

# STUDENT Handbook

2025-2026

www.thefamilyplacedc.org

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## Welcome Message



## Dear The Family Place PCS Students and Families,

Welcome to The Family Place Public Charter School (TFPPCS) and the services that we offer in 2025-2026.

The mission of The Family
Place Public Charter School is
to improve the literacy and
workplace skills of adults who
want to learn English and
improve their income and
careers so that they and their
families can have a better life,
get a good job and become
more active in their
community.

Any adult 18 years or older who is a resident of the District of Columbia is eligible to enroll in free instruction at The Family Place Public Charter School. TFPPCS offers three instructional programs for adults: English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to non-native speakers of English, Foundations of Literacy classes for students with low levels of literacy in Spanish, and a Bilingual Child Development Associate (CDA) training program.

We look forward to serving you and having you join our family.

## Haley Wiggins Executive Director

## How to Contact Us?

TFPPCS strives for effective communication with our adult learners and families through communication with our bilingual staff, translations of all-important documents and by offering the following ways to connect with us:

Address: 3309 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20010

Telephone: 202-265-0149

**Website:** <u>www.thefamilyplacedc.org</u> **Email:** <u>info@thefamilyplacepcs.org</u>

**Social media:** The following social media platforms are used to connect with adult learners and parents:

• Facebook: <u>The Family Place</u>

• Instagram: <u>@TheFamilyPlaceDC</u>

• LinkedIn: <u>The Family Place & Public Charter School</u>

Complaints: please call 202-265-0149 or email at:

info@thefamilyplacepcs.org

**Emergencies:** please contact Fernando Saldana at:

fsaldana@thefamilyplacepcs.org

**Text Message:** You may share your cell phone number with us so we can contact you by text message. You may remove your number and stop receiving text messages at any time. Text messages will be sent through WhatsApp or QuickBase.

**DISCLAIMER:** TFPPCS has made every reasonable effort to ensure the policies in this Handbook comply with all applicable District of Columbia (also referred to as District) and federal regulations. If this Handbook contains a policy that does not comply with applicable law, that law takes precedence over the Handbook policy. If any part of the Handbook is for any reason held to be unenforceable, such provision is severable and the rest of the Handbook remains fully enforceable.



### 1 Foundational Documents

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of The Family Place Public Charter School (TFPPCS) is to improve the literacy and workplace skills of low-income limited English proficient adults in the District so that they and their family are self-sustaining, employable, and engaged in their community.

 We do this by offering Spanish literacy, ESL, and workforce classes to students of different educational backgrounds, ages, and life experiences. We provide holistic and family support in partnership with our sister agency, The Family Place, Inc.

#### **Core Values**

All reasons for learning are valid.

• Our learners set their own goals and work towards them.

We are a place of welcome.

- Our school provides a safe and accepting learning environment. We are more than an educational institution.
  - Our agencies provide resources to meet students' basic needs.
- Our two-generational model supports students with young children. We build community.
  - Our immigrant learners enrich each other, our school, and their DC neighborhoods.

#### **Profile of a Student**

- An empowered, critical thinker with improved literacy, English proficiency, and technology skills.
- A more engaged, contributing member of their community.
- A member of the workforce equipped with relevant workplace skills.

## 2. Board of Trustees

TFPPCS's Board of Trustees is the chief governing body of the organization, with ultimate accountability and fiduciary responsibility for TFPPCS's charter. The Board sets the overall policy of TFPPCS consistent with state and federal laws. The Board's duties include monitoring operations of TFPPCS; ensuring that TFPPCS complies with applicable laws and provisions of its charter; monitoring progress of TFPPCS in meeting students' academic achievement expectations and goals specified in its charter; and ensuring that TFPPCS is fiscally sound, in accordance with the School Reform Act. The Board of Trustees consists of eleven individuals.

- Michael Barnet, Ed.D., Chair
- Shawn Chakrabarti, M.A., Vice Chair
- Sarah Friedman, Ph.D., member
- Natalia Isaza Brando, M.D., member
- Ann Barnet, M.D., member
- Oralia Puente, Ph.D., member
- Elaine Weiss, Ph.D., member
- Gail Arnall, member
- Raj Thomas, member
- Jaqueline Lopez Ponce, student member
- Maria Mejia, student member



## 3. Administrators

- Executive Director: Haley Wiggins, M.A.
- Chief Academic Officer: Laurel Kircher, M.A.
- Chief Compliance Officer: Fernando Saldana, M.S.M
- Director of Operations, Marianella Morales,
- Registrar: Lidia Fleitas

### 4. Teachers

Please check the website for a <u>list of current instructors</u>.



## How to Get Started

### 5. School Calendar



TFPPCS's academic calendar consists of 184 instructional days starting August 25, 2025, and ending June 12, 2026 [planned make-up days for weather: June 15 and 16]. Please see the TFPPCS Student Academic Calendar for a complete list of dates.

A copy of the most recent school calendar can be found online at: <a href="https://www.thefamilyplacedc.org/adult-public-charter-school">https://www.thefamilyplacedc.org/adult-public-charter-school</a>

## 6. Enrollment Policy



TFPPCS does not use admission preferences. Enrollment at TFPPCS is open to all adults who are residents of the District of Columbia and non-resident students who fulfill tuition requirements established by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to the extent of available space.

Applicants may apply for enrollment directly to TFPPCS because we will not participate in the My School DC common lottery.

Returning students who want to re-enroll must have had an average of 70% attendance during the prior school year. Students with an average attendance rate below 70% must sign an attendance agreement before being re-enrolled.

Students with interrupted educations who test below 183 on the CASAS Steps exam will be referred to the Foundations of Spanish Literacy (FOL) program for testing and possible placement.

If eligible applicants for enrollment at TFPPCS for any Academic Year exceed the number of spaces available, the staff will select students using a random selection process.

#### Open Enrollment:

Each year, the Board of Trustees sets the maximum enrollment capacity, based on space, class sizes, and budgetary concerns. TFPPCS does not limit enrollment based on a student's race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identification, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement of aptitude, or status as a student with special needs.

#### **Enrollment Deadlines:**

TFPPCS will follow the timeline for enrollment and acceptance established by its Board of Trustees. Enrollment will be year-round as space becomes available. In general, new enrollments will happen in August and January. Students who apply after March 31st will be considered for enrollment the following school year. Specific enrollment and registration dates will be publicized on our website. Each student must complete an application, which will be submitted to an enrollment lottery if one is required due to receipt of more applications than slots available.

#### **Open Seats:**

TFPPCS will fill open seats from its waitlist and contact those applicants at least twice to notify them of the vacancy.

#### Virtual/Hybrid Classes:

Students who work or have other commitments during daytime hours will be given preference for seats in virtual or hybrid classes. All new students who request virtual or hybrid classes will need to demonstrate competency with the school's technology devices.

#### **Two-Step Process:**

TFPPCS will use a two-step enrollment process; in the first step, staff will collect only basic information required to determine the student's eligibility for services and participation in the admissions lottery. After the student is admitted through the lottery or waitlist, the staff will collect more detailed information necessary to enroll and serve the student.

## 7. Registration

#### **Preregistration:**

An applicant who has registered and been offered a space but does not attend classes for four days will be contacted by staff. TFPPCS may then unenroll the applicant in accordance with the Attendance Policy if the issue is not resolved.

To be enrolled in TFPPCS, an adult student must show documents as proof of DC residency. Each applicant must complete a <u>DC Residency</u> <u>Verification Form</u> to determine residency, and provide one of the following supporting documents:

- Pay stub;
- Supplemental Security Income annual benefits notification;
- A copy of Form D40 certified by the DC Office of Tax and Revenue;
- Military Housing Order;
- An embassy letter;

- Proof that a child is a ward of the District of Columbia, in the form of a Court Order; and
- Proof of financial assistance from the DC Government, in the form of either a:
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) verification of income notice or recertification approval letter;
  - o Medicaid approval letter or recertification letter;
  - Housing assistance letter from a housing shelter, including contact name and phone number or a letter from the Housing Authority; or
  - Proof of receipt of financial assistance from another DC Government program

If none of the above supporting documents are available to verify residency, two of the following items are required:

- Unexpired DC motor vehicle registration;
- Unexpired lease or rental agreement;
- Unexpired DC motor vehicle operator's permit or another official non-driver identification; and
- One utility bill (only gas, electric and water bills acceptable).

In addition, each applicant must:

- Complete a TFPPCS Intake form;
- Sign an attendance agreement form;
- Take a placement/appraisal test; and
- Complete a registration packet.



## Non Discrimination

## 8. Statement of Non-Discrimination

TFPPCS does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability or any other classification protected by law in any of its activities, including its educational programs and activities which comply fully with the requirements of state and federal law.

This is done in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act and applicable state laws.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding TFPPCS's non-discrimination policies:



## Programs & Services

## 9. Candidate for Accreditation

The Family Place PCS is pursuing accreditation from The Middle States Association of Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS). TFPPCS must be accredited by one of the accrediting bodies listed in by the District of Columbia School Reform Act or a body otherwise approved by the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board by the end of its first nine years of operation. Accreditation is an improvement process and an accountability system that schools undergo to evaluate their commitment to their mission, vision, and values and ensure that students' needs are met now and in the future. In May 2023, MSA-CESS offered TFPPCS accreditation candidacy and TFPPCS is now in the self-study phase of the process.

During the self-study process, The Family Place PCS has formed accreditation committees, surveyed its stakeholders (staff, students, and community members) and evaluated its internal processes. TFPPCS is analyzing the survey findings and other evidence to identify objectives for a school improvement plan. This plan will ensure that TFPPCS offers the level of quality in its educational programs, services, activities and/or other resources expected by its community of stakeholders as it grows. TFPPCS anticipates hosting an MSA-CESS Team Visit in October 2025.

Our work together will lead to a bright future for TFPPCS students, staff, and community!

## 10. TFP Public Charter School Programs

TFPPCS offers these programs:

#### **PROGRAMS**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

Classes where you learn English. We offer three levels of classes from beginner through advanced adult secondary ESL. You will gain fluency and proficiency to read, write, speak, and understand English.

FOUNDATIONS OF LITERACY (FOL) Program to improve Spanish literacy skills and one of the few such programs offered in DC. You can earn a certificate of elementary and secondary education based on the Modelo Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo (MEVyT) [Guideline on Education for Life and Work].

CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE (CDA) Bilingual program for infants and toddlers, preschool and home visiting CDA endorsement -- one of the few such programs provided in the District. We are an accredited program based on the Council for Professional Recognition's competency standards.

#### To be eligible for the CDA Credential, you must:

- Have a copy of your high school diploma or be a high school junior or senior in an early education/child development Career and Technical Program.
- Complete 120 clock hours of professional education covering the eight CDA Subject Areas.
- Obtain 480 hours of experience working with young children at a childcare center approved by TFPPCS and the CDA Instructor.
- Prepare a CDA Professional Portfolio according to the requirements outlined in the CDA Competency Standards book.

### Class Schedules

Below are the classes that TFPPCS plans to offer in 2025–2026. Please check the website for an updated schedule of classes.

TFPPCS will offer in-person, virtual, and hybrid classes. Students in virtual or hybrid classes should check with their teachers for the class link and the details of how and when their classes will meet.

Class	Class Times	Days	
ESL Beginner - In-person		Monday-Thursday	
ESL Intermediate – Advanced Hybrid*	8:30 - 11:30 a.m.		
Foundations of Spanish Literacy – In-person			
ESL Beginner – Intermediate In-person	12:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Monday-Thursday	
ESL Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced In-person			
ESL Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced Virtual*	6:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Monday-Thursday	
Foundations of Spanish Literacy– In-person			
CDA	9:00 a.m 3:00 p.m	Friday	

<sup>\*</sup>Students enrolling in hybrid or virtual classes must demonstrate competency with technology devices. Preference for evening virtual classes is given to students who work during the day.

## 12. Curricula

TFPPCS has adopted the CASAS Competencies & Content Standards and the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education for the development of our ESL curricula, lesson planning, and goal setting. We use the competency standards for the Child Development Associate credentials. Foundations of Literacy uses the Plaza Comunitaria education program, which is made possible through Mexico's National Institute for Adult Education (INEA).

### 13. Testing

**ESL**: Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) is a widely used national assessment tool which integrates assessment, curriculum and instruction. The results of the ESL exam help students and teachers to identify educational needs and to see the progress they are making throughout the school year.

Foundations of Spanish Literacy (Plaza Comunitaria): The program is divided into modules. To receive a certificate of elementary education, students need to complete 10 basic modules (three initial-level modules, which are included in the total number) and 2 diversified modules according to the student's areas of interest. To receive a certificate of secondary education, students need to complete 8 basic modules and 4 diversified modules according to the student's areas of interest.

**CDA**: Child Development Associate assesses candidates using multiple sources of evidence, including an exam, observation and professional portfolio with resources and competency statements prepared by the Candidate.

## 14. The Family Place Services

In collaboration with The Family Place nonprofit, TFPPCS will offer the services and enrichment activities listed below.

**Early Childhood Development Program**: The Family Place offers early childhood education classes, for children (0 - 4 years) of adult learners while they attend class.

Home Visiting: The home visiting program is accredited by Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) US. Staff conduct home visits with families to create stronger school-family relationships. During home visits, teachers communicate about educational activities with the family and answer any questions the student might have about the class, their children's progress, and other topics. The home visit is a valuable opportunity to strengthen relationships and partner on approaches, services, and strategies that may be of assistance to the family.

Case Management: The Family Place offers a wide range of case management services to ensure an individual's or a family's well-being and stability. The Family Place recognizes that students may have a difficult time participating in classes if their basic needs are not met. By helping meet these needs, participants can reach their full potential as parents and educators for their children.

TFP staff assists participants with basic, everyday needs such as setting up doctor's appointments or understanding a letter from their child's school. TFP staff and volunteers are also available for more indepth case management with participants, in cases such as finding transitional housing opportunities, accompanying participants to court to file for child support, custody, or civil protection orders, as well as applying for public benefits such as food stamps and health insurance. TFP staff may accompany participants to court appearances and social service agencies as needed. to provide language assistance and support in obtaining necessary services.

#### Circulo de Mujeres

TFPPCS students/participants who have experienced an abusive family situation at some point in their lives can participate in a domestic violence support group led by TFP staff. The goal of this group is to empower women to positively improve their lives and the lives of their families. This support group is developed in Spanish and may be offered virtually. Meetings are held the first and third Tuesday of each month from 6 – 7:30 pm. Students interested in joining the Circulo de Mujeres should contact Case Management at 443–776–1053.

#### **Micro-credentials**

TFP offers ServSafe training to students several times/year. Students who successfully complete the training receive industry recognized credentials.

#### Citizenship Classes

TFP hosts an extracurricular hybrid citizenship class to prepare eligible students for the naturalization interview and civics test in English. The class is open to students/participants with an intermediate level of English who score at least 207 on the CASAS exam.

#### Workshops

The Family Place ECE team may occasionally offer parenting workshops on topics of interest to students. The Case Management team organizes periodic virtual workshops on vaccine awareness, lead exposure, and other topics.



#### **Summer Enrichment Program**

TFP organizes and staffs a summer program open to students, participants, and their children. The summer program is generally organized thematically with events planned for both adults and children and may include weekly field trips to local tourist sites.

#### **Special Celebrations**

TFP sponsors special celebrations throughout the calendar year to raise our students' cultural awareness. In the spring, TFP hosts a Children's Day celebration with food and games at a local park. In the summer, TFP organizes bus transportation to take students and participants to a local water park. In the fall, TFP usually buses students to a local farm during Halloween to educate our students about US holidays and traditions.

## 15. Enrichment activities for students offered by TFP Public Charter School

#### **Student Governance:**

TFPPCS believes that our adult learners can play a significant leadership role. If we encourage them to take on a leadership role, they will bring energy, creativity, ideas to the school, and give a voice to their needs and aspirations.

TFPPCS will establish a Student Leadership Council (SLC) in October of each school year and members will be nominated from the ESL, Foundations and CDA programs. The SLC will elect its officers annually and will consist of chair, vice chair and secretary. TFPPCS will provide an orientation for the SLC and advise the SLC its roles and responsibilities as well as the mission and goals of the charter school.

The SLC will talk with their classmates and ask for their ideas and comments about decisions on:

- Curriculum.
- School schedule.
- Social events.
- School policies and activities being presented to the Board of Trustees and the City Council.

#### **Leadership Opportunities**

There are several ways that TFPPCS students may become school leaders, such as

- serve as a student board member
- become a member of the Student Leadership Council (SLC)
- give written or oral student testimony to organizations like OSSE or Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (MOLA)
- give a speech at the end of year graduation celebration
- participate in interviews with local media or in fundraising campaigns
- pursue volunteer or job opportunities with TFPPCS or TFP

#### **Employment Specialist Services**

The TFP Employment Specialist provides employment/career advising, job placement and retention services to interested current and former students. In addition, the Employment Specialist conducts career workshops on topics such as hard and soft skills, resume writing, job searches, and interviewing.

#### **Technology Classes**

The Digital Literacy and Technology instructor provides weekly technology instruction to in-person ESL, FOL, and CDA students to enhance students' digital literacy skills. In addition, the Digital Literacy and Technology instructor provides periodic training and support to online students so they can access their virtual classes.

#### **Math Instruction**

Students in ESL classes receive weekly math instruction, and students in CDA classes receive occasional math instruction from the Math Instructor. The Math Instructor is supported by the classroom instructor and teaches real-life and relevant math skills to students.

#### **Civics Activities**

TFPPCS students may participate in civics activities on holidays or during heritage month celebrations such as Hispanic Heritage, Black History, or Women's History months. These activities include reading about famous people, going on field trips to local museums, cultural centers, or libraries, and exploring traditions through class celebrations.

#### **Extracurricular Activities**

TFPPCS offers extracurricular activities for students during non-class hours. Extracurricular activities may include conversation club, book club, and workshops on pronunciation or other topics.

#### **Field Trips**

To further students' education, TFPPCS may organize occasional school-wide or individual class field trips to museums or other local sites during the school year. Students who participate in field trips do so at their own risk and accept full responsibility if something happens to them and/or their guests during the trip. Students are responsible for any medical treatment costs incurred during the trip, as The Family Place PCS does not have insurance to cover participants' medical expenses.



## Policies

## 16. General Attendance Policies

An adult student 18 years or older who is a resident of the District of Columbia is eligible for free instruction at TFPPCS if they meet the criteria for admission. As adults, TFPPCS students are not subject to the compulsory attendance laws of the District. However, TFPPCS enforces policies that are designed to promote regular attendance.

TFPPCS will record daily student attendance data and instructional hours including late arrivals, partial attendances, and excused and unexcused absences.

#### 1) Attendance

- ESL and FOL students must attend at least **three days** of class per week.
- CDA students must attend 25 hours each month.
- Students are expected to be present for **the entire class**.

#### 2) Absence

- If students cannot attend class, they must inform their instructor of the reason for their absence. If a student cannot reach the instructor, they must call the front desk at 202–265–0149 to report their absence(s).
- Students who arrive late, leave early, do not actively participate, or fail
  to turn on cameras and microphones in online or hybrid classes may
  be marked absent, at the teacher's discretion.

- Students who miss more than half of the class will be marked absent.
- **Some absences will be** excused if documentation is provided as proof. These may include personal emergencies, student illness or illness of family members, or moving residence.
- Teachers will assign makeup classwork and homework to absent students.

#### 3) Chronic Absence

The following are chronic absences and require intervention:

- ESL or FOL students who:
  - o miss more than four (4) days of class in a row
  - o miss eight (8) days or more in a 30-day time period for any reason
- CDA students who:
  - miss more than 2 Friday classes and 1 Tuesday class in a 30-day period

#### 4) Tardiness

- Students are expected to be present for the entire class.
- Students who are **consistently** late may be marked absent.

#### 5) Absence and Tardiness Interventions



TFPPCS will take these actions for a student with attendance or tardiness problems:

TIER	INTERVENTION
ONE	Teachers will monitor attendance for all students.
TWO	Teachers will refer chronically absent and/or tardy students to the Case Manager. The Case Manager will develop a plan with the student to identify barriers and challenges and set corrective goals. The student will sign an attendance agreement and have two weeks to improve attendance.  Students who need a schedule or class change will be referred to the Chief Academic Officer.
THREE	Registration and the Chief Compliance Officer will follow up with chronically absent and/or tardy students.
FOUR	The Chief Compliance Officer will exit students who have not met the corrective goals.

#### 6) Program Exit

- Students who do not improve chronic attendance or tardiness problems may be exited from the program.
- Students who exit a program for any reason may only be reenrolled if seats are available. Exited students must contact Registration BEFORE returning to class. Students will be waitlisted if classes are full.
- Students exited because of chronic absence must sign an attendance agreement before they can re-enroll.

## 17. Attendance - Online/Hybrid Classes/Situational Distance Learning

This attendance policy is in addition to the General Attendance Policies.

Online and hybrid classes will include regular virtual instruction. Situational Distance Learning will refer to any change from regular in-person or hybrid classes to fully virtual learning for any period of time.

Virtual instruction will occur in a student's home or other private space and include synchronous classes taught by an instructor four days/week. Virtual instruction will be on a video platform such as Zoom or Google Meet.

Students in virtual classes agree to these rules:

- attend class on a computer, Chromebook, or tablet (NOT A PHONE!)
- have a quiet and private space to attend class (NOT ON THE BUS or METRO!)
- · will not attend class while in bed
- keep the camera on during class
- mute the microphone when there is background noise
- use Google Classroom for classwork and homework
- do make-up work when absent

Students will be marked "present" if they log on and actively participate in a virtual class held by their instructor on the day of their class. Students will be marked "absent" if they do not log on to the video class on their scheduled class day or they log on but do not actively participate in the class (cameras and microphones are off for the duration of the class) or do not arrange to make up the class with independent learning.

## **18.** Technology Policy

#### A. Device Loans

Chromebooks and/or hotspots are loaned to active virtual, hybrid and CDA students for the duration of the academic year. All students must meet with the Digital Literacy instructor and sign a contract before obtaining a school device. Devices must be returned as instructed by the Digital Literacy instructor in their original condition. The student must contact the Digital Literacy instructor or teacher immediately if the device or its accessories stop working correctly or are lost, stolen or damaged. Failure to immediately contact the school will result in the student being responsible for repairing or replacing the device.



#### **B. Chromebook Rules**

All students in possession of a school Chromebook must:

- 1.Be the only user.
- 2.Use only their school email account to access the computer.
- 3. Use the computer for educational purposes only.
- 4. Treat the computer and its accessories with respect and care.
- 5. Keep the computer in English.
- 6. Keep the computer out of reach from children and/or pets.
- 7. Return the computer upon completion of or withdrawal from the class.

#### **C. Hotspot Rules**

Hotspots are only to be used to attend TFPPCS virtual classes or complete assignments. All students in possession of a school hotspot must:

- 1.Be the only user.
- 2. Keep it at home.
- 3. Turn off the device when it is not in use.
- 4. Keep it out of reach from children and/or pets.
- 5. Keep it away from liquids.

#### D. Inappropriate Use of School Devices

The following actions are prohibited:

- 1. Downloading unauthorized applications or software.
- Using the device for social media, video games, YouTube or any other non-educational websites or applications.
- 3. Sending or sharing inappropriate, offensive, or explicit content.
- 4. Adding personal accounts to the device.
- 5. Eating or drinking while using the device.
- 6.Traveling with the devices or using them outside of the student's home.
- 7. Changing the device settings.

Any misuse could result in the loss of privilege to use school devices in addition to other potential disciplinary actions. TFP and TFPPCS staff have the right to request a student to return their device if they deem them inactive or believe the devices are being used inappropriately.

#### **E. Technology Support**

The Digital Literacy instructor is available to provide support to students with loaned school devices. Immediate assistance may not always be available. Students should contact the school, their teacher, or the digital literacy instructor directly to schedule an appointment.

## 19 Student Rights & Responsibilities

Each adult learner has the right to:

- Participate in adult education programs, services, and activities without discrimination
- Choose whether to disclose a disability
- Meet with staff to discuss his/her needs
- Be treated with respect
- Privacy of their personal information
- Safety and security at school

Each adult learner has the responsibility to:

- Treat others fairly (Not discriminate)
- Keep information about other people private
- Behave and speak respectfully at all times
- Attend class 75% or more
- Post-test before exit
- Communicate with staff during work hours
- Take care of TFPPCS devices and facilities
- Have academic integrity

### 20. Communication

#### **Class Communication**

Teachers use WhatsApp to communicate with students. Students are encouraged to join class WhatsApp groups for class-related communication, including important information from the teacher, and to participate actively in class with teachers and classmates. Some teachers may also choose to use Google Classroom for classwork and homework. When communicating for any school purpose through email, text, social media, Zoom, or other online applications, students have the right to:

- Privacy of their personal information, which may not be shared without their permission.
- Opt out of participating in WhatsApp groups.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Keep other students' personal information private unless they have permission to share that information.
- Use cameras and microphones on Zoom to participate appropriately in class.
- Turn off cameras and mute microphones when asked.
- Arrange an alternative method of communication with their teacher if opting out of WhatsApp class groups.

Staff will enforce the Discipline Policy for misuse of these forms of communication.

#### **General Communication**

If students need assistance, students may contact teachers, case managers, and other staff **during regular work hours for that staff person**. Each staff person may have a unique work schedule. Students should ask each staff member what hours they work and are available to help students. For example, some teachers teach in the mornings and in the evenings but do not work in the afternoons. Students should contact those staff in the mornings and evenings.

Students should always be respectful of staff. **Students should not contact staff during their non-work hours and weekend hours** from Friday at 5 pm. until Monday at 8:30 am. Staff will not respond to students who text or call during non-work hours.

If you need support from the Case Management team, students can call or text 443-776-1053 between 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday. If a student has an emergency that requires immediate assistance, the student should call 911.

Students who call or text repeatedly during non-work hours may be subject to the discipline policy.



## 21. FERPA Notice

Adult learners have a right to privacy and for TFPPCS to respect your privacy rights. You, therefore, have a right to:

- Expect that your personal information and school records will be protected by TFPPCS in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99.
- Expect that TFPPCS's staff will not ask you about your immigration status.

#### **Privacy and Student Information**

It is the responsibility of the student to inform TFPPCS promptly of any changes that include, but are not limited to: home address, telephone numbers and email address, marriage, separation or divorce, guardianship, health status, immunizations, and medication needs. TFPPCS complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);

FERPA NOTIFICATION: FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age the following rights with respect to a student's education records:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records.
- The right to request amendment of the student's education records.
- The right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by TFPPCS to comply with requirements of FERPA. Notification of Rights under FERPA, with a summarized explanation of these rights, is posted near the Registrar's office; parents and students may request a copy from the office staff.

FERPA directory information is information contained in a student's education record that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Under current TFPPCS policy, the following information is designated as directory information: student name, dates of attendance, and enrollment status. A student may request that his/her information not be included in the directory information by informing the ED, CCO, or CAO in writing.

A school official is considered to have a legitimate educational interest if the official is: performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or contract agreement; performing a task related to a student's education or to discipline of a student; providing a service or benefit related to the student or student's family; or maintaining the safety and security of the campus. An example would be a Case Manager meeting with a student to review the students' record on what goals they set for employment. This review of a student record is related to the task of advising and supporting the student with a goal they set upon enrollment. The advisor would not be authorized to view records that are not relevant to the task at hand. School officials include administrators, Case Managers, and teachers working for TFPPCS and TFP.

## **22.** Discipline Policy

TFPPCS uses a positive behavior approach (PBA) to teach and reinforce expected behavior. PBA uses three steps, or tiers, of support, to help adult learners comply with expectations:

- Teaching expected behaviors to all adult learners and recognizing and encouraging students when they are following the rules and being good citizens of TFPPCS.
- Providing additional lessons and practice for adult learners who do not behave as expected.
- Working with individual adult learners and teachers to help the students learn new behaviors or new ways to express strong emotions.

All discipline and behavior policies apply to in-person, hybrid, and virtual classes and any online communications through email, text, social media, or other applications.



## A. Behaviors that may lead to Intervention, Suspension and/or Expulsion

- Academic Integrity Academic integrity means doing your own work. This includes:
  - Plagiarism: Presenting the work of another person as your own work. Students will not copy from another student, a book, the internet, or any other source or have family members complete their work. Plagiarism violates copyright law and fair use guidelines.
  - Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Students must get permission from their instructor to use artificial intelligence for classwork, homework, and CDA portfolio assignments. Students using AI without permission are subject to the discipline policy.
  - For more information, please read the complete TFPPCS policy on Academic Integrity.
- BULLYING Bullying is a behavior that is repetitive and intended to harass, frighten, insult, threaten an individual psychologically or physically. This includes verbal, written, and physical abuse. Written abuse, or "cyber-bullying," can include emails, and online insults. In addition, unwanted sharing of embarrassing pictures or videos, maintaining an online presence while pretending to be the victim, unsolicited surveillance, and invasion of privacy, such as reading private emails or text messages or disclosing personal information about other students or staff without permission, are all considered bullying behaviors. A copy of the complete policy can be found online at TFPPCS Bullying Prevention Policy.
- HARASSING CONDUCT Harassing conduct includes verbal or written actions that are abusive to any person or conduct which threatens or endangers the physical, emotional health, or safety of any person that may be sexual in nature.
- DAMAGE TO PROPERTY Damage to TFPPCS property, or that of a member of TFPPCS, while on TFPPCS property or at TFPPCS sponsored activities including, but not limited to, hotspots and Chromebooks, walls, bathrooms and classrooms is prohibited.
- DISORDERLY CONDUCT Disorderly conduct includes indecent or obscene behavior in which it is an obstruction or disruption of TFPPCS sponsored activities.
- FIRE SAFETY Tampering with or misuse of fire alarms, fire exits, fire-fighting equipment, smoke/heat detectors, sprinkler systems, and other safety devices.
- FORGERY Forgery is the alteration or misuse of TFPPCS documents, records, or identification.

- FRAUD Fraud includes but is not limited to intentionally giving false information to the TFPPCS staff.
- NON-COMPLIANCE Non-compliance is the failure to comply with directions of TFPPCS staff.
- PHYSICAL ASSAULT or PHYSICAL VIOLENCE Intentionally inflicting bodily harm upon any person; taking reckless action that results in harm to any person; or threatening by the use of force to harm or injure any person.
- PHYSICAL HARASSMENT Physical harassment includes but is not limited to inappropriate touching of any person or similar conduct that threatens or endangers the physical or emotional health or safety of any person that may be sexual in nature.
- THEFT The stealing of property belonging to another member of the TFPPCS community and or possession of stolen property is prohibited.
- VANDALISM Intentional damage, destruction, or defacement of property of TFPPCS.
- WEAPONS -TFPPCS completely forbids the carrying of any weapon on school property. This includes any handgun or rifle, ammunition, knife or other sharp object (ice pick, razor, etc.), or any object intended for use as a weapon. TFPPCS will expel any student who brings a weapon to school.

#### **B.** Consequences for Behaviors

If the Positive Behavior Approach is not effective, the school may take any of the following actions, depending on the nature of the behavior and the student's past performance.

- Student warning, oral or written: Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected. Any faculty or staff member may give a warning.
- Participation in Instructional Program: A student may be expected to: attend a course such as anger management, conflict resolution, peer mediation or stress reduction; participate in group or individual counseling; or attend other programs.
- Remuneration: A student may be expected to perform service to correct or repair any damage or harm which may have been caused. An example of this may include service projects.
- Written Reprimands or Suspensions: The Chief Compliance Officer will issue written reprimands or out-of-school suspensions for serious violations.
- Immediate Expulsion: Physical assault and harassment of another student or staff and/or destruction of property will not be tolerated and will result in immediate expulsion.

#### C. Tiered Consequences and Interventions for Suspension

The chart below outlines progressive levels (A-C) of interventions and consequences, along with examples of actions that may be taken at each level. In any given situation, based on the unique circumstances of a situation, the Chief Compliance Officer may utilize a different level of intervention than is indicated on the chart.

Code of Conduc	t and Discipline Policy	
	Intervention Options: If these interventions are successful, referral to the Chief Compliance Officer may not be necessary.	
Level A	<ul> <li>Reinforcement of appropriate behavior</li> <li>Reminder and/or redirection</li> <li>Re-teach expectations and skills</li> <li>Warning</li> <li>Referral to counselor</li> <li>In-class time-out and/or take a break</li> <li>Written reflection about incident</li> <li>Loss of privileges</li> </ul>	
	Discretionary: Up to referral to Chief Compliance Officer	
Level B	<ul> <li>Records review by staff</li> <li>Referral to Case Manager</li> <li>Possible Written Reprimand or Suspension</li> </ul>	
Level C	Required: Referral to Chief Compliance Officer	
	Possible expulsion	

Consequences for Adult Learners
The following is a matrix of consequences that the Chief
Compliance Officer may use to ensure fair and equitable
consequences for students.

Offense/Level	A	В	C
Lack of Academic Integrity/Plagiarism/Use of Al without Permission	x	x	x
Bullying		x	x
Damage to property	x	x	x
Disorderly conduct	x		
Fire safety	x	x	
Forgery		x	x
Fraud		x	x
Harassing conduct			x
Non-compliance	x		
Physical assault			x
Physical harassment			x
Theft		x	x
Vandalism	x	x	x
Weapons			x

#### **D. Manifestation Determination Review**

The Family Place Public Charter School will implement disciplinary policies and procedures, including policies and procedures for the suspension and expulsion of students that are ageappropriate and consistent with applicable law including, but not limited to, IDEA, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. TFPPCS serves adult learners 18 years or older who are residents of the District as long as they meet all other criteria for admission.

If TFPPCS disciplines an adult learner 18 years or older who is eligible as a student with disabilities, we will ensure IDEA requirements governing the discipline and placement of students with disabilities are followed. We will conduct a Manifestation Determination Review during the disciplinary process if such a review would result in a change of placement.

#### E. Staff Responsible for Compliance

The Chief Compliance Officer is the administrative officer responsible for ensuring staff's compliance and training in the use of the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy.

TFPPCS uses a positive behavior approach (PBA) to teach and reinforce expected behavior. However, physical assault and harassment of another student or staff and/or destruction of property will not be tolerated and will result in immediate expulsion.



## F. Due Process, Hearings and Appeals for Suspension or Expulsion

1. Hearings:

In the case of a recommendation for suspension/expulsion, an administrative officer who is impartial and not involved in the instance will conduct a hearing, determine outcomes, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The student and other representatives may appear at the hearing to be heard, present testimony and other information to the administrative officer. The student will be notified in writing of the decision.

The following minimal procedures will be followed:

- The student shall be advised of the time and place of the hearing.
- The student shall be advised of the breach of rules of which she or he is charged.
- The student shall be advised of the following rights:
  - The right to present his or her case.
  - The right to be accompanied by an advisor.
  - o The right to call witnesses on his or her behalf.
  - The right to confront witnesses against him or her. Three staff members not involved in the infraction or incident will conduct hearings.
  - An official record will be kept and shared with the student upon request.

The student shall be advised of the method of appeal.

#### 2. Appeals:

- The Committee of the Board of Trustees will review the appeal and render a decision within five working days.
- The decision will be provided to the student within five working days.
- If the decision is to expel the student, the student may petition the Board for readmission one year after the date of expulsion.

G. Policy for Equitable Enforcement and Application by Staff

TFPPCS staff will be provided training and guidance on how to equitably enforce and apply TFPPCS's Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy. The Tiered Consequences and Intervention matrix below provides guidance on how the staff can administer the policy in a fair and equitable manner.

## **23.** Grievance Procedures

As an adult learner, you have the right to be informed, to be involved in decisions regarding your education, to file a complaint and appeal any decision you disagree with, and to have your privacy protected. When a student or community member wishes to lodge a complaint, they should provide the following:

- Complainant's contact information, including telephone number and email.
- A detailed account of the complaint.
- Whether this is the first time the individual is calling to report this complaint
- The explicit steps that the caller has taken following the school's complaint process including any evidence of responsiveness and/or unresponsiveness of the school, including date(s).
- If a student or parent has a complaint, they should contact the management staff of TFPPCS. If TFPPCS staff and the school are unresponsive or unwilling to assist in resolving the issue in a timely manner, they should contact the school's Board of Trustees.
   Students may contact Oralia Puente at <u>oraliapuente@aol.com</u> or Michael Barnet at <u>mdjb@rcn.com</u> from the Board of Trustees.

## Special Services

## **24**. Special Needs

TFPPCS provides services and accommodations to students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (20 U.S.C. § 794), and any other federal requirements concerning the education of adult students with disabilities.

## 25. Health & Safety

- TFPPCS complies with all applicable health and safety inspections and takes any and all necessary steps to ensure appropriate ventilation and air quality, building condition, cleanliness, temperature control, and absence of pests/infestation in compliance with applicable health and safety and building laws and regulations.
- TFPPCS will provide required and appropriate health and safety training to its staff including annual CPR and First Aid training.
   TFPPCS will be equipped with appropriate first aid kits.
- TFPPCS complies with the DC Code concerning facility safety and other requirements, including compliance of facilities with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the DC Fire Prevention Code. Our building is accessible to all persons with disabilities.

- TFPPCS facilities undergo regular inspections conducted both internally and by relevant DC government agencies. TFPPCS maintains an up-todate emergency response plan and holds quarterly emergency evacuation and fire drills. The certificate of occupancy and insurance policy are both up to date and on file with DC PCSB.
- TFPPCS will maintain proper licenses from the DC government and applicable agencies therein.
- Students may only take medication during school hours if it is essential
  to maintaining their good health. Students are responsible for their own
  medication and must ensure that no other students have access to it.
  Staff members are prohibited from giving medicine to a student unless
  the following requirements are met: If a student experiences injury or
  illness during TFPPCS day, TFPPCS will contact the nearest of kin. If the
  nearest of kin is not available, whoever is listed on the Emergency
  Contact Form will be contacted.

## Leaving the **Program**

## 26. Withdrawal Policies and Procedures

Students may withdraw from the school at any time, but we require prior notice so that we can accurately report attendance for attendance records. TFPPCS' staff will work with each student when a request for withdrawal is made to conduct an exit interview to determine the reasons for withdrawal and record the extent to which the student has met his/her individualized educational goals.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ADULT LEARNER AND FAMILY

By signing and returning to this page, you acknowledge that you have received the Student and Family Handbook for 2025-2026. This form will be kept by TFPPCS. Please sign below to acknowledge receipt of all items listed above.

To enable us to properly record that you have returned this sheet, please carefully print the information below:

Your Name:
Date:
Program Name (please check one box):  ESL  Foundations of Literacy  CDA
Signature:

By signing the above statement, you have not waived other rights protected under DC and Federal laws and you have the right to express disagreement with TFPPCS's policies or decisions.



# STUDENT Handbook 2025-2026

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