

Parent Handbook



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Dear Niagara Charter School Parents and Community,

As principal of Niagara Charter School, it is my pleasure to welcome everyone back for another great school year! We are all excited to have students back in our classrooms and hallways, filling them with energy and enthusiasm for learning. It is our mission to help every child feel welcomed, connected, and part of our family. Additionally, we strive to challenge each student to grow in his or her academic abilities and character development.

We hope this handbook will serve as a helpful guide for parents/guardians. It contains the most important information you will need for the school year. Please take the time to review the policies and procedures contained in this handbook with your child.

Additional information can be found on our website (www.niagaracharterschool.org) and our Facebook page. Feel free to contact the school office at (716) 297-4520 with questions or concerns. The office hours are 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Once again, welcome back! I look forward to working with you and your child this year. Together, let's make it another great year at Niagara Charter School!

Sincerely,

Dr. Novak
Chief Academic Officer

Parent Commitment

A positive, cooperative relationship between home and school is essential to each child's achievement and success.

As parents of Niagara Charter School students:

1. We exemplify an enthusiastic and supportive attitude toward school and education.
2. We build good working relationships with our children, the teachers, staff, and members of the school community.
3. We inform school officials of changes in the home to ensure open communication and the safety and welfare of our children.
4. We model all aspects of P.R.I.D.E. and expect our children to do the same.
 - **Perseverance:** We persevere through challenging tasks and situations.
 - **Respect:** We are respectful to each other, to ourselves and the school environment.
 - **Integrity:** We show integrity by always doing the right thing.
 - **Dedication:** We are dedicated to the personal and academic success of the students.
 - **Excellence:** We strive to always put forth our best effort, have a positive attitude, and be a role model for the students at Niagara Charter School.
5. We resolve conflicts and disagreements peacefully. We listen with respect to others, seeking a positive solution. We work to create a safe community free from negative criticism.
6. Teamwork is the foundation of our school community. We show appreciation and encouragement for all members of the school community. We work together, collaborate, and support each other to achieve our goals.

We are dedicated to the Niagara Charter School community and the success of our children.

**Niagara Charter School
2077 Lockport Road
Niagara Falls, NY 14304
Phone: (716) 297-4520
Fax: (716) 297-4617
www.niagaracharterschool.org**

Our Vision

Niagara Charter School is committed to the common goal to develop every student as a life-ready leader with the potential to make a difference in the world.

Our Mission

Niagara Charter School strives to develop each student's character through engaging and challenging academic work. Our school believes that academic success is built on strong character qualities of collaboration, perseverance, responsibility, and compassion.

Our Core Values

- **Excellence:** Striving for the highest standards in academic and personal achievement.
- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty, fairness, and respect in all interactions.
- **Inclusivity:** Embracing diversity and fostering a sense of belonging for all students and staff.
- **Innovation:** Encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving.
- **Collaboration:** Working together to achieve common goals and support one another.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Promoting a love for learning and continuous personal and professional development.
- **Responsibility:** Taking ownership of one's actions and contributing positively to the community.
- **Compassion:** Demonstrating empathy, kindness, and consideration for others.
- **Sustainability:** Committing to environmentally responsible practices and teaching students the importance of contributing to a better world.
- **Resilience:** Building the capacity to overcome challenges and adapt to change.
- **Leadership:** Inspiring and empowering individuals to lead by example, make a positive impact, and contribute to society.

Value Proposition

A Niagara Charter School education is a choice for parents and a better opportunity for children.

Equal Education Opportunity

Niagara Charter School provides equal opportunity for students and does not discriminate against any student enrolled in its programs and activities on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. Further, Niagara Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of weight, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sexual orientation, gender, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal non-discrimination laws.

School Design

EL Education

Niagara Charter School is an EL Education school. EL Education is a model for comprehensive school reform for elementary, middle, and high school that emphasizes high academic achievement through active learning, character growth, and teamwork.

EL Education has five Core Practices:

CURRICULUM	Academically rigorous learning expeditions, case studies, projects, fieldwork, and service learning inspire students to think and work as professionals do, contributing high quality work to authentic audiences beyond the classroom.
INSTRUCTION	Our classrooms are alive with discovery, inquiry, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. Teachers talk less. Students talk and think more.
ASSESSMENT	Our leaders, teachers, and students embrace the power of student-engaged assessment practices to build student ownership of learning, focus students on reaching standards-based learning targets, and drive achievement.
CULTURE & CHARACTER	Our school builds a culture of respect, responsibility, courage, and kindness, where students and adults are committed to quality work and citizenship.
LEADERSHIP	School leaders build a cohesive school vision focused on student achievement and continuous improvement.

*For more information on EL Education, visit www.elschools.org

Leader in Me

The Leader in Me is Franklin Covey's whole school transformation process. It teaches 21st century leadership and life skills to students and creates a culture of student empowerment based on the idea that every child can be a leader.

The goal of a Leader in Me school is to establish a school-wide system that focuses on three key principles.

Key Principles:

- Teach and Model Leadership Skills
- Create a Culture of Student Empowerment
- Align Behavior and Actions for Academic Success

The Leader in Me curriculum is centered around the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Our school has embedded the 7 Habits into our daily routines, instructional practices, and our school culture. We are committed to helping students understand that change begins with them and they have the power to succeed beyond measure.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People are:

- Habit 1: Be Proactive(You're in Charge)
- Habit 2: Begin With the End in Mind(Have a Plan)
- Habit 3: Put First Things First(Work First, Then Play)
- Habit 4: Think Win-Win(Everyone Can Win)
- Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood (Listen Before You Speak)
- Habit 6: Synergize(Together Is Better)
- Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw(Balance Feels Best)

Habits of Scholarship (PRIDE)

Niagara Charter School's *Habits of Scholarship* name specific characteristics that support student achievement. They aid students in developing study skills, time-management skills, persistence, self-awareness, and the ability to seek feedback and assistance.

Niagara Charter School's *Habits of Scholarship* (PRIDE) are listed below:

Perseverance: I keep trying.

Respect: I value myself and others.

Integrity: I am honest with myself and others.

Dedication: I am committed to our PRIDE values.

Excellence: I push myself to do more than I thought possible.

Staff Directory

Our current staff roster and contact information is located on the school's website.

Daily Schedule

Full Day Schedule: 8:55 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Early Release Schedule: 8:55 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Regular attendance is important for a student's academic success in school. Parents should make every effort to have their child on time for school, rested, and ready to work every day. Unless there is a serious reason, students are expected to attend school daily and be punctual.

Tardy: A student is considered tardy when they enter the school after 9:05 am.

- * When a student is tardy, he/she must report to the front office for a late pass before going to class.
- * A signed, written excuse explaining the reason for the tardiness must be sent to school.
- * Parents or guardians will be contacted in instances of recurring tardiness.

Absence: A student is considered absent when he/she is not present in the school building for the entire day.

- * If a student must be absent, please call the school and notify the office.
- * Please send in a signed, written excuse from a parent, guardian or medical provider explaining the absence when the student returns to school. New York State Attendance Policy requires that a student bring in a written excuse for each absence.
- * An absence without a written excuse will be considered an illegal absence.
- * If a medical appointment is necessary during the school day and the child will report to school when finished, please send in a signed, written note the day before the appointment if possible.
- * Parents or guardians will be contacted in instances of recurring unexcused/illegal absences. We will not hesitate to consider this educational neglect and will report such to the appropriate agency.

Attendance Monitoring

Student attendance is one of the most important factors relating to the success of every child. Niagara Charter School's expectation is that all students be in attendance for a minimum of 90% of all instructional time throughout the school year (that's 18 or less absences per school year). Both excused and unexcused absences, as well as tardiness, will be closely monitored.

Change of Address/Telephone/Emergency Contacts:

It is extremely important that every student maintain an up-to-date address and working telephone number in the school office. Notify the school immediately if you have a home or work address and/or phone number change for parents or guardians and emergency contacts. Also, please provide proper documentation to the school in the event of a change in custody.

To change your student's **address**, click the following link:

<https://forms.gle/CWqzv5NsS9RaRyRr8>

To change your student's **phone number**, click the following link:

<https://forms.gle/114A8L3YpJrpiAnf9>

To change your student's **emergency contacts**, click the following link:

<https://forms.gle/rd6nTqN2DN5THnKL6>

PickUp Patrol

PickUp Patrol is a web application that helps us manage our dismissal process safely and efficiently while providing you with a convenient app to make changes to your students' dismissal plan daily, weekly, or monthly.

Use PickUp Patrol to:

- Establishing how your student will regularly be dismissed.
- Excuse your student from school early
- Report absences or late arrivals

Early dismissal changes need to be made in PickUp Patrol **BEFORE 2:45 PM.**

BUS COLOR & STOP CHANGES ARE NOT RECORDED IN PICKUP PATROL. THE OFFICE IS NOT NOTIFIED OF THESE CHANGES.

If PickUp Patrol is not available you may send a note to school with the student to give to his/her classroom teacher.

The notes needs to CLEARLY state

- the date the student will be excused early
- the student's full name (first and last)
- time that the student will be excused early
- reason for early dismissal

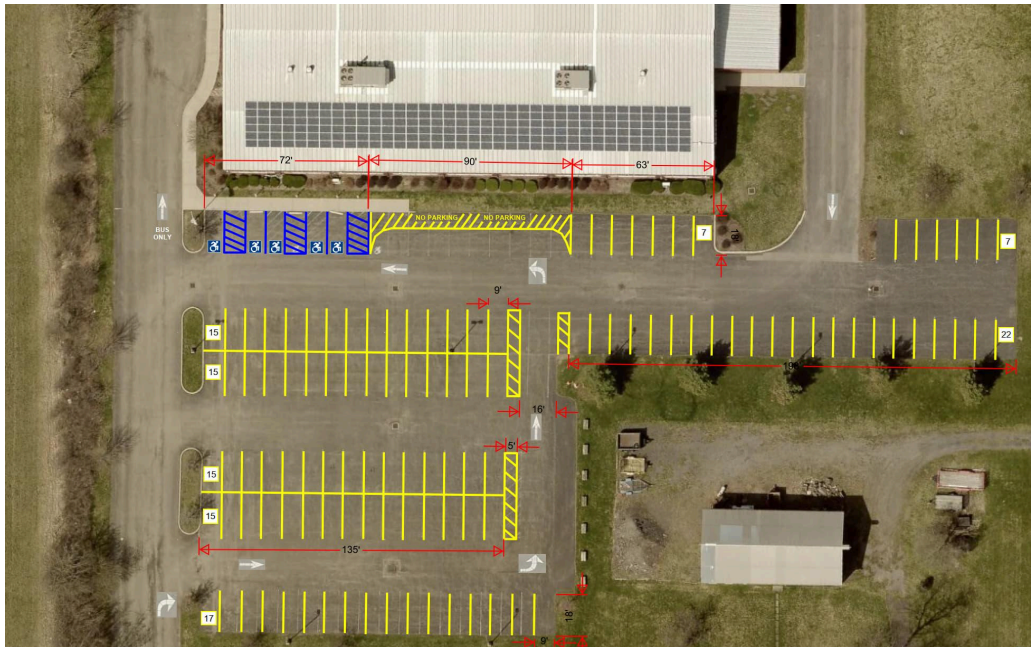
If you are excusing the student from school before 3:15pm, when you arrive to pick the student up from school, you must ring the doorbell, state your name and the student's name that you are picking up and present proper photo identification. At that time, the front office personnel will call the classroom to send the student to the office.

- Please note, front office personnel **WILL NOT** call the student to the office until you arrive. This is to avoid the situation of having several students waiting in the office if their transportation is delayed.
- If someone other than the parent or guardian will pick the student up, that person must be listed as an emergency contact in the school records in order for the student to be released. They should have proper photo identification readily available, if requested.

Student Pickup and Drop Off Procedures

To ensure a safe and smooth arrival and dismissal process, we ask that all families follow the new directional arrows in the parking lot, which guide cars to the designated pick-up and drop-off location. Do not use the handicap parking spaces to unload your child from the vehicle. Families may also choose to park in a marked spot and walk their child to the main entrance. For safety reasons, vehicles should not pull up directly to the main entrance during arrival or dismissal times, as this is reserved for buses and emergency vehicles only.

Student pick-ups will not be permitted between 3:15 PM and 3:45 PM as we prepare for our dismissal process. If you arrive during this time, we kindly ask that you wait until 3:45 PM to pick up your child. This policy ensures that our dismissal runs smoothly and safely for all students.



Transportation

Transportation to School Sponsored Events

Where Niagara Charter School has provided or contracted for transportation of its students to a school sponsored field trip, extracurricular activity or any other similar event, it will provide transportation back to either the point of departure or to the school unless a student's parent or legal guardian provided the school with written notice, consistent with Niagara Charter School policy, authorizing an alternative form of return transportation for the student. In cases where intervening circumstances make transportation of a student back to the point of departure or to the school impractical, and the parent has not authorized alternative return transportation a representative of Niagara Charter School will remain with the student until the student's parent or legal guardian has been contacted and informed of the intervening circumstances and the student has been delivered to his/her parent.

Transportation in Personal Vehicles

Personal cars of teachers and staff will not be used to transport students except in the event of extenuating circumstances and authorized by administration.

Bus Changes

If a student's regularly assigned morning and/or afternoon stop needs to be permanently changed, the Bus Change form will need to be completed and submitted.

To permanently change your student's busing, click the following link:

<https://forms.gle/ATq1CUwEhSnLZt3VA>

If you are not able to complete and submit the Bus Change Form, a written note by an authorized parent or guardian must be submitted to the front office. The written note must include the following:

- Date of notice
- Student's first and last name
- New address for new stop
- Working telephone number
- Parent or guardian signature

The front office will call to confirm all written bus changes. Please note, if a verbal confirmation is not received, no change will be submitted. No exceptions will be made.

DAILY or TEMPORARY BUS CHANGES ARE NOT PERMITTED.

School Closings

If the school must be closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies, parents and students will be notified in the early morning, or if possible, the evening before by television (channels 2, 4, and 7) and the school's internal emergency alert system. All after school and evening activities are automatically canceled if the school closes for the day, unless otherwise announced.

In an emergency situation, if the school needs to dismiss earlier than the scheduled time, Niagara Charter School will notify parents and students by local television news stations and the school's internal emergency alert system. It is imperative that each student knows where he/she should go in the event that school is dismissed early and no one is at home.

The determination of a delayed start will be made by the school's administration. The purpose of a delayed start to school is to allow temperatures to rise in the morning or to allow more time for roads, sidewalks and /or lots to be cleared. If a delayed start is called, information will be provided using the school's internal emergency alert system as well as by television (channels 2, 4, and 7).

Visiting our School

Niagara Charter School's first priority is to keep our students and staff safe through our layered security approach. All visitors must ring the doorbell and enter the building through the main doors. Anyone entering the school must be prepared to present a Driver's License or Government Identification and be checked in before entering the building, utilizing the Raptor Visitor Management System. Upon entering the school, handbags, backpacks or alike are subject to search along with persons, by the School Resource Officer or administration by visual inspection or by use of a handheld metal detection device. Once approved, the visitor will receive a pass that must be worn for the duration of the visit. Visitors are expected to go directly to their named location and then return to the Front Office to sign out when leaving the building. Visitor entrance to the school will be denied if the School Resource Officer or administration deems that

the visit be in contrast to this policy, the good order of the school, safety and security concerns, or if the visit violates a court order or law. We appreciate your cooperation with this policy.

Visitations to classrooms for any purpose require permission in advance from school administration in order to allow teachers the opportunity to arrange their schedules to accommodate such requests. In order to ensure that instruction is not interrupted, we ask that anyone dropping off or picking up students wait outside.

Parents or guardians requesting to speak with a staff member or a member of the administrative team must make an appointment. Meetings will not take place without an appointment. Parents or guardians will not be permitted to meet with a teacher during instructional hours.

Safety Drills

The safety and well-being of our students is a top priority at Niagara Charter School. To ensure that all students and staff are prepared to respond effectively in case of an emergency, we conduct various safety drills throughout the school year. Parents will be notified of upcoming safety drills no more than one week prior to the scheduled drill. Notifications will be sent through written correspondence, SMS alerts or social media. In addition to scheduled drills, the school has a comprehensive emergency plan in place, which is reviewed and updated annually to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast and lunch will be served daily. All students at Niagara Charter School are eligible to receive a **FREE** breakfast and **FREE** lunch, through the *Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act amendment to the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2012*. ALL families must fill out new application forms and determination of continued eligibility will be based on new guidelines. New application forms will be sent home or may be obtained at the front office.

Breakfast:

Breakfast is served daily at 8:55 am and ends at 9:30 am.

Lunch:

All students attending a full-day session remain in school for a half-hour lunch period. Parents/guardians should make every effort to deliver lunch to their child during their child's regularly scheduled lunch time. Scheduled lunch times are as follows:

<i>11:15-11:45</i>	Kindergarten and Grade 1
<i>11:47-12:17</i>	Grade 2 and Grade 5
<i>12:19-12:49</i>	Grade 3 and Grade 4
<i>12:51-1:21</i>	Grade 6

Health Services

Niagara Charter School has a full-time registered nurse on site.

Medical Services Provided

1. First aid for accidents and illness occurring in school.
2. Cumulative health records are maintained for each student.
3. Dispensing medications upon the prescription and recommendation of your doctor.
4. Screening for lice infestation (dependent on symptoms).

Internal Medicine

If a student must take any medication during the day, the following should be observed:

1. A form must be completed by a parent or guardian and must be submitted to the school nurse, for medication to be taken in school

AND

2. A form must be completed by the student's doctor and submitted to the school nurse. The form must state the name of the medication, dosage and time to be given.

Any medication to be administered in school must be brought to the school nurse by an adult, properly labeled in its original container or bottle in which the medication was purchased or prescribed. The term "properly labeled" means that the container must include the following information: the student's name, name of medication, dosage, frequency, and prescribing physician. Students are not permitted to carry any medication on their person in school, or on the school bus, or keep any medication in their school locker. Students who use an inhaler will be permitted to carry the inhaler to and from school with written permission from a medical doctor and the student's parent or guardian,

If a student becomes ill or is injured in school, a parent or guardian will be notified and requested to come for the student or make other arrangements for transportation.

Notice should be given to the health office in the event of contagious diseases including but not limited to: COVID-19, chicken pox, mumps, regular measles, German measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever, strep throat, etc.

Whenever, upon investigation and evaluation by the school nurse, a student in the school shows symptoms of any communicable or infectious disease reportable under the public health law that imposes a significant risk of infection of others in the school, he/she shall be excluded from the school and sent home immediately.

Counseling Services

Niagara Charter School has a full-time school counselor who offers individual and group counseling sessions. Please call the school to obtain a counseling referral form if you would like your child to meet with the school counselor on a regular basis.

Immunization

Every child entering or attending school must present proof of immunization or proof of immunity by serology (blood test) or medical documentation. As of June 13, 2019, New York State no longer allows religious exemptions from mandated vaccinations.

Niagara Charter will not permit a student lacking evidence of immunization to remain in school for more than fourteen (14) days, or more than thirty (30) days for an out-of-state or out-of-country transferee who can show a good faith effort to get the necessary certification or other evidence of immunization.

For homeless children, Niagara Charter will refer the parent or guardian of the student to the School's homeless liaison, who must assist them in obtaining the necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records.

Students with Life-Threatening Health Conditions

Students come to school with diverse medical conditions which may impact their learning as well as their health. Some of these conditions are serious and may be life-threatening. As a result, students, parents, school personnel, and health care providers must all work together to provide the necessary information and training to allow children with chronic health problems to participate as fully and safely as possible in the school experience. All students within Niagara Charter School with known life-threatening conditions will have a comprehensive plan of care in place: An Emergency Care Plan (ECP) or Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) and if appropriate, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan.

Life-Threatening Conditions: For those students with chronic life-threatening conditions such as diabetes, seizure disorders, asthma, and allergies, the school will work cooperatively with the parent(s) and the healthcare provider(s) to:

1. Immediately develop an ECP for each at risk student to ensure that all appropriate personnel are aware of the student's potential for a life-threatening reaction;
2. If appropriate, develop an IHP that includes all necessary treatments, medications, training, and educational requirements for the student. If the student is eligible for accommodations based upon the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act, the appropriate procedures will be followed regarding evaluation and identification;
3. Provide training by licensed medical personnel (e.g., registered professional nurse) for all adults in a supervisory role in the recognition and emergency management of a specific medical condition for specific students;
4. Obtain specific medical-legal documents duly executed in accordance with New York State law; appropriate health care provider authorization in writing for specific students that includes the frequency and conditions for any testing and/or treatment, symptoms, and treatment of any conditions associated with the health problem; and directions for emergencies;

5. Secure written parent permission and discuss parental responsibility that includes providing the health care provider's orders, providing any necessary equipment, and participation in the education and co-management of the child as he/she works toward self-management;
6. Assure appropriate and reasonable building accommodations are in place within a reasonable degree of medical certainty.

Baked Goods Policy: Due to health concerns and food allergies, Niagara Charter School requests only store bought items, preferably with ingredients listed, be brought to school for parties and classroom celebrations. Please check with your child's teacher for specific information regarding food restrictions in your child's class.

Physical Education Policy

New York State law mandates that ALL students must participate in a physical education program. Therefore, all students are required to take gym classes. Students are expected to come to class with the proper clothing and other items needed for each activity. If a student is to be excused from physical education class due to minor illness or injury, he/she must bring in a written note the morning he/she is to be excused. The note must be turned into the health office and it must include the date and reason for the excuse and a parent/guardian signature. A maximum of two parental requests in succession is acceptable. Any lengthy illness or injury must be accompanied by a physician's note.

Uniform and Dress Code

Uniforms instill a sense of community and alleviate peer pressure regarding clothing choices. All students will be expected to be in uniform at all times. Students' appearance should be clean and neat, and should not be a distraction to other members of the school community, nor a safety or health risk to the student or others.

Uniform:

- Gray or navy blue polo shirt (short or long sleeved), with the embroidered Niagara Charter School logo.
- Classic cut **navy or khaki** shorts, pants, skirts, skorts, or pull over dresses. Shorts, skirts and dresses should end just above the knee.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- The Niagara Charter School embroidered fleece/sweatshirts are the **only** outerwear that will be permitted to wear throughout the school day.

In the event of an unforeseen circumstance, please send a note or call the front office to notify us of the reason why your child cannot wear his/her uniform.

Uniform shirts can be purchased at:

Stuart Sports
486 Center Street
Lewiston, NY 14092
(716) 754-4895

Uniforms are also available online through Tommy Hilfiger: <https://www.globalschoolwear.com>. Our school code is **NIAG01**.

Dress Code:

- * Headgear should not be worn in the building or classroom except for medical or religious purposes.
- * Footwear must be worn at all times. Hazardous footwear (flip-flops, slippers, shoes with heels, backless or open-toe shoes) are not permitted.
- * All underwear must be completely covered with outer clothing and all apparel should be fastened appropriately and worn as designed.
- * Clothing/outerwear that depicts discriminatory or obscene words or images, or that promotes weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, drug paraphernalia, and violence or gang symbols is prohibited.
- * During the school day, all coats, hats, jackets, scarves, and backpacks are to be kept in lockers.

Parents of students requiring accommodations for religious beliefs, disability, or other just cause must contact administration. If you have any questions concerning uniforms, please direct them to the Community Liaison.

Students who violate the uniform and/or dress code policy may be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item or may face disciplinary measures. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the policy shall be subject to further discipline.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

In accordance with New York State Education Law §2803, Niagara Charter School has adopted a Distraction-Free School Policy to support a focused and academically supportive learning environment.

- Prohibited Use: Students may not use personal internet-enabled devices (e.g., phones, tablets, smartwatches, gaming devices) during the school day—including during lunch, recess, hallway transitions, and in restrooms.
- Storage: All personal devices must be stored in designated school storage areas during the school day.
- Communication with Students: Parents/guardians may reach students through:
 - Phone call to the school's main office
 - Email to a monitored school address
 - A secure messaging system
 - Written notes dropped off at the office

For the full policy, please refer to the school website.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Use of the Internet is for educational purposes only and appropriate blocks are in place on all school computers. Access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right. It entails responsibility. There is NO RIGHT TO PRIVACY when using the school's computer resources. Administration, faculty, and other authorized persons will have the right to review any and all material saved, transmitted, accessed, or momentarily in use by the student in accord with the policy set by the school's administration. When using the school's computer system the students must agree to the following:

- Never to give out any personal information (name, address, phone, e-mail, gender, etc.).
- Never to give out another person's personal information.
- Never to disguise one's identity, impersonate other users, or send anonymous e-mail messages.
- Never to access other user accounts using passwords or identifiers. This includes never giving personal account passwords or identifiers to someone else.
- Never to try to set up or accept an invitation to a meeting with anyone.
- Never to buy or sell anything on-line.
- Never to access or transmit sexually explicit or violent material.
- Never to harass anyone.
- Never to access or transmit discriminatory material (racist, sexist, or prejudicial).
- Never to use software or hardware that they do not have permission to use.
- Never to try to get into another computer that they are not allowed access to (hacking).
- Never to plagiarize or violate copyright law.
- Never to participate in illegal activity (including the spread of computer viruses).
- Never to install software or other programs without the permission of a teacher or principal.
- Never to download or upload any material without a teacher's or principal's permission.
- To transmit material (e-mail or other Internet postings) only under the direct supervision of a teacher.
- Always to be respectful of people and the equipment.
- Never to do or say anything using the computer that could not be done or said in the teacher's presence.

Students must also adhere to the laws, policies and rules governing computers including, but not limited to, copyright laws, rights of software publishers, license agreements, and student rights of privacy created by federal and state law.

If a student violates any of these rules, he/she will face disciplinary action. This action may include removal from the system temporarily or permanently. The student may face more serious consequences depending on the seriousness of the offense, including suspension. If off-campus computer use is deemed inappropriate and can detrimentally impact the school or program or if the conduct poses a threat to another student the school may take action. The student realizes that he/she is responsible and the school can impose consequences for conduct occurring outside school.

Restorative Practices

The Board authorizes restorative practices to be employed, where appropriate, use conflict resolution, restitution to those harmed, and group, classroom, community, and readmission process to address misbehaviors with the ultimate goal of teaching prosocial behavior. This approach seeks concurrent accountability and behavioral change.

Restorative practices include valuing and restoring relationships, repairing the harm done to affected parties, respecting others' opinions, and reintegrating into the school community.

Under the model, we ask:

- Who has been hurt?
- What are their needs?
- Whose obligations are these?

Essential to the implementation of restorative practices is helping students who have engaged in unacceptable behavior to:

- Understand why the behavior is unacceptable and the harm it caused;
- Understand what could have been done differently in the same situation;
- Take responsibility for their actions;
- Make reparation and/or restitution to repair the harm done;
- Be given the opportunity to learn prosocial strategies/skills to use in the future, and
- Understand the progression of more increasingly punitive consequences may be imposed if the behavior reoccurs.

While there may be more traditional punishments in conjunction with teaching behavior expectations and treating disciplinary matters as teachable moments, this is a more effective approach than merely reacting to specific events unless the student behaviors pose an immediate or ongoing threat to the safety of other students and staff.

The Board directs staff and administration to utilize restorative practices or traditional discipline at their discretion when addressing student disciplinary issues.

A member of the administrative team will immediately notify parents/guardians in writing if a student will be suspended from school or the school bus. Where possible, notification will also be provided by telephone. All discipline policies for Niagara Charter School can be referenced in the school's Code of Conduct publication found on our website.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework that promotes positive behavior and creates a supportive school environment by focusing on teaching, modeling, and reinforcing expected behaviors. Rather than relying solely on punitive measures, PBIS emphasizes proactive strategies to prevent behavioral issues and improve school climate. It involves clearly defining and consistently communicating expectations, recognizing and celebrating positive behaviors, and using data to identify and address areas needing

improvement. By embedding PBIS into the school's code of conduct, the school can foster a culture of respect, responsibility, and safety.

Response to Intervention Team

The Response to Intervention Team meets monthly to discuss students experiencing academic and/or behavioral problems. The team works to collaboratively implement strategies and interventions that will improve a student's performance. Interventions may include behavior modification plans, conferences with students and parents or guardians, referral to the school counselor, referrals to outside agencies, psychological testing, academic screening, and referral to the Committee on Special Education. The individual student's response to intervention determines the degree, depth, and number of strategies attempted. A student who requires a more structured classroom setting or has severe speech problems may be referred to the Committee on Special Education. Committee meetings are held at the district in which the student resides, with a chairperson, team members, the student's parent(s), a classroom teacher and a special education teacher present.

Consultant Teacher Inclusion Model

The Consultant Teacher inclusion model is a special education service in which students are identified by the Committee on Special Education and then included in the regular classroom for all subjects with the direct/indirect support from a consultant teacher. In addition, an Associate Teacher is available at each grade level to carry out the curriculum and test modifications planned by the consultant teacher and classroom teacher. Students in this model are taught the regular curriculum in order to develop appropriate skills and to meet the standards at their level, while working toward the goals and objectives of their Individual Education Plan.

Academic Intervention Services (AIS)

Academic intervention services are designed to help students achieve the learning standards in English language arts and mathematics. These services include two components:

- Additional instruction that supplements the general curriculum (regular classroom instruction); and/or
- Student support services needed to address barriers to improved academic performance.

English as a New Language

The English as a New Language (ENL) program is designed to help those children who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken. Instruction in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing English is provided along with regular classroom instruction.

Enrichment and Remediation Block

Niagara Charter School offers enrichment and remediation to students. Through remediation, teachers give students that little "extra" instruction that is meant to help increase their proficiency in a particular area. Enrichment work is directed to creative and critical thinking skills in math, language arts, and the arts. In order for a student to be eligible for enrichment

they must be recommended by his/her teacher and display exceptional performance and responsibility in the classroom. Our daily school schedule allows for one hour of enrichment and remediation each day.

Home/School Communication

Open House

Our Open House date is to be announced. All families are invited to attend to tour the building and meet Niagara Charter School staff members.

Report Cards

Report cards will be emailed to the email on file at the end of each quarter. Mid-quarter progress reports will also be emailed to the email on file. If you have a question about your child's report card or progress report, please schedule an appointment with your child's teacher.

Student-led Conferences

Student-led conferences are scheduled twice a year. Every parent is urged to attend both conferences.

The Communicator

All students will be given a communicator folder which serves the purpose of transporting school work and school related information. It is also an important method of communication between parents or guardians and teachers. Should your child's communicator be misplaced and a new one is needed, please call the office.

Class Dojo

ClassDojo is a communication app used by teachers, staff, and parents. Teachers and staff can send messages, updates, and photos to parents, keeping them informed of their child's progress and classroom activities. The app also allows for direct communication between teachers and parents.

PowerSchool Parent Portal

Parents and/or guardians will receive access to the PowerSchool Parent Portal. This tool is designed to keep you connected with your child's academic progress and school information. This online portal offers real-time access to your child's grades, attendance records, assignments, and more.

School Volunteers

Volunteers are persons who are willing to donate their time and energies to assist building principals, teachers, and other school personnel in implementing various phases of school programs. Volunteers will serve in that capacity without compensation or employee benefits except for liability protection under the school's insurance program.

Niagara Charter School Board of Trustees

The Niagara Charter School Board of Trustees meets the third Tuesday of each month (with the exceptions as publicized). The public is invited and welcomed at all meetings held at the school. Please see the school's website for a current Board of Trustees roster.

Parent Lighthouse Team and Family School Association

Niagara Charter School's Parent Lighthouse Team (PLT)/Family School Association (FSA) is committed to bringing families and education together through academic involvement, community outreach, and support. The PLT/FSA is open to all parents or guardians of students who attend Niagara Charter School. Please contact the school's Community Liaison if you are interested in joining the PLT/FSA.

Media Consent

Throughout the school year, students may be highlighted in efforts to promote Niagara Charter School's activities and achievements.

If you **DO NOT** want your child to have their picture appear on the Niagara Charter School website, newsletter/publications, social media or print/TV media, please contact the front office in writing.