



Parent & Student
Handbook
2020-2021

The policies, rules and regulations contained within this Parent & Student Handbook ("Handbook") are not to be considered exclusive and are subject to change and revision during the school year by the Plato Academy School Board. Parents and students are advised to check the PlatoAcademy.net school website for the most up-to-date version of the Handbook.

PLATO ACADEMY SCHOOL LOCATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Plato Academy Clearwater

2045 Palmetto Street
Clearwater, FL 33765
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 228-9518
Principal: Sara Sutura
principalclearwater@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Largo

7100 142nd Avenue North
Largo, FL 33771
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 228-9520
Principal: Stephen Donnelly
principallargo@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Tarpon Springs

2795 Keystone Road
Tarpon Springs, FL 34688
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 939-6080
Principal: Danielle Turro
principaltarponsprings@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Pinellas Park

9200 49th Street N.
Pinellas Park, FL 33782
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 521-7261
Principal: Tonia Cunningham
principalpinellaspark@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Tampa

7705 Gunn Highway
Tampa, FL 33625
Tel:(727) 205-6360
Fax: 813 437 2868
Principal: Charity Edmond
principaltampa@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Palm Harbor

1601 Curlew Rd.
Palm Harbor, FL 34683
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 228-6851
Principal: Amber Sipe
principalpalmharbor@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Seminole

10888 126th Ave
Largo, FL 33778
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 228-6849
Principal: Karen Staab
principalseminole@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy St. Petersburg

6745 38th Ave. N.,
St. Petersburg, FL 33710
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 82521-7259
Principal: Michelle West
principalstpetersburg@platoacademy.net

Plato Academy Trinity

8812 Old County Road 54
New Port Richey, FL 34653
Tel: (727) 205-6360
Fax: (727) 877-2438
Principal: Hayley Harris
principaltrinity@platoacademy.net

School Hours

Student Hours - 8:40-3:10 (M-F)

Drop Off Begins: 8:15 AM

Official Start (enter room) - 8:30 AM

Tardy at 8:40AM

MAIN WEBSITE: platoacademy.net

Table of Contents

PLATO ACADEMY SCHOOL LOCATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION	2
VISION AND MISSION OF PLATO ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOLS	4
PLATO ACADEMY GUIDING PRINCIPLES	4
PLATO ACADEMY CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT	6
1. Parent Responsibilities:	
2. Student Responsibilities:	7
3. Dress Code:	8
4. Student Attendance & Homework/Classwork Guidelines:	10
5. Participation in Physical Education:	13
6. Locker Use Procedures:	14
7. Discipline:	15
8. Cyberbullying/Bullying Policy:	17
9. Grievance Policy:	19
10. Citizenship Policy:	20
11. Patriotic Program - The Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem:	21
12. Greek Culture:	21
13. Classroom Transfer:	21
PLATO ACADEMY ESSENTIAL INFORMATION	
1. Commitment to Character:	22
2. Communications:	22
3. School Supplies:	23
4. Lunch Procedures:	23
5. School Parties and Birthday Celebrations:	23
6. Field Trips:	24
7. Student Drop Off /Pick-up Procedures:	24
8. School Closing in an Emergency:	25
9. Cell Phones, Electronics and Toy Policy (“Private Electronic Devices”):	25
10. Report Cards - Progress Reports - Grading:	26
11. Promotion and Retention Guidelines:	27
12. Academics and Conduct Requirement for Sports Eligibility:	28
13. Enrichment Activities and Extended Care:	29
14. School Visitor Policy:	29
15. Textbooks:	29
16. Technology and Equipment Use Policy:	30
17. Withdrawals:	35

18. Administration of General Medications:	35
19. State of Emergency Disclosure	35
20. Coronavirus	36

PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

MISSION OF PLATO ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOLS

The mission of the Plato Academy Charter Schools is to assist students in achieving their full potential by requiring and nurturing high academic and behavioral standards in a safe, supporting, challenging, and enthusiastic environment, providing a well-rounded K-8 education fortified by a study of the Greek language and culture, and fostered by a commitment and cooperative effort among the school, students, parents, and community: our family.

VISION OF PLATO ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOLS

The vision of the Plato Academy Charter Schools is to progress as a family in which all are teachers and learners and are empowered and encouraged to exceed expectations, resulting in successful graduates ready to advance into their next stage of life, equipped with a well-rounded K-8 education fortified by the study of the Greek language and culture, and excited about continuing to achieve their full potential.

PLATO ACADEMY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The primary goal of Plato Academy Charter School is to ensure that each student's achievement is at the highest possible level. Education is to be provided in a manner that does not discriminate or cause harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or social and family background. In order for this to be accomplished:

- Every school staff member will strive to create a positive, safe environment that encourages and supports student success. Underlying causes for misbehavior will be explored, and when possible, positive redirection will occur and acceptable alternative behaviors will be taught. Such redirection may involve a collaborative effort of school, student, parents, and community members.
- It is the objective and policy of the Administration of Plato Academy to recognize, preserve, and protect the individual rights of all students; and, at the same time, to encourage and enforce the exercise of these rights within the framework of an orderly and efficient school program. Within this framework, it is the duty of the administrative staff, and the faculty of each school to prevent student conduct that is dangerous, disruptive, or destructive, therefore endangering the proper maintenance and function of the school program. Staff members are expected to model core value behaviors that set an example for students. It is expected that all disciplinary measures will be conducted in a manner that is respectful to the student and preserves that student's dignity wherever possible. It is the expectation that each student will behave in a manner that does not threaten, interfere with, disrupt or deprive other students of their right to an education. It is also expected students will learn to accept

responsibility for their behavior. An effective school environment must be safe and free from disruption.

- The Administration further recognizes that students are protected and have certain rights extended to citizens under the United States Constitution and its amendments; and that these rights cannot be abridged except in accordance with the due process of law. Therefore, in order to clarify the guidelines of student behavior in the school and establish procedures to be followed, the Plato Academy Code of Student Conduct (contained in this Handbook) has been adopted. If any issue is not addressed by this Handbook, it will be supplemented by the Code of Student Conduct in the District where your child attends. However, this Handbook will supersede the applicable District Code of Conduct if a conflict arises, except if prohibited by law. The Codes shall be mandatory and applied in a manner that is consistent with Plato Academy Schools' philosophy of discipline. It is essential that all students, their parents or guardians, teachers, and administrators understand and abide by the Code of Student Conduct.

PLATO ACADEMY CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

This *Plato Academy Code of Student Conduct* has been revised in order to present it in a style that is easier to understand. For the purpose of this Code, when we talk about a "parent" that term also includes "legal guardian." When we use the term "stakeholder" it means any student, teacher, staff, school leader, or community member with an interest in the success of the school.

Parent Responsibilities:

School staff and parents must work together in order to maximize students' success at school. We are committed to working with and supporting families and we need parents to work with and support us.

As a parent you should:

- A. Get to know the people at your child's school by attending open houses and teacher conferences, participating in school-parent activities like PTO/ Booster meetings, joining committees, and volunteering. Building strong home school relationships helps to ensure that communications between the school and home are positive, respectful, and productive. (See Citizenship Policy)
- B. Ensure your current telephone number, home address, work telephone number, correct email address and emergency contact number remains up-to-date at all times. **Parents can satisfy this responsibility by updating the Emergency Contact Information with the school's paper form and also at the parent portal FOCUS.**
- C. Understand and support the rules in this Handbook by talking with your child about them.
- D. Teach your child to dress neatly and appropriately for school because it is a place to work and learn. Please make sure students are in proper uniform because it promotes a positive, focused learning environment.
- E. Make sure your child arrives at school on time every day.
- F. Parents may not be in a classroom unless a teacher is present, unless permission is granted and the parent is Level 2 cleared.
- G. **Plato Academy Schools' mission is based on parental involvement: the cooperative effort among the school, students, parents, and the community. We strongly recommend parents contribute to the high quality of the school for 30 hours a school year per family, supporting the school and your child's teacher. Parent participation is of critical importance to the success of our schools and directly influences the quality of the learning environment for our students and teachers.**
- H. Ensure your child arrives at and leaves school on time. Do not leave your child at school prior to 8:15AM or after 3:30 PM unless you have made special arrangements with the Before or After school care program. Supervision will not be provided beyond that time. This also includes school activities outside the regular school day such as clubs, dances, carnivals, practices, and games. If a child is not picked up within this time-frame, the student will be considered abandoned, and the school will have to call the appropriate authorities.

- I. Contact the school prior or the day your child is absent and follow up with a note to the teacher.
- J. Be aware, when parents are divorced or separated, both parents have full rights to participate in the child's school activities and receive information in regards to what is happening at school unless there is a court order limiting that access. The office must have a certified copy on file of any such court order.
- K. Provide the school with written permission from custodial parents if you want a stepparent who is not the legal guardian of the child to have access to information about the child or sign forms related to the child. This permission may be given on the Emergency Card.
- L. Be prepared to pay for any damage done to school property by your child. If payment is not made and the amount is substantial, administration determines the final action.
- M. Understand that delay in paying for lost or damaged books, electronic equipment, or other teaching materials may result in your child not having the materials necessary to be successful while replacements are obtained..
- N. Be aware that only people listed on the Emergency Contact form may take a student from school. Identification must be shown at the office.
- O. Adhere to the school's on-site traffic plan for drop-off and pick-up. All families opting to have their child(ren) walk to school, must have completed the "Walker Release Form" every year. Encourage your children, if they are walkers or bicyclists, to follow safety rules and use pedestrian-safety features where available. Please do not text or use your cell phone while in the car line. Please do not smoke on school property. Never leave your car unattended. If you leave your car unattended with children inside we may call the appropriate authorities.
- P. Students dropped off at school functions (including athletic games) without a parent's permission or chaperoned by an adult, will be considered abandoned and the appropriate actions will be taken.
- Q. Early release/sign outs should be done before 2:45 PM with prior written notice.
- R. Parents are responsible for providing a daily lunch either from home or through the school. If the school provides lunch, the student's lunch account must have a positive balance sufficient to pay the full cost of lunch. It is recommended that parents pre-pay by the month for their lunches.

2. Student Responsibilities:

To be successful, the student should:

- Attend school each day
- Arrive on time
- Be prepared with proper materials and supplies
- Make sure important messages are communicated between school and home.
- Complete all assignments to the best of your ability and on time
- Dress appropriately in full uniform
- Be tolerant of and respectful to others
- See teachers about makeup work and complete it in a timely manner

- Contact the teacher then the principal, if needed, regarding conflicts or concerns
- Set goals for success
- Get enough sleep
- Set responsible activity hours outside of school

A student must participate in school crisis plan activities and practices such as Active Assailant, lock-down and fire drill. (Failure to meet these requirements may lead to disciplinary action.)

Dress Code

Plato Academy is a school of choice, which means parents of our students have made a careful and committed decision about where to send their child. Plato Academy holds that a higher standard of dress and grooming creates a safe environment for students which fosters learning and encourages greater respect for individuals, students, and themselves, thereby promoting a positive educational environment. The uniform policy applies to all students in kindergarten through grade 8 and will be carefully enforced. Apparel that disrupts educational activities and processes of the school (i.e. non- uniform apparel) will result in the removal of the student from the regular school environment until acceptable apparel can be secured. Students who report to school out of dress code will have parents called to come to the school to bring the proper uniform. Students and parents are expected to honor these guidelines. Reasonable requests by parents for accommodations related to wearing uniforms based on a student's disability, sincerely held religious belief, or medical condition may be made by the principal. Such requests must be made in writing and submitted to the principal with signed documentation from a doctor for medical issues or a signed affidavit setting forth the religious issues and the requested exemption to the policy. Discretion in all uniform issues resides in the principal whose duty is to ensure the school environment remains disruption free. Plato Academy holds that dress and grooming regulations are a reasonable means of instilling discipline and compelling uniformity of dress and appearance.

Requirements for student dress are listed below:

- All uniform apparel must be purchased by the Plato Academy approved uniform vendor. The approved school vendors are Risse Brothers School Uniforms. The School has provided a link to the vendor's site on the school website at PlatoAcademy.net.
- Students must wear an official Plato Academy shirt which includes the Plato Academy logo.
- All uniform dress shirts (button-down) must be tucked in; Plato Academy polo shirts can be untucked.
- Students may not wear jackets, coats or sweaters that do not meet dress code in the classroom during the school day. Jackets, coats or sweaters must either be Plato Academy uniform jackets or coats, or must be RED with no logos, insignias or other items. Trench coats are not permitted.
- **FRIDAY ATTIRE:** Any shirt or top with Plato Academy insignia (i.e. Spirit shirts, team jerseys, and Plato events) may be worn on Fridays. In addition to the regular uniform

bottoms, students may wear the approved Risse Brothers uniform vendor black mesh PE shorts on Fridays and any bottoms issued or approved by the school for their sport programs.

- All uniform shirts and blouses must cover midriff, back, and sides. Dress shirts must be tucked in the pants. Plato Academy polo shirts may be worn outside the pants. Colored bras, boxers, and t-shirts must not be visible through the uniform. All shirts, tops, and dresses shall have sleeves and cover the shoulders. Tanks or t-shirts under the Plato Academy uniform shirt must match Plato Academy colors (i.e. red, blue, white, gray, etc.).
- Uniform apparel must cover all undergarments.
- Uniform shorts, skirts, and jumpers may be hemmed, but be no shorter than 3" from the knee in length.
- Socks should be school appropriate.
- All jewelry and clothing shall be free of the following: profanity, violent images, wording, or suggestion; sexually suggestive phrases or images; gang-related symbols; alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or advertisements for such products. All jewelry must be safe and shall not be disruptive to the learning environment.
- No body piercing other than earrings. Earrings must hang no lower than one half an inch from the bottom of the ear. Gauge and tunnel earrings are not allowed nor are spike earrings.
- Hair shall not be dyed in any unnatural color or worn in a way that is disruptive to the learning environment.
- Safe and appropriate footwear must be worn. Since all students have P.E. every day we highly recommend that students wear gym shoes (tennis shoes or sneakers) with socks. Inappropriate footwear includes, and is not limited to: roller skates, skate shoes (i.e. Heelys), bedroom slippers, sling-back flip flops, sandals, slip-on shoes, and boots. Safety is a concern and sneakers seem to be the best choice for safety. Clothing must be the appropriate size, with the waist of the garment worn at the student's waist.
- Warm-up pants are not allowed.
- Clothing not properly buttoned, zipped, fastened, or with inappropriate holes or tears shall not be worn.
- Sunglasses may not be worn inside unless a parent provides a doctor's note to the school.
- Hair must be neat and clean with no "unnatural" colors, i.e. fluorescent, bright green, etc. Hairstyles disruptive to the learning environment will not be permitted.
- No hats or bandanas may be worn. Headbands may only be worn if holding hair back and may not be worn across the forehead.
- Sweatbands are not allowed to be visible on school grounds during the regular school hours, unless permitted for physical education class.
- Hats or other head coverings may be worn during outside P.E. activities, but may not be worn during any portion of the regular school day without the express permission of the Principal.

Cold Weather Uniform Guidelines:

- A solid white, blue, or red undershirt (such as a turtleneck) may be worn under the school polo or school shirt.
- Long-sleeve school uniform polo is available for purchase from Risse Brothers.
- Students may not wear jackets, coats, or sweaters that do not meet dress code in the classroom during the school day. Jackets, coats or sweaters must either be Plato uniform jackets, coats, or sweaters or must be RED with no logos, insignias or other items. Non-school jackets that do meet this criteria must be removed in the classroom.
- Girls may wear solid white, red, black, or navy tights or leggings under their uniform shorts or skorts.

First offense – Mandatory conference with teacher and administration

Second offense – Written notification/warning sent home. Document must be signed and returned as a gesture of acknowledgement

Subsequent offense – Student will be sent to the office and parents will be called. Student will not be permitted into class until he/she is in proper uniform. Student may be provided a clean and appropriately sized uniform compliant outfit, from lost and found, at principal's discretion.

Student Attendance & Homework/Classwork Guidelines

Regular attendance and punctuality are very important habits that all students need to acquire. Attendance is important to learning because when a student is absent, they miss the strategies necessary to master skills being taught in class that are needed to be successful. Students who miss ten (10) or more days due for any reason, excused and unexcused, are considered chronically absent and their grade will be impacted by a letter grade. Chronic absence is an indication that a student is academically at risk due to missing too much school as early as Kindergarten. Chronic absenteeism is a red alert that students are headed for academic trouble and eventually for dropping out of high school. Students with fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences are considered truant. *Source: Nauer, K. et al, Strengthening Schools by Strengthening Families, Center for New York City Affairs New School, Oct 2008.* Therefore, based on research and best practices, Plato Academy puts great emphasis on regular attendance and arriving at school on time.

Absences Generally:

1. When a student is absent for three (3) consecutive days the homeroom teacher will call home.
2. Students who have been absent five (5) days or more in a grading period may be required to bring a certificate of illness from a licensed doctor to the school FOR ABSENCES TO BE EXCUSED.
3. If a student is absent from school because of illness or if the absence is unexcused, attendance at after school activities (such as sports, dances, or clubs) may not be permitted.

4. If a child has a fever, based on the current recommendation of the CDC, the student MUST be fever free for 24 hours without the assistance of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
5. Students accumulating more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences per school year are considered truant and the truancy may impact the student's enrollment preference for the following school year and the matter will be referred to the SBLT (Student Based Leadership Team) and an action plan will be developed. The SBLT team will consult with the family to identify school and community supports needed to ensure student attendance at school. If attendance is not improved, recommended actions may also include recommendation to consider neighborhood school, referral to the State Department of Children and Families, referral to truancy court, retention due to credit non-completion.

Excused Absences: Excused absences include those for the following reasons with sufficient written documentation:

Student is ill or injured.

Major illness in the immediate family (this means parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents or others living in the home or who are close relatives).

Death in the immediate family of the student.

Religious holiday of the student's faith. This requires a parent's note before the absence.

A major disaster as determined by the administration.

Any absences, including those for field trips or other parental requests as judged appropriate by the Principal, provided that the request is submitted to the principal forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the absence. A principal may waive the requirement for advance notice if extenuating circumstances exist.

On the 5th day of excused or unexcused absence, official documentation of excused absences may be required to designate them excused. For example, a doctor's note will be required to continue to excuse the absence due to illness.

Unexcused Absences:

Any absence that does not meet one of the criteria above is an unexcused absence. The following are examples of unexcused absences (this list is not exhaustive):

1. Out-of-school suspension
2. Family vacations
3. Students without complete, compliant Certificates of Immunization.
4. Outside of school appointments

Tardies – Late to School and Early Pick Up

Tardy students not only distract from their own learning, but from the learning of other students.

Late to School: It is imperative that all students are in the classroom and prepared to begin learning at 8:40 AM. Students not in their classrooms by 8:40 will be considered tardy.

Early pickup: Students picked up prior to 3:10 dismissal will be considered tardy. If a child must be picked up early, Plato Academy requires that it be done by 2:45 pm.

Tardies will be considered unexcused for the following reasons: over-sleeping, too tired, heavy traffic, or couldn't get motivated. Early pick up will be counted as a tardy if there is not a legitimate reason for leaving school early, such as a doctor or dentist appointment.

Tardy Documentation:

- A tardy slip will be issued after 8:40 a.m..
- A tardy slip may also be issued for an unexcused early pickup
- A tardy student may be required to document relevant information in a classroom sign in/sign out sheet in addition to the tardy slip.

Tardy Consequences:

- Every three (3) unexcused tardies or unexcused early pick-ups will result in the student receiving one unexcused absence.
- Numerous unexcused tardies may result in the following:
 - Parent or guardian contacted by the school
 - Detention for the student with parental notification
 - Parent or guardian contact by other authorities.

Make-Up Work

After an absence, a student must arrange with the teacher for any make-up work. Credit for makeup work may only be given for excused absences. All other work will receive a NG (No Grade). The number of days allowed to make up the work shall be the same as the number of school days the student was absent. If a teacher assigns an assignment or long-term project prior to the absence, the project, assignment, or test shall be completed expeditiously upon returning.

Homework/Classwork Guidelines

Plato Academy recognizes the importance of homework to reinforce content already taught in the classroom, to help students develop independent work and study habits, to build self-discipline, to instill a sense of responsibility, to identify any area of difficulty for the student, and to involve parents/guardians in the learning process. We also believe in the importance of free time for children. Homework **may not** be assigned over a weekend or a holiday and be due on the first day coming back from such weekend or holiday unless a parent requests extra work for their child or a teacher and parent determine a child needs additional practice and the amount of homework is reasonable. This does not apply for middle school courses and/or high school courses.

Homework is usually assigned Monday through Thursday. Students who do not have homework assignments completed and turned in by the assigned date may earn a lower grade or may receive after school homework detention with parent notification. Students with incomplete homework/classwork may be assigned homework during the weekends or holidays if the work cannot be completed during the school day.

Students with excused absences will have the same number of days as they were absent after returning to school to turn in missing assignments, including classwork/homework. Students with unexcused absences will be unable to make up missing home or classwork.

Participation in Physical Education

Participation – Every student is required to participate in P.E. class—if scheduled—daily during school. If a student is not able to participate due to an illness or injury, a note from a parent is required to be excused. If the student is not able to be in P.E. for more than three days, a doctor's note will need to be obtained in order for the days to be excused. On the note, we request the reason why the student will not be participating, what limitations they have, and how long they will not be allowed to participate in certain activities. Dr. notes should be addressed to the student's teacher, and a copy needs to be given to the P.E. teacher.

If a student suddenly becomes ill or injured and requests to sit out of P.E., a form will be filled out by the student and sent home explaining why he or she sat out and describe what they were learning in class that day. This form will need to be signed by the parent and returned to the P.E. teacher the following class. If the inactive form is not returned the following day, the student will receive an unexcused absence from P.E. If the student acquires three or more unexcused absences in one grading period, their grade for participation will be affected.

Behavior – Every student is required to display good behavior including following good sportsmanship:

- Respects the teacherRespects all classmates
- Follows directions
- Listens
- Good attitude
- Honesty
- Always tries to do their best
- Has fun

If a student breaks the rules, displays inappropriate behavior, disrupts the class, chooses not to participate, intentionally harms others verbally or physically, then the student will receive disciplinary action. Depending on the behavior issue, a student could have sports privileges, recess, P.E., or extracurricular activities limited or taken away for a period of time.

- **Effort** – All students are expected to do their best in P.E. every day, even if they do not like the activity or sport. If the student chooses to display less than 85% effort, the parent/guardian will be contacted due to the effect it may have on the student's P.E. grade.
- **Dress Code** – All students are required to wear comfortable shoes so that they will be able to run and perform physical activities, without limitations or fear of getting hurt. They are required to wear the school uniform at all times. Girls who wear

dresses must wear shorts under their jumpers. If a student is not in proper attire for P.E. class, the student will have to sit out of P.E. class and an inactive form will be filled out and sent home for the parent to sign.

- **Grades** – All students will be graded on behavior, effort, and participation. If there is any concern with a student in any of these areas, the parents will be contacted via email or a phone call to discuss the concern before grades are given. Parents have access to their students' grades by logging in on Portal.
- **Injury** – If a student gets injured at school, the coach will write an incident report and send the student to the office. The office will then notify the parent or guardian to determine appropriate action.

Locker Use Procedures

Lockers—if applicable—are made available for students as a privilege—not a right—to use in storing school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school. Lockers are not to be used to store items that cause, or can reasonably be foreseen to cause, an interference with school purposes or educational functions. Nor should lockers be used in any way forbidden by state law or school rules. A student who uses a locker that is the property of the school is presumed to have no expectation of privacy in that locker or the locker's contents. The following rules and regulations shall be enforced throughout the school year:

- **Locks**—Locks will be permitted at the discretion of the Principal. The school may retain access to student lockers by keeping a master list of combinations or retaining an extra key. Students may not use their own locks to prevent access to lockers by school officials. Any unauthorized locks may be removed without notice and destroyed. Students may not trade lockers or locks with other students. Failure to follow such requests will result in a student forfeiting his or her locker privileges for, perhaps, an entire school year.
- **Locker Use**—Lockers are to be used to store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school. No material that violates the Student Code of Conduct is allowed in the locker. Students will be expected to keep their lockers in a clean and orderly manner. Failure to follow such a request will result in a student forfeiting his or her privilege in accessing a school locker for a designated amount of time up to the entire school year.
- **Locker Inspection**—The school retains the right to inspect lockers to ensure they are being maintained in accordance with these rules, or upon a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains items that may interfere with school purposes.
- **Law Enforcement Officials**—Administration may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to assist the school administrators in inspecting lockers or their contents for purposes of enforcing school policies only if such assistance is required.

Discipline

Misconduct that may result in discipline

In General

Students are expected to behave well at school and school-sponsored activities. Students may be disciplined if they do anything at school or at a school function (or attempt to do anything) that violates a school rule or may:

- Hurt, harass or threaten others
- Damage property
- Disrupt class or school
- Violate a criminal law
- Show disrespect of any kind towards another person: teacher, parent, staff, volunteer, visitor, or student

Specific Acts

Listed below are some acts that fall within the above five types of misconduct. These acts are not the only acts that may result in discipline, including suspension, dismissal, or reassignment, according to the Plato Academy Code of Student Conduct and the applicable District Code of Student Conduct.

Some, but not all, of the acts that may result in discipline are:

- Cheating (teacher shall also record a “zero” for each act of cheating), including plagiarism
- Falsifying or altering records (i.e. forging a signature)
- Improper use of computers or electronic devices
- Threatening to hurt someone
- Hitting someone
- Using physical force against someone
- Stealing
- Fighting
- Extortion
- Blackmail
- Misconduct
- Arson
- Vandalism
- Interference with school personnel
- Interference with the movement of another student
- Cyberbullying/Bullying
- Gambling
- Trespassing
- Defiance
- Verbal abuse of another

- Profanity
- Failure to give correct name
- Participation in disruptive demonstration
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Sexual activity at school or at a school function Sexual or other harassment
- Participating in, watching, recording or electronically transmitting any inappropriate sexual content, e.g. sexting
- Making a false alarm (this includes pulling a fire alarm)
- Possession of common objects that could hurt someone (such as self-defense chemical spray, nail files, silverware, screwdriver, etc.)
- Possession of toy or replica gun or knife
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Possession of tobacco or alcohol
- Possession of illegal narcotics
- Possession of over-the-counter medications (if prescribed, these must be delivered to the front office with a doctor's note)
- Possession of prescription medications (if prescribed, these must be delivered to the front office with a doctor's note)
- Possession of hazardous material
- The unauthorized use of electronic items such as, but not limited to, the following;
 - Cell phones (including the camera that may be part of the phone)
 - Tape player/recorder
 - Radio
 - Camera
 - Camcorder
 - Television
 - MP3 player or any upgraded one
 - Violation of a school rule
- Other serious misconduct
- An incident involving illegal substance at school or at a school event
- Involvement in any threat of violence.
- Possession of a gun (real, toy, pellet, or BB) at school, or at a school function
- Possession of any object brought to school that could be used against others with the intent to do harm even if for self-defense
- Possession of any type or style of knife
- A violent act resulting in an injury
- Possession of brass knuckles at school or at a school function

CONSEQUENCES

Plato Academy believes that all students are entitled to an optimum learning environment free of disruption. In order for this to transpire Plato Academy implements a schoolwide discipline policy that provides consistency to all students because the rules and consequences will be applied fairly throughout the school.

The principal has the discretion to provide consequences that promote a safe, secure, and nurturing learning environment considering the totality of the circumstances for all students. For serious or repeated infractions the principal may suspend the student out of school for up to ten (10) days at a time. Serious infractions include but are not limited to: causing substantial harm to self or others, destruction of property, use of profanity or vulgar language, bullying and taunting, causing significant disruption to the learning environment. Consequences will increase in severity in accordance with frequency and severity of harm and/or disruption.

Searches and Seizures

A student's purse, backpack, and other personal possessions can be searched if there is a reasonable belief or suspicion that any of them contain drugs, weapons, contraband, or other items not permitted on campus; as well as, reasonable suspicion that the backpack or purse may contain property of the school or another student. These are safety precautions designed to give Plato Academy students a safe and healthy school in which to learn.

Cheating/malpractice

Cheating/malpractice definition: Behaviors that result in or may result in a student gaining an unfair advantage over another student and includes the following:

- Plagiarism: the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student's own. Students who have questions regarding whether or not something constitutes plagiarism have a responsibility to consult with the teacher prior to submitting the work/assignment.
- Collusion: the support of malpractice by another student, as allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for another.
- Duplication of work: the presentation of the same work for different assignments
- Other: includes but is not limited to:
 - Engaging in misconduct during an exam, test, quiz or other assessment situation
 - Falsifying any records, documentation
 - Copying, paraphrasing, reusing or submitting another's work without acknowledging the source, including information from the Internet
 - Identical answers on passages on tests, reports or papers

CONSEQUENCES

First Offense: Grade of zero (0) on assignment

Second Offense: Grade of zero (0) and referral to office with possible suspension

Cyberbullying/Bullying Policy

Plato Academy Charter schools are committed to the prevention of any cyberbullying/bullying behaviors and will take subsequent swift action in response to any reported cyberbullying/bullying or harassment incidents in accordance with Florida Statute 1006.147. Providing a quality education in an environment of safety is a core value to the administration and teachers at Plato Academy as referenced in our Mission Statement. Students shall adhere to the Code of Student Conduct policies in this Handbook. Bullying and/or

Cyberbullying, as defined below, is prohibited during school, via school equipment, at school-sponsored events, or by any electronic act that results in the disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment, whether or not the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment.

“Bullying” includes cyberbullying and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual’s school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to: 1) Teasing, 2) Social Exclusion, 3) Threat, 4) Intimidation, 5) Stalking, 6) Physical violence, 7) Theft, 8) Sexual, religious, or racial harassment, 9) Public or private humiliation, 10) Destruction of property.

“Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying and **harassment** also encompasses:

1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
2. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by: a) Incitement or coercion, b)

Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system, or c) Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

“Cyberstalking” as defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Reporting an act of bullying/cyberbullying, or harassment: Any student, staff, volunteer, or parent/legal guardian who witnesses bullying, or has reliable information that a student has been the victim of cyberbullying/bullying, as defined above, shall report the incident to the principal or designated representative immediately either in person, via email, or anonymously. Once the report has been received, the principal or designated representative will begin an investigation.

Pinellas County Students and parents can report anonymously to the following site:

<https://www.saysomething.net>

Pasco County Students and parents can report anonymously to the following site:

<https://ryu.pasco.k12.fl.us/do-mform/view.php?id=31389>

Hillsborough County Students and parents can report anonymously on the school’s website at the designated prompt or on the following site:

[Report an Incident of Bullying or Harassment for Hillsborough Schools](#)

Consequences: Students who engage in bullying during school, on school property, during and/or while in route to or from any school function in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event, or by an electronic act that results in the disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion, according to Plato Academy or the applicable District Codes of Student Conduct, from the school. Students accused of bullying or harassment may be subject to being reported to the county/state bullying/harassment database.

Prevention: Plato Academy shall work to sustain a healthy, positive, and safe learning environment for all students. This requires the efforts of everyone in the school environment – principal, teachers, staff, parents/legal guardians, and students.

Grievance Policy

All Plato Academy Charter School complaints will be addressed in a timely and consistent fashion. Disagreements should be solved whenever possible among the people most closely involved while preserving positive relationships. Therefore, when parents have complaints or disagreements with any parties at Plato Academy Charter School, they should observe the following guidelines:

1. If the complaint involves a situation in the classroom, parents should seek to resolve the issue with the **Classroom Teacher** in a manner that is not disruptive to the learning environment via email or a scheduled meeting. Please be sure to have all the facts.
2. If a resolution with the classroom faculty is not possible, or if the complaint is with a school-wide policy or procedure, the parent should seek to resolve the issue with the **Assistant Principal** or **Principal** via email or a scheduled meeting.
3. If resolution is not possible with any of the school faculty listed above, parents may contact the school representative to report their grievance.
4. If the grievance cannot be resolved with the school representative, parents may then contact the Chief Academic Officer.
5. If, after the above steps, the issue is still not resolved the parents may then contact the Superintendent.
6. If the matter is still unresolved after Step #5, parents may contact the **Plato Academy Chairman of the Board of Directors** via the email address located on the Plato Academy website.

NOTE: As the goal is to achieve positive resolution as promptly as possible, parents are encouraged to strive to follow the above sequence with the expectation that the matter will be resolved as early in the process as possible, and to inform the school official if they consider the matter to remain unresolved and would proceed further.

This Grievance Policy is not designed to supersede or supplant parent rights under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as amended, 1996, or section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Citizenship Policy

Plato Academy provides its students with a safe, supporting, challenging, and enthusiastic learning environment. Creating such an environment is the result of good citizenship. To help guarantee this environment exists, Plato Academy students are required to meet behavior expectations outlined above in this handbook. Adults are expected to respect the following Citizenship policies:

- As citizens within an academic community focused on providing students with a learning environment that is enthusiastic, supporting, challenging, and safe, Plato Academy employees, parents, and community members will demonstrate the concept of "Citizenship" in their dealings with all Plato Academy Stakeholders, including students, parents, school employees, and visitors.
- Physical or verbal acts that are hostile, threatening, or harassing in any way will not be tolerated. Profanity and insults are not constructive and unacceptable
- Whether it is face-to-face or over the phone, through texts, blog posts, or emails, good Citizenship requires an attitude that is productive and strives for harmony.
- Destructive criticism is unacceptable.

- Employees and parents should report any behavior that falls below this standard of Citizenship using the grievance procedures outlined above. Our students deserve good role models.

Patriotic Program - The Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthems:

At Plato Academy every morning the Pledge of Allegiance is recited and American and Greek National Anthems are sung. Each student will give the pledge by standing with the right hand over the heart. According to Florida Statute, a student has the right not to participate in reciting the pledge. Upon written request by his or her parent, the student will be excused from reciting the pledge, including standing and placing the right hand over the heart. When the pledge is given, unexcused students must show full respect to the flag by standing at attention, males removing the headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes. When the National Anthems are sung, students and all civilians shall stand at attention, men removing the headdress, except when such headdress is worn for religious purposes.

Greek Culture

As part of Plato Academy's Greek Culture program, the Greek national anthem is sung every day along with the U.S. National Anthem and U.S. Pledge of Allegiance recitation. The Greek national anthem, "Hymn to Liberty" praises those who fought in the Greek War of Independence.

Participation

Students are encouraged to participate, however, there is no requirement for any student to sing the anthem(s).

Classroom Transfer

In accordance with F.W 1012.42 a parent whose student is assigned an out-of-field teacher may request that his or her child be transferred to an in-field classroom teacher within the school and grade in which the student is currently enrolled when there is more than one classroom per grade and if an in-field teacher for that course or grade level is employed by the school and the transfer does not violate maximum class size pursuant to s. [1003.03](#). Please contact the school Principal if you would like more information regarding a transfer on this basis.

PLATO ACADEMY ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Commitment to Character

Plato Academy has adopted a program that creates a safe learning environment for all students with the focus on the core traits of responsibility, honesty, respect, and self-motivation. Each month the school will focus on one specific trait that will mold our students in becoming better citizens of the world as they grow and become our future leaders.

Communications

Plato Academy is constantly improving its digital capabilities, including communications with parents via its website. Increasingly, communications between home and school will occur on the school's website or via email.

Parental Responsibility: It is a parent's responsibility to check the online grade book at least once every two weeks and regularly check the school website and email for announcements from the school or from teachers. Parents must update any changes to their contact information with the school. Parents are expected to regularly use the school-specified online grading system to monitor their child's progress.

Communication between Home and School: All students shall be directed to deliver all school communications to his or her parent. The parent should expect to assist their student in forming the good habit of delivering all papers and communications home and back to school on time as directed by the teacher. Students are accountable for delivering and returning all communications on the day they are given to them. New communication technologies will also be employed throughout the school year to provide communications between home and school.

Students leaving campus with someone other than a parent: If a parent has made arrangements for their child to go home with another student, a parent must add that other student's parent to the list of acceptable people to pick up their child on the emergency contact form on the school's website. If that system is down or inaccessible a written note is required by the parent informing appropriate Plato Academy staff upon arrival at school. We are responsible for the safety of your child and we must know that arrangements students make with each other have been approved by the parents. A student will not be released to another parent unless we have a note stating specifically who will pick up your child and on what day. Phone calls between students will not be permitted, only written notes from the parent.

The items below require a parent signature. Plato Academy Charter School communicates with parents in the following ways and requires parents to note their awareness with a signature:

1. Notes sent home from teachers or staff
2. Injury or Accident Report forms
3. Parent signatures on student's work when applicable
4. Behavior forms that have been sent home
5. Report Cards and Progress Reports
6. Parent conferences including but not limited to phone, or in person

School Supplies

Plato Academy teachers have put together a supply list for each grade level and all students will need to have the supplies on the first day of school. Supply lists are posted on Plato Academy school specific websites.

Parent communications will be via email, teacher webpages, and class newsletters. For students who have been issued an electronic device, it will serve as an agenda. The purpose of the communication is to give students, parents, and teachers a way of exchanging important information. It allows all parties to write messages as needed concerning the education of the students.

Lunch Procedures

Students at Plato Academy have the option to pack their own lunch or they may purchase a hot lunch. A lunch calendar and the lunch cost will be provided from your school and will be posted online at the Plato Academy school specific websites. Breakfast may be provided at some schools; check directly with your school. Payment procedures for school lunch are posted on the website under the website www.myschoolbucks.com. If your student is running late and they require a hot lunch, please call in to the school by 9:00 AM For safety reasons, do not pack glass containers or food items needing microwaving or heating.

For parents with limited financial means, free and reduced lunch options are available to families who qualify.

Parents are welcome to have lunch with their student and may bring an outside lunch for their child only (to be eaten during their designated lunch time). Parents may not bring food for other students in the school unless we have a written note approving this from the other student's parent.

If a student should happen to forget to order a lunch or if they forgot their lunch box, they will be asked to call home and parents will be responsible to bring them a lunch. In order for students to do their best work, we need to feed the brain. Therefore, any student who has not been provided a home lunch by lunchtime will receive a modest meal and parents will be billed. If the lunch is forgotten more than two times, Plato Academy may conduct an investigation of child neglect and, if deemed appropriate, will contact Children's Services.

School Parties and Birthday Celebrations

Classroom teachers arrange parties with the help of classroom parents. Any food brought in by parents must be commercially prepared. Homemade items cannot be served to children. Celebrations are encouraged to support academic success.

Plato Academy is happy to celebrate a child's birthday at school if parents wish to send in a special treat sufficient to share with all children in their child's class. Parents should notify the teacher to make arrangements on timing. All foods must be commercially prepared. Teachers should be keenly aware of and strive to prevent any possible known student allergic interactions to food. Birthday party invitations cannot be distributed on school grounds unless there is an invitation for every student in the class.

Field Trips

Educational field trips are an important part of the student's school year. Each trip is an outgrowth of the instructional program designed to support and enrich the curriculum. Permission forms, with information about locations, cost, etc. are sent home for parents to read and sign prior to any field trip. Money will not be refunded after the field trip. Students who do not have a signed permission slip in on the designated deadline will not be permitted to attend the field trip. Due dates are very important and permission slips cannot be turned in late. Students on disciplinary probation or students who have violated fundamental discipline guidelines may lose the privilege to attend field trips. Dress for field trips will always be school dress uniform--unless stated otherwise by teachers and approved by administration.

The primary mode of transportation for field trips will be by bus. In the event that bus transportation is not available, all field trip drivers and chaperones must have completed and passed the required school background screening form and pass required background checks. Any vehicle used to transport students under this policy shall be: 1) currently registered in the State of Florida, 2) insured for personal injury protection and property damage liability in at least the minimum amounts required by law, and 3) in good working order. All field trip drivers must have and provide a copy of a valid driver's license and insurance card. Prohibited vehicles for student transportation include convertibles and SUVs with a wheelbase of 10" or less (which per Federal Law will have a rollover warning label displayed). Students are required to wear seat belts at all times. Instructors will assign students to each car and students may not switch cars. Please do not make any stops to or from a trip.

If you volunteer to chaperone on a trip, please stay with the group of children assigned to you and do not leave until the designated time without approval. Students will not be dismissed to parents at the field trip venue unless approval is obtained. Due to liability issues and the supervisory responsibilities of all chaperones, younger and older siblings cannot be brought on class field trips. Smoking or use of other tobacco products, including vaping, is not allowed on field trips or on school campus by adults. Chaperones must adhere to all rules and guidelines of the field trip venues. Field trips are for registered Plato students only.

Student Drop Off /Pick-up Procedures

Parents/Guardians are expected to provide transportation for their children back and forth from school. Students should NOT arrive before 8:15 am. for school if they are not registered in the before care program. Plato Academy believes all students have a right to a safe environment and we strive to ensure that by not allowing any student to be unattended on campus. Students who arrive on campus before 8:15 am, will not have teacher supervision unless they are in Before Care. When students arrive on campus they need to go to their assigned area and quietly wait for the teacher to let them in their room. Due to new safety measures parents will not be allowed in the school buildings for arrival or pick up, unless an appointment has been made in advance. Please refer to your school's specific AM and PM drop Off/pickup carline schedule.

After 3:30 PM all remaining students will be assigned to a specific spot. Plato Academy may be forced to consider a child as "Abandoned" when the parent responsible for the child's

welfare rejects parental obligations, leaving the child at school after the school day, and has not told the child or the school that the parent will be late. In such cases, Plato Academy may call the appropriate officials.

School Closing in an Emergency

Plato Academy will do all that it can to protect the health and safety of its students. Residents in Florida know the dangers of inclement weather especially during the hurricane season. While very infrequent, there may be times when our school may have to close to protect our students and be reopened as emergency shelters for the community. Local television and radio media inform the public when school closings occur. In emergency situations, Plato Academy will close when the County where the school is located issues a school closure.

In emergency situations where schools are closed, Plato Academy will send out emails to families, post current information on its website, and make phone calls to families notifying them of the closure.

The following media outlets, among others, will also provide up-to-date information to the public in the event a school closing occurs or if the student day must be shortened due to emergency conditions:

WFLA - Channel 8

Bay News - Channel 9

WTSP - Channel 10

WTVT - Channel 13

WFTS - Channel 28

WUSF 89.7 radio

Cell Phones, Electronics and Toy Policy (“Private Electronic Devices”)

Private electronic devices may not be used during school hours, including transitions between classes and in extended care. Private electronic devices may only be used upon departure from school premises. Private Electronic devices need to be turned off (not set on vibrate) during school hours and must be kept out of view

- Private electronic devices may not be used during school hours, and including transitions between classes. Private electronic devices may only be used upon departure from school premises. Private Electronic devices need to be turned off (not set on vibrate) during school hours and must be kept out of view.
- Private Electronic Devices blatantly used during school hours or that are audible, although out of view, will be confiscated and sent to administration with disciplinary consequences.
- All contact between parents and students must be made through the administrative office for proper documentation of such contact. Electronic Devices that violate this policy will be confiscated and kept in the front office until a parent arrives to retrieve it directly from administration. Violating this policy may result in suspension because of the level of disruption it creates to the learning environment.

Fidget Spinners, cubes, and similar items are permissible for those students with official accommodations for use. For students without official accommodations, they may be used in the classroom at the teacher's discretion and should not be used in common areas such as, but not limited to, hallway, PE, cafeteria, and courtyard, and if found the student will be asked to put the item away. A second offense will result in confiscation of the toy and a parent will be required to obtain it from the front office.

Report Cards - Progress Reports - Grading

Report Cards are completed by the teacher four times per year for grades K-8 and are sent to the parent or guardian who must sign the envelope and return it to school, unless otherwise noted by the School. Progress Reports will be issued to students in need of additional support between grading periods. Parents may receive a Progress Report and be requested to return the form signed.

Explanation of Codes

The set of codes listed below is used in:

- Grades 1 & 2 – all areas
- Art, Music, Greek, and Physical Education – all areas
- Grades 3-5 - work habits and conduct
- Grades 6-8 - all areas (as noted with an asterisk (*) below)

E – Excellent performance in classroom work or behavior. Daily performance meets or exceeds Plato Academy grade level expectations.

V – Very good performance in classroom work or behavior. Daily performance meets or exceeds Plato Academy grade level expectations. (V - Not applicable for Pasco County nor for middle school grades)

S – Satisfactory performance in classroom work or behavior. Daily performance may be at or somewhat below Plato Academy grade level expectations.

N – Needs Improvement in classroom work or behavior. Daily performance is below Plato Academy grade level expectations.

U – Unsatisfactory in classroom work or behavior. Daily performance is markedly below Plato Academy grade level expectations.

The set of codes listed below is used in:

- Grades 3-5 - grades in Core Courses: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Greek Language, and Health
- Grades 6-8 - grades in Core Courses: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, and Health, and Elective courses, including but not limited to Greek Language

A – (90-100%) Student's average grade during the marking period falls within the range of 90-100% and daily work consistently meets high quality standards

- B – (80-89%) Student’s average grade during the marking period falls within the range of 80-89% and daily work consistently meets acceptable standards
- C – (70-79%) Student’s average grade during the marking period falls within the range of 70-79% and daily work consistently meets acceptable standards
- D – (60-69%) – Student’s average grade during the marking period falls within the range of 60-69% and daily work is inconsistent in meeting acceptable standards
- F – (0-59%) Student’s average grade during the marking period falls within the range of 0-59% and daily work consistently does not meet acceptable standards.

K-5 students participate on a regular basis in art, music, and physical education classes and students in grades 6-8 participate on a regular basis in physical education. In PE, students participate in activities and learn about subjects relating to the following standards: physical education literacy, responsible physical activity, and the promotion of physically active lifestyles. In Art and Music classes students participate in activities and learn about subjects relating to the following standards: skills and techniques, creation and communication, cultural and historical connections, aesthetic and critical analysis and applications to life. Each student receives grades based on student expectations. Expectations are different for each grade level. More specific information on the expectations for your child's grade level are shared at Open House.

Student Honors Criteria

Principal’s List – Students in grades 3-8 who receive all A or E grades in the academic subjects and who achieve all E grades for conduct, work habits, physical education, art, and music shall have their name entered on the Principal’s List

Honor Roll – Students in grades 3-8 who receive no grade lower than “B” or “V” (or “S” in Pasco County) or for middle schoolers “S” in the academic subjects and who achieve all E grades for middle school for conduct, work habits, physical education, art, and music shall have their names entered on the honor roll.

Each school has the discretion to choose to award students based on various academic and character achievements, including but not limited to 8th grade valedictorian. Such policies will be determined by administration and their designees at each individual campus.

Promotion and Retention Guidelines

Our teachers will challenge each student with motivating, engaging instruction in a safe learning environment. The curriculum is based on the content and performance strategies that will nurture high academic standards along with the love of learning. Our philosophy is to encourage critical thinking skills that will prepare our students to become productive, contributing citizens in our multicultural society. In reality, we know that students are individuals and they learn at different levels.

In order for a student to be promoted, the teacher and administration will look at these criteria:

- Class grades

- Report card grades
- Common assessments
- Teacher recommendation and observations
- Standardized Assessments/Student portfolio
- Parent's willingness to help or get help for student
- Student's maturity and ability to succeed at the next level
- Students attendance history

In order to uphold our mission, no student will be promoted unless they are academically ready and have the maturity to succeed in the next grade.

Academics and Conduct Requirement for Sports Eligibility

It is the philosophy at Plato Academy that all students will work to their fullest potential. We are educating the whole student, not just academically. So behavior and manners are as important as grades. We also understand that all students achieve at different levels and as long as a student is *doing their best* and working to their potential they will be allowed to participate. We understand that all students are not "A" students and we will not hinder students from enjoying extra activities when they are behaving well and doing their best academically.

All competitive and recreational sports during and after school are considered a privilege to all students. To be a member of a team or sport, students must maintain good behavior in ALL classes, during school activities, and on field trips. If any student is sent to the office with a referral, the student may not be able to participate in the next team practice or game.

If a teacher is concerned about a student's work, grades, or behavior, a note will be given to the coach or club teacher and a meeting will be held to discuss the need for the student to receive tutoring during sport or club time in order to help the child improve his or her grades. The Principal has the discretion to permit or prohibit students from participating in sports based upon her consideration of the whole child: academics, citizenship, and effort.

If a student is terminated from a team or club, they can request one meeting for a review of the decision. The meeting will take place by appointment only and will include an academic teacher, the student, the parent, the coach or club teacher, and the Principal. The student must write a letter of apology, stating the mistake they made, what they learned from it, and why they should be allowed to rejoin the club or team. A unanimous decision by all members of the committee will be required before the student can be reinstated into the sport or club.

Enrichment Activities and Extended Care

The Enrichment Activities and Extended Care programs are separate from Plato Academy's public charter school program and information will be provided to parents annually regarding these voluntary programs.

School Visitor Policy

Plato Academy welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents, other adult residents of the community, interested educators, and representatives of the news media. These visits

must be confirmed and approved in advance in order to preserve the ongoing educational programs at each school and to prevent any disruptive intrusions at the school and on the campus. In order for the educational program to continue undisturbed when visitors are present and to prevent the intrusion of disruptive persons into the schools or into the student's learning environment, it is necessary to institute procedures regarding visitors.

All visitors must sign in at the main administration building of the school and present a photo I.D. before being granted access. Each guest will be required to sign in, indicate the purpose of the visit, wear a name badge, and sign out when they are leaving school grounds. The principal or his/her designee has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person to a school or a student's learning environment or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such person would disrupt the orderly and efficient operation of the school. If such an individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, the principal or his/her designee is authorized to issue a trespass warning and/or and thereafter request from the local law enforcement agency whatever assistance is required to remove the individual.

Plato Academy is in full compliance with the Jessica Lunsford Act, which focuses on increasing the security measures used to protect children and staff through enhanced background checks and improved screening and supervision of vendors working within or near schools.

Visitors volunteering are representatives of Plato Academy Schools and need to present a positive image to the public. Attire should be comfortable and appropriate for the assigned task(s).

Textbooks

Textbooks are one of a variety of instructional materials used at Plato Academy. Novels, teacher- and supervisor-developed packets, experimental kits, models, nonfiction school books, reference books, periodicals, on-line services, newspapers, magazines, subject-based audio/video recordings, software, maps, and globes are examples of other instructional materials used to successfully meet the needs of our students. All textbooks and school books are loaned to students free of charge. However, students are responsible for lost or damaged books and will be expected to pay for them.

Technology and Equipment Use Policy

Plato Academy believes that technology is necessary for our students to succeed in the 21st Century. All students will have access to an electronic device or laptop for their daily use in class. The use of the Plato Academy's technology and Internet resources is a privilege, not a right. The privilege of using the technology resources provided by Plato Academy is not transferable or extendible by students to any people or groups and terminates when a student is no longer enrolled in Plato Academy. Plato Academy technology devices are to be used with one primary goal in mind: **maximize student learning**. The following is the school's Technology and Equipment Use Policy to which all students and families must abide.

Internet Policy

Plato Academy provides students with access to the Internet during school hours. Access to the Internet is provided for the purpose of educational research and learning. School administration will have final judgment on what sites can be accessed on school property.

General Responsibilities and Risks:

Plato Academy's electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use. Student users may access technology for only educational purposes. The actions of student users accessing networks through the Plato Academy reflect on Plato Academy; therefore, student users must conduct themselves accordingly by exercising good judgment and complying with this policy and any accompanying administrative regulations and guidelines. Students are responsible for their behavior and communications using Plato Academy's computers and networks. Students should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

Regrettably along with valuable content online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, filtering software/hardware is used at all Plato Academy schools to limit users' Internet access to materials that are obscene, pornographic, harmful to children, or otherwise inappropriate, or disruptive to the educational process, notwithstanding that such software/hardware may in certain cases block access to other materials as well. At the same time, Plato Academy cannot guarantee that filtering software/hardware will in all instances successfully block access to materials deemed harmful, indecent, offensive, pornographic, or otherwise inappropriate. The use of filtering software/hardware does not negate or otherwise affect the obligations of users to abide by the terms of this policy and to refrain from accessing such inappropriate materials. No technology is guaranteed to be error-free or totally dependable, nor is it safe when used irresponsibly. Among other matters, the Plato Academy is not liable or responsible for:

- Any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical, or other difficulties;
- The accuracy or suitability of any information that is retrieved through technology;
- Breaches of confidentiality;
- Defamatory material; or
- The consequences that may come from failure to follow Plato Academy's policy and procedures governing the use of technology.

Student Internet Usage Responsibilities:

When accessing the Internet with Plato Academy equipment students and parents should know:

- Internet access should be for educational purposes while using Plato Academy equipment.

- Students are expected to respect that the web filter is a safety precaution, and should not try to circumvent it when browsing the Web. If a site is blocked and a user believes it shouldn't be, the user should alert a member of school faculty or administration.
- All activity over the school network or using Plato Academy equipment may be monitored and retained indefinitely.
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as they are offline.
- Misuse of school resources or equipment can result in disciplinary action.
- Users of the Plato Academy network or other technologies are expected to alert school faculty or administration immediately of any concerns for safety or security.
- Students are not permitted to connect to the Internet using a detected hot spot or 3/4G account while at school. Plato Academy is able to detect this on the network.
- Students should not plagiarize and comply with copyright laws and software licensing agreements. Students must not use others' content including words or images from any electronic or print media as their own, without citing the original creator. Users should not take credit for things they did not create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of the materials. Research conducted should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.
- Students should not post anything online that they would not want parents, teachers, or future colleges, or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.
- Cyberbullying (discussed above) will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, denigrating, impersonating, hating, pranking, excluding, and cyber-stalking online including words or images from any electronic or print media are all examples of cyberbullying. ***Don't be mean.*** Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities: We encourage you to talk to your children about values and the standards that your children should follow on the use of the Internet and on the use of all media information sources such as television, cell phones, videos, movies, literature, and music.

Equipment Use Policy

All students at Plato Academy will have access to technology. All technology devices issued are school property and all users of such school property must abide by the following policies:

Student Equipment Responsibilities:

Usage:

- Monitored Use—All files stored on the technology device are the property of the school and are subject to regular review and monitoring. Students should have no expectation of privacy when using the technology device. Any and all activity on the technology device can be monitored. Plato Academy may routinely monitor all technology devices.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to mechanical failure, failure to back-up files, or accidental deletion. Technology device malfunctions are not an acceptable excuse for not submitting work; therefore, students should back up all work.
- Respect the privacy of others
- All media, including music, images, and software must be appropriate for the school environment.
- Students may be selected at random to provide their technology device for inspection.
- Students should not attempt to download, alter, or disable software installed on the technology device.
- Inappropriate media may not be used as a screensaver or background photo.
- Presence—anywhere—of guns, weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drug, tobacco, and gang-related symbols or pictures are prohibited.
- Technology devices will be password-protected with a password being assigned at the time technology devices are issued. Students are prohibited from sharing their password with others.
- *Photos:* All technologies provided by or used at Plato Academy are intended for education purposes. Photos or Videos can only be recorded in public spaces with the consent of students, teachers, staff, or parents being photographed. The nature of the content of photographs must be appropriate for the Plato Academy school environment. **In the event that distance learning or virtual lessons are required, students may be livestreamed but not recorded. Families may not record any live-streamed class sessions.**
- Students may not use Plato technology for improper uses. These uses include, but are not limited to:
 - Any and all illegal purposes;
 - Any and all obscene or pornographic purposes, including, but not limited to, retrieving or viewing sexually explicit material;
 - Any and all discriminatory purposes, including harassment and bullying of individuals based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability, among others;
 - Any and all purposes that would violate state, federal or international law, including: copyright laws, cyberbullying laws, and sexting laws.
 - Any use of profanity, obscenity, or language that is offensive or threatening;
 - Reposting or forwarding personal communications without the author's prior consent;

- Reposting or forwarding of junk mail, chain letters, or inappropriate or offensive jokes;
- Destruction, alteration, disfigurement or unauthorized access of hardware, software, or firmware;
- Obtaining financial gain or Transacting any business or commercial activities;
- Political advocacy;
- Disrupting the use of others to any process, program or tool, including downloading or otherwise spreading computer viruses;
- Engaging in hacking of any kind, including, but not limited to, the illegal or unauthorized access;
- Allowing others to use Property issued under the program without authorization, including students whose access privileges have been suspended or revoked;
- Soliciting or distributing information with the intent to incite violence, cause personal harm, damage a person's character, or to harass another individual.

Care:

- Technology devices that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to the school-site technology representative for an evaluation of the equipment.
- Students are responsible for the general care of technology devices used for school purposes.
- Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the technology device to prevent damage.
- Do not stack objects upon technology device.
- Do not drop, toss, or mishandle the technology device in any way.
- Treat others' technology devices with the utmost care
- Technology device **screens are particularly sensitive to damage** from excessive pressure on the screen. Do not place anything near the technology device that could put pressure on the screen.
- Do not lean on the top of the technology device.

Security:

- Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin.
- **If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert a teacher or your principal.** Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

Personal Safety:

- Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social- security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission.

- Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.
- Users should never agree to meet someone they meet online in real life without parental permission.
- If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're at home) immediately.

Violations of Technology and Equipment Use Policy

Violations of this Technology and Equipment Use Policy may have disciplinary repercussions pursuant to the Plato Academy and the applicable School District's Codes of Student Conduct, including but not limited to:

- Notification to parents and/or suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges.
- Loss of technology device use for a determined period of time (student still responsible for all required work).
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities
- Legal action and/or prosecution

This policy is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with efficient, ethical, and lawful use of technology resources. If a person violates any of this policy, privileges may be terminated, access to technology resources may be denied, and the appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied. ***Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension and even expulsion for students, in accordance with Plato Academy/District Codes of Student Conduct. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.***

Withdrawals

Please notify the school as soon as possible when a student will be leaving. The school follows a checkout procedure, which includes checking school, textbook and equipment records, as well as completing reports. Fines will be assessed for lost or damaged equipment, textbooks or school books.

Administration of General Medications

All children's medication **MUST** be kept locked up in the school office. The office staff will follow appropriate procedures for dispensing all medication. School personnel are trained and give approved dosage to the student and watch them take it. However, if a child is required to take any type of medication at school, it must be authorized by a physician and parent. Medication must be in the original container. Parents must submit the form and medication to the office. Teachers are not to dispense any other medications, including any over the counter remedies such as cough drops or aspirin.

Students may not carry medications in their book bags or on their persons. They may not keep medications in their lockers. All medications for students shall be held and delivered to students by designated school personnel.

- School personnel may administer medication(s) only to those students who have an official authorization form on file at the school. The Administration of Medication form shall provide for both the physician's and parent's signatures for administration of over-the counter medications in original/new sealed container including dietary or herbal supplements or only the parent's or guardian's signature for administration of prescription medications and shall indicate the kind of medication, dosage and time to be given at school and any special instructions. A new authorization form shall be required each school year.
- Approval for self-administration of medication(s) (Inhaler, Epi-pen, Insulin, etc.) shall be written by the physician under special instructions on the Administration of Medication Form available from the Principal.
- It is the parent's responsibility to pick up all unused medication as soon as possible. Any medication remaining at the end of the school year shall be destroyed.
- Plato Academy Schools, as all Pinellas County Schools, DOES NOT allow essential oils, including CBD oil (or any other form) or of any kind, nor supplements on campus, even with a prescription. Parents who wish to administer it to their children must sign their child out, go OFF CAMPUS to administer it, then sign them back in.

State of Emergency Guidelines

In the event of a global, national or local emergency, various guidelines must be implemented and may supersede the other policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. In the event of one of the aforementioned circumstances please note that we will make all decisions based on guidance from the appropriate agencies and if/when things change, we will continue to keep you updated. In the event where distance learning is required students will be held to the same academic, behavioral and attendance standards as if they were in a traditional setting.

Coronavirus

As we continue to provide students with an excellent education during the Coronavirus global pandemic, safety of our students, families and staff will always be our first priority. The following policies must be abided by in order to ensure the Plato Academy Mission is fulfilled,, even in new and ever changing circumstances. We continue to rely on your sense of responsibility, civic duty, and role as a Plato parent to cooperate to the best of your ability with the guidelines established by local, state and federal governments and health departments, and as incorporated by Plato. Namely, that you:

1. Immediately notify the school principal or assistant principal (or designee in charge in their absence) of any Plato campus at which you (and/or any associated minor) were physically present if you (and/or any associated minor) test(s) positive for Coronavirus and/or have (has) been exposed to anyone who has tested positive; and

2. In exercising an abundance of caution, agree to inform the school principal or assistant principal (or designee in charge in their absence) of any Plato campus at which you (and/or any and/or any student in your care – “associated student”) were physically present of any symptoms that you (and/or any associated student) have (has) experienced within two weeks prior to your (his/hers/their) presence at the school, of which you are reasonably aware to be considered a Coronavirus symptom, even if you have no particular reason to believe that you (and/or any associated student) have (has) contracted Coronavirus, and if you (and/or any associated student) or any household member have/has traveled outside of the United States, or visited a known “high-risk” Coronavirus city/town within the United States, within the past 30 days.
3. Any portion of the teaching and learning process may be conducted using distance education technology. Please know and acknowledge that while this may result in your child(ren) being live streamed, no such class session may be recorded by anyone – whether a Plato employee, parent, or otherwise.

Students/Family Expectations:

- Distance Learning:
 - Students will participate in work and put in maximum effort.
 - Students will turn in assignments in a timely manner, as directed by the teacher.
 - Students will actively engage in learning- ask teachers questions when needed.
 - Students will wear uniforms.
 - Students will maintain a non-distracting work environment for yourself and others (backgrounds, pets, etc.).
 - Students will abide by cheating/plagiarizing policies outlined in this parent/student handbook.
 - Students will not record any lessons or portions of lessons.
- Brick and Mortar
 - Students will maintain hygiene and follow cleanliness standards.
 - Students will follow safety expectations outlined by school staff.
 - Students will not use lockers in an effort to remove congregation in the hallway.
 - Students will have an assigned school computer which they will have complete responsibility for (charging, transporting).
 - All students will wear face coverings.
 - All students will wash/sanitize hands regularly.
 - All students will have regular temperature checks.
 - All students will report illness or Coronavirus symptoms and follow appropriate procedures as directed by the school and department of health.

- Social distancing will be practiced whenever possible.
- Students will not use community supplies.



PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

We at Plato Academy Charter School are dedicated to assisting our students in achieving their full potential by requiring and nurturing high academic and behavioral standards in a safe, supporting, challenging and enthusiastic environment fostered by a commitment and cooperative effort between the school, students, parents, and community. Accordingly, we ask that each parent and student carefully read and review (for younger students please review them) the Plato Academy Parent & Student Handbook ("Handbook"). The Handbook is posted online at www.PlatoAcademy.net and is revised from time to time. Parents and Students are to acknowledge the following:

Student Responsibilities and Acknowledgements:

1. I understand the importance of abiding by the applicable District and the Plato Academy Codes of Student Conduct and agree to adhere to them as well as the other policies and procedures in the Handbook (available online at each school's web site page). I further understand that the Handbook supersedes the applicable District's Code of Conduct when a conflict arises, except in matters of dismissal or expulsion.
2. I promise to work hard every day to achieve my personal best.
3. I will arrive at school each day prepared, ready to learn, and on time.
4. I will complete and turn in all class assignments and homework when due.
5. I will strive to honor my school and my family by exhibiting exemplary behavior at all times and in all places, as I understand that my behavior is a direct reflection of me, my family, and the school.
6. I will always demonstrate proper courtesy when speaking to faculty, staff, and other students.
7. I will not use any personal electronic devices during the school day, including making or receiving phone calls, texting, or communicating with others (including family members). School phones are available if needed.
8. I will not disrespect other students, fight with them, or encourage other students to fight.
9. I will refrain from using inappropriate language.
10. I will not intimidate, harass, or threaten others.
11. I will exhibit the principles of good sportsmanship.
12. I will abide by all technology, equipment, and Internet usage policies and procedures.
13. I will adhere to the school uniform policy described in the Handbook.
14. I will deliver all announcements, messages, and reports to and from school.

15. I AM responsible for taking care of all books, materials, and equipment loaned to me by the school. I will replace anything that is misused or lost, unless otherwise agreed.
16. I understand that the Handbook can be updated from time to time and that it is my responsibility and my parents' responsibility to keep informed of changes by visiting the website. I understand that additional policies that are found in the Handbook and sent out via school or student newsletters must be adhered to. I agree to cooperate with all the established policies and procedures at Plato Academy.

Parental Responsibilities, Acknowledgements and Consents:

1. I will abide by and ensure that my child complies with the Handbook, the applicable District and the Plato Academy Codes of Student Conduct. I understand that Plato Academy Parent & Student Handbook supersedes the applicable District Code of Conduct when a conflict arises, except in matters of dismissal or expulsion.
2. I will notify the school of any changes on the emergency contact form (addresses, emails, telephone numbers, etc).
3. I will abide by and ensure that my child complies with all applicable technology, equipment, and usage guidelines, policies, and procedures.
4. I will ensure that my child arrives punctually at school daily and remains in school for the entire day. I understand that students must be in their seats by the start of class. Any student arriving after this time will be issued a tardy slip.
5. I agree to contact the school office if my child is going to be absent. On the day the student returns to school, the student must bring a note from a parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Otherwise, I understand the absence will be considered unexcused.
6. I agree to check the online grading system at least once every two weeks to remain apprised of my student's grades.
7. I agree to ensure that my child wears the proper uniform attire from the designated uniform vendor every day as stated in the uniform policy in the Handbook.
8. I agree to arrange for my child to have a daily, nutritious lunch. Lunch may be brought from home or purchased from the school.
9. I understand that Plato Academy holds the belief that parents play an integral role in their children's educational and social lives and asks that a parent or guardian personally transport their child to and from school.
10. As an investment in my child's education I understand that I, or other adult members of my child's family, should complete 30 volunteer hours per family prior to the last day of school. I understand that the school will provide me with various options to complete these hours.
11. I agree to read all information sent home from the school so that I will be informed of activities and academic opportunities provided by the school.
12. I give my permission to allow my child to be photographed or videotaped for use in school and classroom newsletters and news stories, school yearbook, news stories and/or promotional materials that relate to Plato Academy Charter School that may be displayed in print or via electronic means, such as on the school's website via the Internet. Unless rescinded, this permission will remain in effect in subsequent years.

13. I understand that in the event that distance learning or virtual lessons are required, students may be live-streamed but not recorded. I pledge to not record any students, teachers or live-streamed class sessions.
14. I acknowledge that the Handbook details many of the responsibilities of staff members, students, and parents or guardians. I understand that the Handbook can be updated from time to time by the Plato Academy Board and that it is my responsibility to keep myself informed of changes by visiting the website periodically. I understand that the Handbook is not exclusive of all School policies and that some may be noticed directly to me by the Principal.

I have read this handbook and agree to all of its terms and conditions.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____