CAROLUS ONLINE ACADEMY
POWERED BY K12

Student and Learning Coach Handbook
School Year 2024-2025

Carolus Online Academy

August 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sep 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Oct 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Nov 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Dec 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Jan 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Feb 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

Mar 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Apr 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Back To School Night: 8/20/2024

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences: 9/26, 12/4, 2/25, 5/8

Interim Assessment Windows:
8/8-8/23/2024
12/9-12/18/2024
4/1-4/11/2025

Weather Make-Up Days:
10/11/2024, 12/19/2024, 1/2/2025, 1/3/2025, 1/6/2025, 3/14/2025

State Testing Windows:
CogAT/IA (G2): 10/14-10/25/2024
ACCESS for ELLs: 1/21-3/13/2025
PTA (G2-5): 2/18-3/13/2025
SC-Alt (G3-8): 3/10-4/25/2025
SC Ready (G3-8): 4/28-5/23/2025
HS EOC (HS): 4/28-5/23/2025
PSAT/PreACT (G10): 10/1-10/31/2024
ACT/SAT (G11-12): Spring 2025

Staff and Student Holiday	First and Last Day of School	Instructional Day	Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences	Teacher Workday

Staff and Student Holidays – No School

Sept 2 – Labor Day
Nov 27-29 – Thanksgiving Break
Dec 20-Jan 1 – Winter Break
Jan 20 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Feb 17 – President's Day
March 24-28 – Spring Break
Apr 18 – Good Friday

Teacher Professional Days
No School for Students

August 1-7
Dec 20
May 27-30

End of Term & Reporting Dates

5th Day – Aug 14
45th Day – Oct 10
End of Semester 1 – Dec 18
90th Day – Dec 18
135th Day – Mar 12
180th Day – May 23
End of Semester 2 – May 23

Carolus Online Academy

Our mission is to empower students with access to college and career readiness opportunities, enabling them to realize their full potential.

School Administration Directory

Name	Position	Email
Pamela Sieger	Executive Director	psieger@k12.com
Angela Jones-Howze	Operations Manager	ajones-howze@carolusonlineacademy.org
Carlotta Redish	K-8 Academic Administrator	credish@carolusonlineacademy.org
Christopher Webber	High School Academic Administrator	cwebber@carolusonlineacademy.org
Tara Ball	Interim Special Programs Academic Administrator	tball@k12.com
Tracey Lee	Testing Administrator	tlee@carolusonlineacademy.org
Kanesha Morman	Reading Coach	kmorman@carolusonlineacademy.org

For K12 Customer Support, visit https://www.help.k12.com/s/ or call 866.K12.CARE (866.512.2273).

COA Faculty and Staff

We believe that a collaborative relationship between you and your assigned teachers is essential for success. Your homeroom teacher should be your first point of contact for all academic or technical questions, as they possess a wealth of knowledge. Our teachers work as a team to ensure your student's progress and compliance in all areas.

Support Team

Our support team members collaborate closely with your family to meet your student's needs and provide the best possible education. Your student may interact with various team members throughout the year. To stay informed about your student's progress, it's crucial to check and respond to your email regularly.

School Counselors

High School
Katie Beck serves as the High School Guidance Counselor.

Elementary and Middle School
Amanda Wilson is the Elementary and Middle School Guidance Counselor.

Our school guidance counselors play a crucial role in supporting students and families by acting as liaisons between families and community resources. They provide assistance in various areas, including:

- Academic guidance and support
- College and career planning
- Social and emotional development
- Connecting families with community resources
- Addressing economic challenges and providing relevant support

The counselors work closely with students, parents, teachers, and administrators to ensure a comprehensive support system that promotes student success and well-being throughout their academic journey.

School Counselor Services

Our guidance counselors offer a wide range of services to support students' academic, personal, and social development:

Academic Support

- Course selection and scheduling assistance
- Study skills and time management guidance
- Academic progress monitoring

College and Career Readiness

- College application guidance
- Scholarship and financial aid information
- Career exploration and planning

Social and Emotional Support

- Individual and group counseling sessions
- Conflict resolution strategies
- Stress management techniques

Family and Community Outreach

- Parent-teacher communication facilitation
- Referrals to community resources
- Workshops and informational sessions for families

Crisis Intervention

- Immediate support during personal or academic crises
- Coordination with mental health professionals when necessary

Our counselors are committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment, ensuring that each student has the resources and guidance needed to thrive academically and personally.

Community Engagement Specialist

Niki Kayser serves as our Community Engagement Specialist, providing essential support to COA families through various initiatives:

- Organizing monthly outings and learning lab activities
- Managing social media and website communications
- Facilitating socialization opportunities among COA families
- Conducting individual training sessions as needed
- Coordinating the onboarding and training process for new students

The Community Engagement Specialist plays a crucial role in promoting positive school attendance and addressing concerns related to attendance and truancy. For more details on attendance policies, please refer to the attendance section of this handbook.

Important: If your student has missed school without an excuse, please contact your homeroom teacher immediately and ensure your student logs in to complete schoolwork.

General Guidance

This handbook provides general guidance for parents and students enrolled in Carolus Online Academy (COA). As a public charter school, COA adheres to the rules and regulations governing South Carolina public charter schools. For more information on charter school guidelines, visit https://sccharter.org/.A copy of this handbook is available on the school website at Carolus Online Academy.

School Right to Amend Handbook

Carolus Online Academy reserves the right to amend handbook items as necessary throughout the school year. Once revised and approved by the administration, families will receive the amended handbook.

Policy of Non-Discrimination

Carolus Online Academy is committed to providing equal opportunities and does not discriminate on the basis of:

- Race
- Color
- National origin
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Age
- Religion
- Immigrant status

This non-discrimination policy applies to all programs and activities, including equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

For inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

- Section 504 inquiries: Contact Ebonie McMullan, 504 Coordinator, at emcmullan@carolusonlineacademy.org
- Title IX inquiries: Send mail to Carolus Online Academy, 1812 Barnwell Street, Columbia, SC 29201

You may also contact the Office of Civil Rights at 800-421-3481 or OCR@ed.gov for further assistance.

COA School Requirements and Procedures

Carolus Online Academy is dedicated to providing comprehensive support for all K-12 students, ensuring their academic success and overall well-being. We implement effective strategies to support students throughout their academic journey and apply retention measures when necessary.

Student Support Services

Academic Counseling
Each student has access to a dedicated school counselor for guidance on course selection, academic progress, and goal setting.

Tutoring and Remediation
We offer tutoring services and remedial support for students requiring additional assistance in specific subjects or skills.

Special Education Services
Students with special education needs receive appropriate accommodations and support services as outlined in their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).Social and Emotional Support
Counseling services are available to address students' social and emotional well-being, fostering a supportive learning environment.

Learning Coach Involvement
We encourage regular communication with Learning Coaches to promote a collaborative approach to student support and success.

Retention Procedures

Early Intervention
Regular monitoring of academic progress helps identify at-risk students, allowing for prompt implementation of intervention strategies.

Progress Monitoring
We closely track academic performance and attendance throughout the school year, identifying students who may need additional support.

Retention Criteria
Retention decisions are based on comprehensive assessments of academic performance, attendance records, and progress towards grade-level expectations.

Retention Review Process
A committee of school administrators, teachers, and counselors assesses potential retention cases. Learning Coaches are involved in this collaborative decision-making process.

Appeals Process
An appeals process is available for Learning Coaches who wish to challenge retention decisions.

Implementation and Review

- Staff receive training on effective student support strategies and retention procedures.
- The policy is reviewed annually, considering feedback from all stakeholders.
- Clear communication of policies and procedures ensures transparency and understanding among students, parents, and staff.

This comprehensive approach is designed to promote student success, provide necessary support systems, and ensure a nurturing learning environment for all Carolus Online Academy students.

State & School Testing Requirements

As a South Carolina public charter school, COA must adhere to mandatory state testing requirements. All COA students are required to participate in state-mandated academic assessments. Key points to note:

- Specific testing dates will be communicated as soon as they are available
- Testing locations will be announced closer to each scheduled testing period
- Efforts will be made to minimize travel time to testing locations, but families should be prepared for some travel

Important:

- Failure to participate in these assessments may result in administrative withdrawal from COA
- Non-participation may negatively impact COA's future availability
- South Carolina does not offer an opt-out option for mandated tests

COA Instructional Assessment Plan

The COA Instructional Assessment Plan utilizes 3rd party curriculum supplements, including periodic Interim Assessments, to:

- Provide growth measures for all students
- Ensure systematic exposure to state standards
- Enable data-driven instruction

Note: Participation in the Instructional Assessment Plan, which may include face-to-face components, is mandatory for continued enrollment at COA.

Consequences of non-completion:

- Access to course material may be blocked
- Absences may be recorded until the Interim Assessment is completed

Questions, Concerns, or Complaints

To address issues or seek information, please follow this two-step procedure:

- Contact the student's Homeroom Teacher via phone or school email
- If unresolved, contact an administrator at schooloffice@carolusonlineacademy.org or refer to the directory at the beginning of this handbook

COA staff is committed to collaborating with parents to resolve any problems that may arise during the school year.

Communication Responsibility

Consistent communication between students, parents, and teachers is essential for school compliance. Communication channels include:

- School email
- Telephone (including voicemail)
- School announcements
- Newsletters
- Workshops (in-person and online via Class Connect)

Response Times:

- Teachers will respond to school emails/phone messages within 1 business day
- Learning coaches are expected to check school emails at least twice daily

For questions, support, or feedback, contact school administrators using the directory provided in this handbook.

Class Connect Sessions

COA teachers offer multiple live sessions weekly, covering various topics. Key points:

- Attendance may be mandatory if data indicates a need for additional intervention
- Working microphone and camera are required, to be used as directed by the teacher
- These tools improve interactive experiences and help proctor student learning

For technical support, contact customer support at 1-866-512-2273.

Homeroom Model and Student Individualized Learning

COA employs a data-driven instructional model to define students' academic needs and strengths:

- Teachers use previous standardized tests, quarterly benchmark exams, and online school information
- Student progress is tracked throughout the school year
- The process is fluid and evolves based on individual student needs

Data-Driven Small Groups:

- Students are placed in small groups within the first 9 weeks of enrollment
- Group placements are reviewed at least quarterly, with potential for more frequent changes
- The process begins with a "Connection Call" from the Homeroom Teacher within the first two weeks

Ongoing Support:

- Periodic data reviews occur every 4-6 weeks
- Families may receive calls, emails, or conference invitations based on individual needs

This approach ensures personalized support and timely interventions to meet each student's academic goals.

Grading and School Work Policy

Report Cards

- Official report cards are issued throughout the academic year
- The final report card determines grade level/course promotion

Course Completion Requirements
Students must complete 20% of each course by the end of every quarter, unless teacher-approved modifications are in place.

Grade Appeals
To appeal a grade, submit a request to the Academic Administrator. Direct any concerns about school material to the same administrator.

Retention Recommendations
Students may be recommended for grade level retention if they are:

- Failing 3 or more core academic courses (Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, or Science)
- Failing both Math and Language Arts

K-5 Promotion Considerations

For students in grades K-5, promotion status also takes into account:

- Performance on individual progress monitoring assessments
- Results from interim assessments (criterion and/or normative based)

This comprehensive approach ensures that promotion decisions are based on a holistic view of student performance and readiness for the next grade level.

Grading Scales

Kindergarten - 2nd Grade

Grade	Description
E	Excellent
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

3rd Grade - 12th Grade*

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

3rd Grade Read to Succeed Act Information

The Read to Succeed Act (Act 284) mandates that, starting from the 2017-2018 school year:

- Students must be retained in third grade if they fail to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the year
- Proficiency is determined by scoring above the lowest achievement level on the SC READY state summative reading assessment

Exemptions and Support:

- Students may be exempt from mandatory retention for good cause
- Exempt students will continue to receive appropriate instructional support and reading interventions

Summer Reading Camp:

Third graders who do not take the state test or fail to demonstrate reading proficiency must participate in summer reading camp, which may include:

- Daily participation in a virtual classroom
- Work samples
- Daily reading (parent and child)
- In-person reading testing
- Home visits
- Local in-person sessions or classes

Important: Failure to participate in the summer reading program may result in the student repeating third grade.

The Read to Succeed Team is actively researching models and solutions from other states and South Carolina stakeholders to address concerns about third-grade retention.

Career Learning

Carolus Online Academy (COA) is a career-focused virtual school in South Carolina designed to give students an edge for the future. Our Career Learning program offers:

- Exposure to relevant technical and specialty trade skills
- Career and technical education (CTE) courses built around multiple career fields
- Opportunities to explore occupations of interest before high school graduation

Middle School: Students explore multiple career fields
High School: Students choose a specific CTE Pathway

Withdrawing from COA

To withdraw from COA:

- Submit a request to the student's homeroom teacher
- Complete the parent withdrawal form provided by the teacher
- Provide the following information:
    o Reason for withdrawal
    o Last day of enrollment/attendance with COA
    o Name of the new school the student will attend

The new school must send a records request or proof of enrollment to schooloffice@carolusonlineacademy.org to finalize the withdrawal.

Important Notes:

- Unresponsive families may have the withdrawal process placed on hold
- Absences will accumulate until the student is withdrawn for truancy
- Failure to provide proof of enrollment in a new school may result in notification to the home district and possible family court referral or DSS intervention

Attendance Policy

Regular school attendance is crucial for student success and grade level completion. Chronic absenteeism is strongly linked to dropping out of school.South Carolina Attendance Requirements:

- Mandatory school attendance from age 5 to 17
- Kindergarten attendance waiver available if requested
- Homeschooling option available if requirements are met

Attendance Expectations:

- Students must attend school daily
- Presence counted when in school or at authorized activities

The 25% Rule/Instructional Time:
According to SC Code 59-40-65 (C), COA must provide 25% of core academic instruction through non-online methods:

- Average of five hours weekly of real-time teacher interaction or offline schoolwork
- Students expected to attend weekly live sessions for each core subject

Attendance Definition:

- Daily sign-in and work completion or live class attendance required
- Make-up days (weekends, holidays) allowed with teacher approval

Lawful Absences:

- Student illness (physician's statement required)
- Serious family illness or death (parent verification required)
- Recognized religious holidays (advance approval needed)
- Military deployment of parent/guardian (up to 5 days, conditions apply)
- School-approved activities or extreme hardships

- Approved school outings and face-to-face testing

Unlawful Absences:

- Absences without parental knowledge
- Absences without acceptable cause, even with parental knowledge

Truancy:
A student aged 6-17 is considered truant after three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences (S.C. Code of Regulations - Chapter 43-274).

Adherence to this policy ensures compliance with state regulations and supports student academic success.

Administrative Withdrawal for Attendance

Students may be withdrawn from COA South Carolina due to attendance issues:10 Consecutive Unexcused Absences:

- Student considered truant
- Withdrawn from active enrollment on the 11th day
- Withdrawal review held by senior administration

Important: Students absent for more than 3 consecutive days must provide documented excuses to their homeroom teacher within 7 days to avoid being considered truant and withdrawn.

Cumulative Absences:
Students who miss more than 10 school days cumulatively may be withdrawn due to attendance policy violation.

Attendance Intervention Timeline:

Absences	Action
3 consecutive or 5 total	Email, auto dialer, possible truancy intervention plan
5 consecutive or 7 total	Letter, email, auto dialer, attempted live phone call
10 total	Possible withdrawal from school
10 consecutive	Automatic withdrawal from school

Additional Reasons for Administrative Withdrawal:

- Failure to attend in-person State Mandated Testing or School Benchmark testing
- Failure to complete at-home benchmark during testing window
- Failure to complete onboarding requirements during initial 25 days of enrollment

Student Onboarding

COA utilizes the Strong Start program to provide early communication, orientation, and onboarding tasks for students and families. This program aims to foster engagement and provide the foundation for success in the online school setting.Key Components:

- Resources available from enrollment through the first four weeks of school
- Pre-school start email outlining expectations
- Required orientation sessions for new students
- Access to Online School materials in a familiarization course
- Completion of orientation requirements and initial assessments

Resources:

- Learning coach resource site: https://www.k12.com/parent-student-resources/how-online-learning-works.html
- Strong Start information: https://www.k12.com/parent-student-resources/how-online-learning-works/strong-start.html

For technical assistance, contact K12 Customer Support at 1-866-512-2273.

Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use

This section outlines the policies and guidelines for student conduct and acceptable use of COA resources. COA reserves the right to update these guidelines at any time.

Violation Categories

Level I Conduct:

- Impedes classroom procedures or school operations
- Examples: repeated absence from live sessions, inappropriate behavior, dress code violations, plagiarism

Level II Conduct:

- Activities directed against persons or property
- Endangers health or safety
- Includes repeated Level I violations (3 or more times)
- Examples: disrespect to staff, bullying, profanity, posting obscene materials

Level III Conduct:

- Results in violence or poses serious threat
- May require administrative action, law enforcement intervention

- Examples: illegal activities, threats, vandalism, sexual harassment, possession of dangerous substances

Consequences

- Level I or higher - Verbal warning, call to parent, student/teacher/administrator conference with parent
- Level II or Ill - Referral to outside agency, loss of privileges/exclusion from school activities or events (outings, clubs, etc.), loss of privileges and access to COA instructional resources (class tools/chat, etc.), out of school suspension (curriculum lockout), in person meetings or conferences, restitution of property and damages, expulsion, involvement with law enforcement agencies and possible legal action

Online Accountability

- Posting anonymous messages is not permitted unless authorized by the course's online teacher. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited.
- Use your own username and password, and do not share these with anyone. You are responsible for all activities associated with your username and password.
- Do not interfere with other users' ability to access COA.
- You must change your password(s) frequently, at least once per semester is encouraged.
- Do not publicly post your personal contact information (address and phone number) or anyone else's.
- Do not publicly post any messages that were sent to you privately.
- Do not download, transmit or post material that is intended for personal gain or profit, non-COA commercial activities, non-COA advertising, or politically lobbying on a COA owned instructional computing resource.
- Do not use COA instructional computing resources to sell or purchase any illegal items or substances.
- Do not upload or post any software on a COA instructional computing resources that are not specifically required or approved for your assignments.
- Do not post any MP files (audio or video), compressed videos, or other non-instructional files to any COA server.

Live Class Connect Violations

- Continued failure to attend and/or participate in required live Class Connect Sessions.
- Improper use of tools and privileges in Class Connect Sessions.
- Failure to follow expected dress code and conduct policies while on camera (ie: not wearing a shirt or smoking).
- Using inappropriate behavior while in class as outlined below.

Inappropriate Behavior

Inappropriate behavior includes the following:

- Using rude or inappropriate language when communicating with your COA teacher or staff.
- Insults or attacks of any kind against another person.
- Use of obscene, degrading, or profane language.
- Harassment (continually posting unwelcome messages to another person) or use of threads.
- Posting material that is obscene or defamatory or which is intended to annoy, harass, or intimate another person. This includes distributing "spam" mail, chain e-mail, viruses, or other intentionally destructive content.

Materials and Computer Equipment

- Students and Family Members should respect school equipment that has been loaned to the student. Please refrain from inappropriate or rough handling or allowing food or drink near materials and computer equipment. Please contact K12 Customer Support at 1-866-512-2273 to Request materials or to report a concern with materials or equipment.

Student Internet Safety

- Do not reveal on the internet personal information about yourself or others.
- Do not agree to meet in person anyone you have met on the internet and who is not affiliated with COA.

Academic Integrity

Students who submit work as their own, when it is not wholly and completely their own, are guilty of cheating and/or plagiarism and will receive a grade of zero on the entire

assignment. Assisting other students in cheating or plagiarism is also considered academic dishonesty, and students who do this will receive a grade of zero on their assignment submission as well.

The first time a student fails to cite the source of information in an essay or research paper, he/she will be advised of proper citation methods, receive a grade of zero, but will be allowed to submit the corrected assignment for credit.

Students who are found guilty of cheating or plagiarism more than once will not receive credit for the assignment and will be referred to the school administration for breach of the school's Behavior Code.

Bullying Policy

All students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive school environment that is free from bullying, intimidation, and harassment. The school environment includes blackboard collaborate or other live virtual meeting place, blended learning labs, outings, testing sites, any school- sponsored events. The school environment is also extended to include incidents that occur outside of school whenever such incidents impact the school environment. COA is committed to providing a safe environment by ensuring that bullying, intimidation, and harassment is not tolerated in our school and will be investigated and addressed upon notification.

- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means a gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of:
- Harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage; or
- Insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
- Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. This differs from teasing and peer conflicts in which power is equal and it may not be repeated over time.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets

as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Reporting

All COA staff are required to immediately report any reports of or incidents of intimidation, bullying, threats, harassment, or reports of violation of this policy to the head of school. All reports will be reviewed by the designated administrator to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

Investigation

The designated administrator will promptly follow up on all reports and complete an investigation to determine whether the action is a violation of this policy. Upon completion of the investigation the designated administrator will determine if outside entities (law enforcement) need to be involved. The designated administrator will also determine the consequences or actions to be taken for students who committed the act of intimidation, bullying, threats, or harassment.

Behavior in Face to Face Settings

COA sponsors optional outings for students and families on a regular basis that enhance the K12 curriculum/learning activities. While attendance is not mandatory, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet other school participants and have conversations about our children and programs and share practices that work. Outings are opportunities for both the students and parents to socialize. It is our hope that the teachers and parents will work together to plan and implement these activities. Parents are responsible for the cost of transportation and any entrance fees associated with optional outings. While credit for field trips is not offered in lieu of the regular curriculum for most outings, attendance at these events can be included under supplemental time.

COA parents and students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all optional outings. Parents are always responsible for supervision of their children.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their school community through participation in outings and clubs and arranging other "non-official" outings with COA parents. Parents may freely meet and organize unofficial outings as they wish. These outings are not considered "official" outings unless a COA representative attends.

Dress Code

COA expects students to dress appropriately for school events, outings, and live virtual settings. The dress code promotes a safe, respectful learning environment and prepares students for professional settings.Prohibited Clothing and Accessories:

- Clothing, apparel, or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any other combinations thereof, advocates or promotes sexual activity, violence, death, suicide, or the use of
- alcohol or drugs, or demeans, degrades, or intimidates another because of race, sex, religious persuasions, national origin, disability, or gang membership.
- Apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff/lower back or sides of the upper body or torso and/or undergarments.
- Any clothing that is excessively tight, is of transparent material, see through material, or that is ripped or torn, or has suggestive signs or symbols.
- Any clothing through which underwear or any type of undergarment may be seen.
- Spandex, clothing that does not cover backs, clothing that permits viewing of cleavage, halter tops, tank tops with open sides, spaghetti strap tops, and muscle/tank shirts.
- Spikes, dog chains/chokers, ball bearing chains, wallet chains, or other jewelry that increases the risk for accidents.

Appropriate Attire:

- Collared shirts or blouses
- T-shirts with appropriate graphics or text
- Sweaters or cardigans
- Jeans, slacks, or khakis
- Knee-length shorts or skirts
- Closed-toe shoes

Virtual Learning Considerations:

- Ensure appropriate attire is visible on camera
- Avoid distracting backgrounds or virtual backgrounds
- Maintain a professional appearance during live sessions

Consequences for Dress Code Violations:

- First offense: Verbal warning and request to change
- Second offense: Parent notification and temporary removal from virtual session
- Repeated offenses: Disciplinary action and parent-teacher conference

Summary of School Crime Act

- According to SC law, if a student is convicted of assault and battery, which is not of an aggravated nature, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event against a person affiliated with the school in an official capacity, including, but not limited to, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, teacher's assistants, student teachers, custodial staff, food service staff, and volunteers, the student must be punished by imprisonment for not more than twelve months or a fine of not more than one thousand dollars, or both, at the discretion of the judge
- Law requires the Department of Juvenile Justice to immediately notify the COA School Administration if a COA student is convicted of a violent crime.
- Any teachers of the student will be notified by administration as soon as knowledge of the conviction is shared with COA.
- Anyone officially affiliated with COA is immune from criminal prosecution and civil liability if they report school related crime made in good faith, if making the report would otherwise incriminate them.

Smoking Policy

According to SC law, COA always prohibits the use of any tobacco product or alternative nicotine product by any person in any school buildings or facilities, including the use of tobacco products or alternative nicotine products by persons attending a school-sponsored event at any location when in the presence of students or school personnel or where use is otherwise prohibited by law.

School Personnel must enforce the policy, including appropriate disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions for a student violating the policy may include but are not limited to:

Conference with Parent or Legal Guardian, Mandatory enrollment in Tobacco Cessation or Prevention Program, Community Service, School Suspension, or Suspension of Extracurricular Activities. Visitors who violate this policy may be verbally requested to leave and could have prosecution for disorderly conduct for repeated offenses.

Administrative Withdrawal/Expulsion

Administrative Withdrawal is the removal of a student from our school due to the student no longer meeting enrollment requirements. Students may be administratively withdrawn due to violation of terms of probation and due to serious minimum daily progress concerns, chronic absenteeism, relocation to another state, or failing to comply with testing participation requirements as indicated in enrollment policy acknowledgements.

Expulsion is the removal of a student from our school because of serious behavior concern such as the commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior or the violation of any other written rules and regulations established by COA, or when the presence of the student is deemed to be detrimental to the best interests of the school. Examples being possession of a weapon at a school event or gang affiliation.

Students who engage in an ongoing pattern of behavior that is disruptive to the orderly operations of the school or who are in violation of school attendance, daily progress, or other enrollment requirements shall be recommended for Administrative Withdrawal/Expulsion, as set forth in the Student Behavior Code. This means the student cannot attend online school or attend any school-related events.

Discipline of Disabled Students

Students identified as disabled pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEA disabled") will be disciplined in accordance with federal and state law as set forth in the special education procedures developed by the administration.

In the case of a student classified as Special Education is recommended for expulsion, a manifestation hearing will automatically be scheduled to ensure access and equity in compliance with state/federal law.

Appeal Process

An appeal against any disciplinary decision up to and including Administrative Withdrawal/Expulsion must be made to the School Administration within 3 days of the decision being communicated to the parent or Legal Guardian.

High School

WELCOME TO THE HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

The high school instructional model will rely on:

- Rigorous academic standards and expectations
- Highly qualified educators providing synchronous and asynchronous instructional support
- Student-to-student and student-to-teacher interaction using a variety of learning technologies
- Traditional grading scale and grade reporting, class rank, cumulative GPA, and formal transcripts
- Opportunities for student leadership and participation in school-sponsored activities, both virtually and face-to-face
- Post-secondary preparation, career planning, exploration, and support

In this educational model, teaching and learning include the accessibility of teachers during normal school hours via communication tools such as email, phone, texting, instant messaging, and Class Connect live sessions.

This could involve individual students, small groups, or large group instruction. In addition, students participate in online threaded academic discussions and class postings.

Students participate in school on a daily basis for an average of 7-8 hours. Students will be assessed frequently to determine achievement in their scheduled courses.

Satisfactory performance is based on student participation in online discussions and online threaded discussions, submitted writings, projects, portfolios, quizzes, additional supporting assignments, unit tests, and final exams. Students and parents can view grades, student progress, and the amount of time the student spends in each class at any time on the D2L, online platform.

High School Student Requirements and Attendance Policies

- Orientation:
    - Attend a mandatory informational meeting or view a recorded session
    - Complete an orientation quiz to ensure understanding of program expectations
- Consistent Engagement:
    - Maintain active participation throughout the summer session
    - Complete weekly progress check-ins with assigned mentor
    - Risk removal if inactive during the first week, with replacement by waitlisted students
- Attendance Policy:
    - Attend all scheduled required Class Connect sessions
    - Notify instructors in advance of any unavoidable absences
    - Make up missed content through recorded sessions and additional assignments

Academic Progress Reporting

Quarterly Updates:

- Students receive progress notifications
- Parents encouraged to review online gradebooks thoroughly

Semester Reports:

- Include semester grades and grade point averages
- Distributed via the school-supported communication system

Year-End Reports:

- Contain final course grades, cumulative GPA, and class rank (seniors only)
- Accessible through the school-supported communication system

Continuous Access:

- Students and learning coaches can view grades in real-time for each course

Transfer Students and Credit Policies

Mid-Year Placements:

- Students entering after the school year starts must provide current transcripts

- Placed in corresponding courses at appropriate curriculum points

Placement Assessment:

- COA teachers may conduct additional assessments for accurate placement
- Considers past performance, prior learning, and COA course assessments

Final Placement Decisions:

- Determined by subject teachers, school counselor, and principal
- Includes course placement, individual course positioning, and grade assignments

Credit Transfer Challenges:

- Students without corresponding prior courses may struggle to complete COA curriculum
- No academic credit or grade given if course completion is not feasible

Homeschool Transfers:

- Must provide evidence of curriculum plan submitted to local school district
- May undergo additional assessments for proper K12 curriculum placement

Grade and Credit Alignment:

- Transferred grades/credits must conform to COA's grading scales and GPA weighting
- Out-of-state or private school transfers may qualify for reduced state testing

Class Rank Determination

Class rank is assigned based on cumulative GPA relative to classmates. In cases of identical ranks, the following prioritization applies:

- K12 courses take precedence
- Enrollment approval date
- Enrollment application date

This comprehensive approach ensures fair and accurate academic placement and reporting for all COA students, including those transferring mid-year or from alternative educational backgrounds.

High School Parent Notification

Using the guidelines above for habitual truancy, COA will:

- 1. Assign the student to the Attendance Intervention Team (AIT) within 10 days of the triggering absence.
- 2. Make three attempts to notify the parent/Learning Coach regarding the truancy concern and provide an opportunity for the parent/Learning Coach to develop an Absence Intervention Plan (AIP) to remediate the truancy pattern and identify specific barriers and solutions to attendance issues.
- 3. Develop the AIP within 14 days of the student's assignment to the AIT and provide a working copy to the student and Learning Coach.
- 4. If the student does not make progress on the plan within 30 days or continues to be excessively absent or habitually truant, COA may file a complaint in the juvenile court.
- 5. If a student does not make progress on the plan within 61 days, with the support of the AIT and any court resources, the student will be considered for truancy withdrawal by COA. Some withdrawals may be court-mandated.

COA does not permit sudden and excessive submission of attendance hours. Attendance cannot be recorded if the student did not complete any K12 lessons, other approved educational programs, or attend online Class Connect sessions. Students must be able to show proof of academic progress to verify attendance hours.

COA High School Special Education Truancy Policy

While truancy applies to all students, COA will take every step to ensure that a student with special needs receives, in addition to other services offered, some or all of the following steps:

1. The IEP team will hold a Manifestation Determination meeting to decide whether the student's disability is contributing to the truant behaviors and will decide on appropriate action based on that decision.

2. The IEP team is dedicated to making the necessary changes as outlined per the outcome of the meeting that is fair and appropriate to the student, according to their needs.

CAREER LEARNING AT COA

Carolus Online Academy, in partnership with Stride Career Prep, offers comprehensive career skills training to prepare students for success after high school. The program features:

- Core courses required for graduation
- Electives exploring various career fields
- Skills development for workplace and college success
- Occupational programs aligned with high-demand fields

Students can tailor their education to their post-high school plans, whether they intend to pursue college, are currently working in their chosen field, or plan to start their career immediately after graduation.

For detailed information, visit our Career Technical Education Page.

External CTE Programs

If COA doesn't offer a specific CTE program, students may pursue external Career Center options while remaining enrolled at COA. Key points:

- Close coordination with counselors at both COA and the Career Center is essential
- Students must adhere to rules and guidelines of both institutions
- Students are responsible for all admission paperwork for Career Tech Centers (CTCs)

Eligibility Requirements:

- Minimum 60% passing score at COA
- Participation allowed even if state tests aren't passed, but test preparation is mandatory
- Failing courses at CTC or COA may require full-time COA attendance
- CTC admission process is independent; COA supports CTC recommendations
- CTC suspensions/expulsions may affect COA enrollment

CLASS CONNECT POLICY

COA emphasizes the importance of live, synchronous "Class Connect" sessions for enhancing independent study and developing crucial 21st-century skills. Key expectations include:

- Mandatory attendance for all students at the beginning of each semester
- Teachers may require participation from any student as needed
- Sessions held Monday through Friday, with frequency varying by grade and course
- Non-Class Connect times reserved for independent work
- Sessions tailored to individual and class needs, marked as Required or Optional
- Participation may impact grades (refer to individual teacher policies)
- Recordings available for missed classes

- Students must resolve scheduling conflicts with both teachers
- Pre-work completion expected before attending class
- Non-attendance in required sessions may lead to truancy considerations

Course Materials and Communication

- Most coursework accessed online through the Learning Management System (LMS)
- Some high school courses provide physical materials (some returnable)
- Teachers provide weekly feedback on assignments and course communication

GRADING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Grades are determined based on various teacher-graded activities, including:

- Daily assignments
- Live Class Connect sessions
- Labs, projects, journal entries
- Class discussions
- Quizzes, tests, and exams

Key Points:

- GPAs and credits calculated at semester end
- Courses are one semester long (0.5 credits)
- Credit Recovery courses designed for 8-9 week completion
- On-time assignment submission expected
- Zeros considered temporary until content mastery
- Teachers aim to return graded assignments within 3 work days
- Extra credit limited to 5% of semester grade
- Honor Roll based on semester averages:
  - 3.5-3.74: Honors
  - 3.75-4.0: High Honors

Grading Scale and GPA Points

[COA's specific grading scale and GPA point system to be inserted here]

Weighted Courses

Weighted courses receive an additional 1.0 quality point per letter grade.

This comprehensive approach to career learning, class participation, and grading ensures that COA students receive a well-rounded education preparing them for future academic and professional success.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
100-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	66-63	62-60	59-0
4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.7	0

Course Weighting and Grading Policies

Course Weighting:

- College Credit Plus courses are weighted (refer to CCP handbook for specific guidelines)
- Honors courses are not weighted

Report Cards:

- Quarterly progress notifications
- Semester reports include grades and GPAs
- Year-end reports include final grades, cumulative GPA, and class rank (seniors only)
- Continuous access to grades for students and learning coaches

Grade Point Average (GPA):

- Calculated by dividing total quality points by total credits
- Determined on a semester basis
- Cumulative GPA uses semester averages from 9th grade onward
- Calculated in the school's student information system

Course Management

Selection and Scheduling:

- Annual student input on course selection
- Assignments based on availability, previous courses, and graduation requirements
- School counselors provide guidance for graduation path

Course Changes:

- Requests must be approved within first 2 weeks of enrollment
- Additions subject to availability and credit review

- Level changes considered at semester with teacher recommendations

Credit System:

- High school graduation based on accumulated credits
- Prerequisites require full credit in prior level
- Grade-level promotions occur annually (exceptions by principal permission)
- Final grades calculated using percentages, recorded as letters

Credit Recovery Program

Credit Recovery at COA allows students who have failed core courses to retake them at an accelerated pace to stay on track for graduation. Key points of the program include:

Eligibility:

- Open to students in grades 9-12 who have previously failed a core content course (English, math, science, social studies)
- Students must enroll in the same level of course they failed (e.g., CP level for CP level, not Honors)

Program Structure:

- Courses are modified to be completed in 8-9 weeks
- Focuses on specific skills and content areas where the student struggled
- Less than the entirety of the original course, targeting key components for proficiency

Requirements:

- Certified content area teacher assigned to monitor progress and provide support
- Courses must be completed within one academic year
- May include computer-based instruction supplemented by teacher guidance

Placement and Compliance:

- Placement in Credit Recovery is at the discretion of the Grade Level Principal
- Students must comply with program policies or risk removal

Important Notes:

- Credit Recovery courses appear as additional courses on transcripts
- They do not replace previous failures in GPA calculations
- The program aims to help students graduate on time, not to get ahead on credits

While not explicitly stated, the possibility of recovering half credits may exist, given that the program covers less than the full course. Students and parents should consult with school counselors for specific details on credit recovery options and how they apply to individual graduation plans.

Content Recovery Program

Content Recovery at COA is designed to help students currently enrolled in a course who need to make up specific content or skills. This program differs from Credit Recovery in several key aspects:

Key Features:

- For students currently enrolled in a course, not those who have previously failed
- Allows retaking a subset of the course (single unit, multiple units, or supplemental assignments)
- Must be completed within two weeks after the end of a quarter, no later than the school year's end
- Focused on core content areas (English, math, science, and social studies)
- Supervised by the original teacher of record

Implementation:

- May use State Virtual Program or approved fee-based vendor systems
- Schools provide information, training, and support to faculty, parents, and students

Alternatives for Late-Enrolling Students
While not explicitly part of Content Recovery, COA may offer:

- Individualized learning plans
- Extended learning time (after-school or weekend programs)
- Virtual learning opportunities

South Carolina Policies:

- Allows make-up work for approved excessive absences
- Make-up work typically completed within 30 days of course end
- Possible extensions for extenuating circumstances

Content Recovery aims to provide targeted support for students struggling with specific course content, helping them achieve mastery without repeating the entire course. This

approach, along with other flexible options, ensures that students who enroll late or miss significant portions of a course have opportunities to catch up and succeed academically.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Determination

The selection of valedictorian (first in class rank) and salutatorian (second in class rank) is based on academic performance over seven semesters. Eligibility criteria include:

- Attendance at Carolus Online Academy High School for at least four semesters
- Enrollment during both semesters of senior year
- Completion of high school at the end of the second semester

Note: Students finishing high school at the end of the first semester of their senior year are not eligible for these honors.

Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculation

- GPAs are calculated by dividing total quality points by total credits received
- Calculations occur on a semester basis
- Cumulative GPA includes all semester averages from 9th grade onward
- High school credit courses taken in middle school may be included
- All GPAs and class rankings are managed in the school's student information system

College Readiness Testing

ACT Test:

- COA high school code: [Insert ACT code]
- Register online at: http://www.actstudent.org
- Digital photo upload required during registration
- For additional information, consult your guidance counselor

SAT Test:

- COA high school code: [Insert SAT code]
- Register online at: http://www.collegeboard.com
- Digital photo upload required for SAT and SAT Subject Tests
- Visit http://sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-dates for test dates and details

Military Access to Student Information

Federal law requires schools to provide military recruiters access to student information (names, addresses, phone numbers) unless parents opt out. To withhold information:

- Submit a formal written request to the student's school counselor
- Use the provided form (available upon request)

COA will release information to military recruiters in the absence of a formal opt-out request.

South Carolina High School Graduation Requirements

To graduate with a South Carolina High School Diploma, students must earn a total of 24 units of credit distributed across specific subject areas. These requirements apply to all public high schools in South Carolina, including Carolus Online Academy.

Total Credit Requirements (24 units)

- English/Language Arts: 4 units
- Mathematics: 4 units
- Science: 3 units
- U.S. History and Constitution: 1 unit
- Economics: 0.5 unit
- Government: 0.5 unit
- Other Social Studies: 1 unit
- Physical Education or JROTC: 1 unit
- Computer Science (including Keyboarding): 1 unit
- World Language or Career and Technology Elective: 1 unit
- Personal Finance: 0.5 unit
- Electives: 6.5 units

Grade-Level Specific Requirements

9th Grade (Freshman Year)

- English 1: 1 unit
- Mathematics: 1 unit (typically Algebra 1)
- Science: 1 unit
- Physical Education or JROTC: 1 unit
- Computer Science: 1 unit
- Electives: 1-2 units

10th Grade (Sophomore Year)

- English 2: 1 unit

- Mathematics: 1 unit (typically Geometry)
- Science: 1 unit
- Social Studies: 1 unit
- World Language or Career and Technology Elective: 1 unit
- Electives: 1-2 units

11th Grade (Junior Year)

- English 3: 1 unit
- Mathematics: 1 unit (typically Algebra 2)
- Science: 1 unit
- U.S. History and Constitution: 1 unit
- Electives: 2-3 units

12th Grade (Senior Year)

- English 4: 1 unit
- Mathematics: 1 unit
- Economics: 0.5 unit
- Government: 0.5 unit
- Personal Finance: 0.5 unit
- Electives: 2-3 units

Additional Requirements

- Students must demonstrate proficiency in computer literacy before graduation.
- Students must complete a study and pass an examination on the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution and American institutions and ideals. This instruction is typically given within the required U.S. History course.
- Students must attend the accredited high school issuing the diploma for at least the semester immediately preceding graduation.

College Preparatory vs. Career and Technology Education

- For college preparatory programs: One unit must be earned in a foreign language (two units to meet program completer requirements).
- For career and technology education programs: One occupational unit must be earned (four occupational units to meet program completer requirements).

These requirements are based on the South Carolina State Board of Education Regulation 43-234 and are set to take effect for the entering freshman class of 2023-24, pending

legislative approval. Schools should regularly check with the South Carolina Department of Education for any updates or changes to these requirements.

Identifying and Supporting At-Risk Students

Carolus Online Academy (COA) is committed to ensuring all students have the opportunity to qualify for a high school diploma. To achieve this goal, we have implemented a comprehensive system for identifying and supporting at-risk students.

Identification Criteria

High School Administrators and School Counselors collaborate to identify students at risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma based on the following criteria:

- Insufficient progress towards graduation requirements
- Excessive absences
- Credit deficiency (starting after the first semester of 9th grade)
- Falling behind in credits at the beginning of each school year

Notification and Intervention Process

Once a student is identified as at-risk:

- Semester Outreach: School Counselors contact students via email at the start of each semester.
- Fall Informational Session: At-risk students are invited to learn about COA's credit recovery program.
- Spring Follow-up: Information is reshared through a recorded session emailed to at-risk students.
- Counselor Review: During these sessions, counselors explain graduation requirements and how credit recovery can help students get back on track.
- Annual Parent Notification: At the end of each school year, parents/guardians of at-risk students receive an email containing:
    - A statement of the student's at-risk status
    - An overview of COA's curriculum requirements or the student's IEP
    - Available graduation pathway options
    - A description of COA's additional support services

Comprehensive Support Services

COA offers a range of services to support at-risk students:

- Personalized mentoring and tutoring programs
- End of Course competency assessments for credit
- Flexible Credit Recovery Program
- Mental health services, including Crisis Support Team and Student Support Groups
- Targeted tutoring support
- Specialized English Learner (EL) assistance
- Learning Coach support sessions

Additionally, COA develops individualized Student Success Plans for students at risk of dropping out, as outlined in our Career Advising Policy.

Continuous Monitoring and Adjustment

Our support system is designed to be dynamic and responsive:

- Regular progress checks to assess the effectiveness of interventions
- Adjustments to support plans based on individual student needs
- Ongoing communication between students, families, and COA staff

By implementing this comprehensive approach, COA aims to identify at-risk students early, provide clear communication to families, and offer robust support to keep all students on track for graduation.

Early Graduation Procedures

Carolus Online Academy (COA) offers an early graduation option for eligible students who wish to complete their high school education ahead of schedule. This program allows students to graduate either one semester or one full year early, provided they meet specific criteria and follow the established procedures.

Eligibility Requirements

Students seeking early graduation must:

- Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average
- Fulfill all COA graduation requirements
- Complete all graduation requirements by:
    - End of first semester of senior year (for one-semester early exit)
    - End of junior year (for one-year early exit)

Application Process

- Timing: Apply 15 days before the start of the planned exit semester
- Initial Step: Contact school counselor to initiate the process
- Counselor Consultation:
  - Verify all requirements can be met by early graduation date
  - Discuss implications for:
    - Graduation procedures
    - Class rank
    - Diploma options
    - College applications and scholarships
    - Extracurricular activities and leadership opportunities
- Documentation:
  - Submit the Early Graduation Approval Form (obtained from school counselor)
  - Ensure both student and parent/guardian signatures are included
- Late Enrollees: Students enrolling after the early graduation deadline must provide proof of an early graduation request from their previous district

Evaluation and Approval

- Early Graduation Committee Review:
  - Committee composition: school administration, counselor, and teacher
  - Evaluate request to ensure all criteria are met
- Final Approval:
  - Request presented to COA Head of School or designee for final decision

Post-Approval Considerations

- Early graduates may participate in the graduation ceremony of their graduating class
- Students should consider potential impacts on:
  - College admissions timelines
  - Scholarship eligibility
  - Social and emotional readiness for post-secondary transitions

Commencement Exercises

Participation in high school graduation exercises is contingent upon:

- Successful completion of all course requirements set by:
  - South Carolina Department of Education

- o   Carolus Online Academy (as detailed in this handbook)
- Passing all required state testing
- Fulfillment of all graduation requirements for the student's cohort year

Important Notes:

- Students completing requirements post-graduation may receive diplomas by mail after confirmation
- Commencement and related ceremonies are privileges that may be revoked for Student Conduct Code violations

Non-Graduation Notice

For students unable to meet graduation requirements by the end of their graduating year:

- School counselor will notify student and learning coach via email by end of April
- Attached letter will include:
  - o   Date
  - o   Specific reason(s) for not meeting requirements
  - o   Next steps for academic support and planning
  - o   Statement on potential impacts on college/university acceptance in South Carolina

Transcript Requests

To obtain a high school transcript:

- Access the COA Transcript Request Form at [INSERT LINK]
- Final transcripts available within one week after the graduation ceremony

By offering early graduation options and maintaining clear communication about graduation status, COA aims to support students in achieving their academic goals while ensuring they are fully prepared for their post-secondary pursuits.

Student Records

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights regarding the student's education records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.

To request an inspection and review, the parent or eligible student should submit a written request to the Head of School that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The Head of School will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place when the records may be inspected.

The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the Executive Director; clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school notifies the parent or eligible student of the decision and advises him/her of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA allows disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits the school to disclose information without consent is when the school discloses information to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by or contracted to provide services to or designated by the contractor to provide services to the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Directors of the School; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Ave., S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

FERPA requires that the school, with certain exceptions, obtain a parent's or eligible student's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a child's education records. However, the School may disclose "directory information" without written consent, unless either the parent or eligible student has advised the school in writing that he/she does not want all or part of the directory information disclosed. The method for objecting to disclosure of directory information is specified below. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include the following information from education records in certain school publications or disclose it to certain parties.

Examples include:

- Shipment of computer and school materials to and from student's home
- Entry of student enrollment information into a computer database for use by school officials Sports activity sheets, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. In addition, federal laws require the school to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses and telephone listings - unless parents or eligible students have advised the school in writing that they do not want their student's information disclosed without prior written consent.

The school has designated the following information as directory information:

- name
- address
- telephone number
- e-mail address
- photo
- athletic information
- grade level
- activities and clubs
- awards

If there are certain items the school has chosen to designate as directory information that parents do not want disclosed from their student's education records, without their prior written consent, parents are encouraged to send an e-mail identifying the information they do not want disclosed, the student's name, and the family identification number to schooloffice@carolusonlineacademy.org

Notice of these rights is available, upon request, in languages other than English.

Protection of Pupil Rights Act (PPRA)

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

Carolus Online Academy (COA) Protection of Pupil Rights Act (PPRA) Operational Guidelines and Procedures

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) -

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family.
- Sex behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships.
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -

- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis

screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law or the Individuals with Disabilities Act; and

- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling or otherwise distributing the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -

- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party.
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum if the instructional material will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any survey funded in whole or in part by a program of ED.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

COA will develop and adopt policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. COA will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes.

COA will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. COA will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the school has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided with an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

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

Annual Notification Process:

- Publicly post policy in the Parent Student Handbook
  - Responsible Party: Administration
- Provide annual overview/training to all staff members.
  - Responsible Party: Administration
  - Documentation of Completion: Retain training materials, staff in attendance and tracking tool.
- Distribute policy in a newsletter, email, or other direct manner to families annually.
  - Responsible Party: Administration
  - Documentation of Completion: Retain dated communication.

Rights of Children with Disabilities

Children with a disability have the right to attend a school authorized by the South Carolina Public Charter School District (SCPCSD).

This section explains the educational rights of children with disabilities to attend a charter school that has been authorized by the SCPCSD.

Both federal and state law requires that admission to a charter school be conducted without regard to or consideration of whether the child has a disability; therefore, charter schools are open to all students. Charter schools must provide special education services, as outlined in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), to all eligible students. This is a summary of your child's rights to attend and receive needed services from his or her public charter school.

Charter schools must ensure that your child receives special education services if the child has been determined to be an eligible student with a disability by the Individualized

Education Program (IEP) Team. Charter schools within the SCPCSD must ensure that students with disabilities receive the special education services to which they are entitled. The services consist of special education instruction and related services in the least restrictive environment.

The amount and location of services (where services will be delivered) are determined by the student's IEP team and are documented in the student's IEP.

Your child must receive related services if the IEP Team determines the child needs them. Charter schools within the SCPCSD must provide related services to students with disabilities if the IEP Team determines that the services are necessary for the student to benefit from special education (i.e., OT, PT, counseling, etc.).

For students who require special education services that are beyond what is reasonable for the charter school to provide, an IEP Team meeting will be convened to arrange for provision of needed services. Charter schools within the SCPCSD are held to the same standards and regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as traditional public schools. In some cases, the parent's request to remain in the school of choice (charter school) cannot be granted because the IEP team determines that in order to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to a student; the services must be provided in a different setting, such as a child's district of residence.

Just like a traditional district, individual schools are not required to provide an exhaustive list of placement options within that one school. This decision will be made through an IEP meeting. Legal guardians are invited to the meetings. When the meeting occurs, the IEP Team will determine what the child's needs are and how those needs will be met. If the IEP team determines that a FAPE cannot be provided to the student within the current charter school setting, the SCPCSD will contact the school district of residence to determine if there is a program within that school district that can meet the child's needs. If so, based on the IEP team's decision, placement will be made, and responsibility will return to the school district of residence.

Charter schools are required to meet the needs of qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, even if the student is not eligible as a student with disabilities under federal and state special education laws. Charter schools within the SCPCSD are required to provide a FAPE to students with disabilities determined eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under Section 504 regulations could

consist of education in general education classrooms with or without accommodation and/or supplementary services. These services will be decided upon by the child's 504 Planning Committee.

Relevant Laws and Regulations:

South Carolina Special Education Regulation 43-243; SC Code 43-243.1; The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 34 CFR Parts 300 and 301 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 34 CFR Part 104

Direct questions or concerns about the information contained in this notice to: Tara Ball, Interim Special Programs Manager, tball@k12.com.

CHILD FIND

Child Find is a process based on the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part C. The purpose is to identify, locate and evaluate individuals with disabilities who may need special education services. Anyone can initiate the process: a parent, doctor, teacher, relative or friend.

To ensure that all COA students are properly identified and served, the parent or guardian will be asked at least twice if their student has ever been evaluated for possible special education services, and if the student has ever received special education services as a student in a public or private school. If so, the parent or guardian will be asked if their student has an active Individual Education Plan (IEP).

If there is any indication that the student may have received special education services, once COA receives the previous school's records, your family will be contacted by the school. Should you have any additional questions please contact the Interim Special Programs Manager, Tara Ball at tball@k12.com.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

COA is responsible for providing a free and appropriate education under the federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). COA Special Education professionals assist parents in accessing and coordinating services pursuant to a current Individualized Education Plan.

Parents should indicate that their child has an Individualized Education Plan on their enrollment form.

Special education services are available to students who have been identified with a disability. Documentation of the disability must be provided, such as a previous Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or a psychological evaluation. Students with IEPs in need of adapted learning support services are those whose complex learning needs impact their academic achievement and their ability to make sufficient progress toward IEP goals in the general education setting. Services offered may include adaptations and modifications to the general education curriculum, specialized instructional strategies, and adjustments in pacing.

The COA program is considered an inclusion program. The student's home is the regular classroom and services are provided by a highly qualified special education teacher via phone, e-mail and the online (virtual) classroom.

Special Education Expectations

- Every special education student will be assigned a special education teacher in addition to their regular education teacher.
- The special education teacher will collaborate with the learning coach on IEP goals.
- The special education teacher, the regular education teacher, and the learning coach will meet for a virtual connect once every grading period.
- The special education teacher will hold Class Connects online to assist students with their specific learning needs.
- The special education teacher is available to be used as a resource for instructional
- strategies and adaptations and modifications to the curriculum.
- IEP meetings will be held online in a virtual classroom.
- The special education teacher will provide a progress report at the end of each grading period noting the progress on the student's IEP goals.
- Special education students are required to meet the same attendance policies as their peers. The home environment, one on one instruction, and flexible schedule can help the students create a learning environment that meets their specific needs.

Related Services

Related services, placement and goals are determined by the IEP Team. Options for related services should be discussed with the special education staff before a decision is made to enroll with COA.

COA provides related services through contracts with service providers (speech pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.). It is important for students and parents to attend all related services appointments for the student to receive maximum benefit and achieve IEP goals.

We understand that it is our responsibility to provide a free and appropriate public education to each enrolled special education student. Because COA is a virtual school of choice, it is understood that speech and related services are provided virtually; however, we understand that the virtual environment is not always the most appropriate environment for speech and other related services. If the IEP team determines that face to face therapy is the most appropriate, services will be offered by a provider close to the family's home.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Response to Intervention (Rtl) Services at COA are available for students who have been identified as academically "at-risk". A student that is defined as "at-risk" has tested significantly below on his/her assessments, has demonstrated that he/she is struggling with the current curriculum he/she is enrolled in, or he/she has been identified with some type of need on the Child Find screening.

RTI is based on the concept of providing evidence-based instructional and behavioral strategies by highly qualified intervention teams that are matched to the student's needs, and those needs are monitored on a frequently scheduled basis.

Medical Needs or Access to Medications

It is the responsibility of the legal guardian to report any medical needs or any access to medication for on-site events to your student's Homeroom Teacher.

Parents with Disabilities

Providing accommodation also applies to parents with disabilities. If needed, in order to allow for parental participation, accommodation for parents with disabilities will be provided; thus, enabling parental involvement throughout the 504 processes. The school must take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with parents with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.

Health and Safety Manual & Crisis Manual

COA has a written Health and Safety Manual that is available upon request by emailing schooloffice@carolusonlineacademy.org

Rights of Children with Special Home Circumstances ESSA Title IX, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures youth experiencing homelessness can attend school and outlines student rights.

McKinney-Vento homeless liaisons are designated personnel that ensure homeless youth can enroll in school and receive services.

Additional information can be found at

https://ed.sc.qov/policy/federal-education-proqrams/essa-title-ix-part-a-mckinney-vento- homeless-assistance-act/

Lisa Jenkins Turnipseed is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison at COA and she can be reached at ljenkins@carolusonlineacademy.org. Please email any dispute involving your student's eligibility for McKinney-Vento designation to Mrs. Jenkins Turnipseed.

TITLE I, Youth in Foster Care

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) establishes guidelines to ensure school access, improved educational outcomes, and enhanced academic stability for children and youth in foster care.

Amanda Wilson, the School Counselor is the Student in Foster Care Liaison at COA and she can be reached at awilson@carolusonlineacademy.org

English Language Learners (ELL)

Tracey Lee, is the ELL Coordinator at COA and can be reached at tlee@carolusonlineacademy.org.

Translated Materials

COA will provide translated material upon request whenever possible. Please contact your student's Homeroom Teacher for assistance with translated materials

Appendix A

Learning Coach and Student Responsibilities

The following statements are electronically signed by the student's legal guardian at time of enrollment and/or reregistration.

- I understand that enrollment includes full participation in all state- mandated testing on the required dates and at the assigned location. It is my responsibility to provide transportation for all required testing.
- I understand that I will have the direction and support of a South Carolina certified teacher in implementing the K12 curriculum with my student.
- I accept the responsibility to supervise my student in using the K12 curriculum.
- I understand that I am expected to become knowledgeable about the curriculum and the Online School.
- I accept the responsibility to actively participate in the planning, instruction, and assessment of my child using the K12 curriculum and the Online School.
- I understand that I will schedule a minimum of six (6) hours per school day to accomplish this task.
- I understand that there are guidelines and policies regarding daily lesson completion and assignment submission and course level attendance.
- I understand that there are guidelines regarding recording of live-online sessions and that my student(s) are required to participate fully in virtual sessions, including the use of the microphone, camera, and other online tools, as requested.
- I understand that students are expected to complete work in the Online School each regular school day, according to the official school calendar, and that any deviation from this calendar must be communicated to and approved by my student's advisor.
- I understand that my child and I are required to participate in scheduled conferences with our teacher(s). I understand that during these conferences I am expected to have access to all materials and the computer. Scheduled conferences are expected to occur from the primary location that instruction takes place.
- I understand that I must read and respond to emails and phone calls from COA staff within 24 hours.
- I understand that if my phone number, address, email, or emergency contacts change, I must inform my homeroom teacher in a timely manner.

- I understand that COA students are required to have full-time adult supervision and participation during instruction/learning to be enrolled in the school.
- I understand that in order to fulfill enrollment requirements the following documents must be provided: enrollment form, copy of birth certificate, proof of residency (copy of utility bill, etc. stating service address), agreement to use of instructional property, current immunization record or waiver, previous standardized test scores and report cards (if available), custodial paperwork (if applicable), Home Language Survey (if applicable) and a copy of current Individualized Education Program/504 plan (if applicable).
- I understand that periodic school diagnostic assessments, both online and face-to-face, are a requirement and must be completed within the given timeframe.
- I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to secure an internet service provider that will support a connection that is sufficient for my student to participate in virtual live sessions and access school related video content.
- I understand and agree that COA is a full-time public school and that my student may not be enrolled in any other full-time public, private or charter school while enrolled in COA.
- I understand that learning coach absences are not an excused reason for student absence, and it is my responsibility to create a plan for continued study in COA's curriculum if the learning coach is unavailable.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to alert COA if my student is currently suspended from school, under a school truancy plan or has court order to attend school for Truancy, Expelled, in the process of an Expulsion Hearing, ineligible to attend.
- I understand that live class sessions and/or attendance at in-person educational sessions will be required as part of my student(s) learning plan.
- I understand that students identified as at-risk based on current engagement and/or transfer information (such as credit deficiency, excessive absences, or low academic performance) may have additional probationary enrollment monitoring. This program could entail additional daily scheduled live sessions that will be required, as well as completion of assignments by deadline.
- I understand that if my student(s) or I fail to uphold any of the above expectations, that my student(s) may be withdrawn from COA.
- I understand that COA may take and use photos at school events that may include my student (s) for social media, yearbook, and other purposes. It is my responsibility to contact the school coordinator at each event and notify him or her of our desire not to be photographed.

- I understand that the COA may provide a school level directory to be shared with others within the school. It is my responsibility to request to opt out, if desired, by sending a written notice to schooloffice@carolusonlineacademy.org

Appendix B

Teacher Responsibilities

- Collaboratively develop an individual learning plan for your student by use of data-driven instructional methods.
- Guide and direct the student through the K12 Online School platforms.
- Provide instructional support to meet SC state standards.
- Facilitate academic conferences.
- Review student submitted work throughout each grading term.
- Maintain school-work day Monday through Friday from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm.
- Respond within 24 school day hours to all school emails and telephone calls.
- Inform you of school updates/information from COA and/or K12.
- Plan and attend regional outings/field trips.
- Administer state required assessments.
- Provide support in all areas of successful student learning and achievement.
- Complete semester progress reports and year-end report cards.
- Be the first point of contact for parents and students.