purposes and communication. Consequences, ranging from warnings to withdrawal of the right to use the computer, will occur for deliberate misuse. Parents may be asked to pay for damage deliberately incurred.

Drug Policy

These guidelines are written to promote the health and safety of the community. The guidelines were developed in order to establish and clarify Community High School's expectations regarding medications, legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco, and illegal substances.

We believe that consistent, ongoing guidelines and procedures will provide a clear message to the school community, which will result in appropriate action in addressing issues in terms of both prevention and intervention.

Medications prescribed for a student must be reported to the school by the parent/ guardian for proper administration and safe storage. No medications (including pain relievers, such as Tylenol) will be administered without written parental permission.

Possession of illegal drugs or alcohol will be reported to the proper authorities and will result in the initiation of 'Due Process'.

Community Service / Field Trip Expectations

A student's learning may often extend outside of the classroom, along with these opportunities come rights and responsibilities. The student is a representative of CHS when in public, and is expected to carry him- or herself in a professional manner. Students in service learning situations or traveling to locations that are not directly supervised by a staff member are expected to demonstrate appropriate conduct at all times.

All activities connected to the school are to be treated as extensions of the school with all of the same rights and responsibilities.

Shared Facility

CHS is part of the Sarah Scott Educational Complex. All CHS students must remain in the designated CHS area unless accompanied by a staff member. Use of the elevator is prohibited. Students violating this policy will be considered as trespassing and will face appropriate consequences.

We strive to respect our neighbors in our facility as well as in our wider community.

Due Process

Note: Community High School is an MPS charter school and therefore abides by the rules and regulations as presented in the MPS Parent Handbook. Please take the time to read through both handbooks to be sure to thoroughly understand students' and families' rights and responsibilities.

The term 'due process' covers the formal steps taken in response to a student's continued lack of co-operation with the school's expectations of a student's behavior as dictated by a serious breach of school and/or district policy. The following outlines the possible steps taken in this procedure:

- Following a series of discussions/conferences with the student concerned, the first formal step is usually when parents are invited to meet with the concerned staff member(s) to discuss the difficulties.
- If the situation is not resolved, a meeting is arranged with the Lead Teacher, who will give a final warning of the consequences of continued non-compliance.
- A student may be suspended for a period of time, to reinforce the seriousness of the situation. A student may also be suspended immediately for a serious breach of the school's drug policy, computer ethics statement, physical violence or theft as mandated by board policy. At this stage, a code of behavior or contract may be drawn up which sets out in writing the matters to be addressed.

Note: The proper authorities will be notified immediately in cases of violence or threats of violence. We will in no way compromise the safety of students, staff or visitors of the school.

- If the situation continues after the final interview with a Lead Teacher, the student will be referred for a Central Office hearing, and may be asked to leave the school.

RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT

STUDENT LAST NAME _____

FIRST NAME _____

NAME OF ADVISOR _____

Please
print
clearly

As a CHS student, I promise to:	As a CHS Parent, I promise to:	As a CHS staff-member, I promise to:
<p>Be on time and in school every day, prepared to learn.</p> <p>Complete assignments, both homework and class work.</p> <p>Bring all necessary materials to school (books, writing tools, etc.)</p> <p>Show a positive attitude toward learning.</p> <p>Treat others and myself with respect at all times.</p> <p>Use class time wisely.</p> <p>Be cooperative and follow all class, school and district rules and policies.</p> <p>Comply with the service learning expectations of the school – understanding that this is a critical component of the school mission as outlined in the CHS School Handbook. *</p> <p>*I have read the CHS School Handbook and understand the expectations and mission of the school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p>	<p>Encourage and support my child's learning – both at school and at home.</p> <p>Maintain high expectations of my child in terms of his/her behavior.</p> <p>Be responsible for the prompt attendance of my child.</p> <p>Work as a partner with teachers and staff to support a healthy learning environment.</p> <p>Respond in a timely manner to oral and written communications.</p> <p>Attend parent-teacher conferences, school activities and serve as a volunteer when possible.</p> <p>Promote positive health and hygiene.</p> <p>Maintain up to date information (address, phone, medical, etc.)</p> <p>Comply with the service learning expectations of the school – understanding that this is a critical component of the school mission as outlined in the CHS School Handbook. *</p> <p>*I have read the CHS School Handbook and understand the expectations and mission of the school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p>	<p>Foster a positive and productive learning environment.</p> <p>Serve as an instructional leader and positive role model.</p> <p>Support the education of all the children in the school.</p> <p>Provide an intellectually and physically safe learning environment.</p> <p>Communicate clearly with students, parents, and teachers. Know and enforce rules and consequences consistently and fairly.</p> <p>Maintain a high quality work ethic-be prepared and reliable.</p> <p>Provide regular progress reports and other important information to parents.</p> <p>Keep accurate records. Support my colleagues. Provide assistance to students as needed.</p> <p>Participate in staff development activities.</p> <p>I have read the CHS School Handbook and understand the expectations and mission of the school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p>
Student Signature	Parent Signature	Staff Signature (Advisor)

This document must be signed by all parties and kept in the students' file.
At your request, we will gladly make you a copy for your records.