



**Premier Arts Academy
Student Handbook
2025-2026**

Where the Arts and Academic Excellence Meet!

The Premier Arts Academy is a free, chartered public school offering integrated arts and core academic learning. We are a non-profit, independent school in Elkhart, IN governed by a local board of directors and operating in accordance with the regulations of the Indiana Department of Education. The Premier Arts Academy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Mission Statement:

Utilizing the Arts as a catalyst, The Premier Arts Academy, utilizes a rigorous project-based curriculum blending academics and artistic excellence to enable our students to become the next generation of creative leaders.

Welcome to Premier Arts Academy!

Dear Premier Arts Academy Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year at Premier Arts Academy! It is with great joy and pride that I welcome you into our vibrant and growing school community. As Head of School, I have the honor of working alongside an incredible team of educators, artists, and staff who are deeply committed to nurturing the minds, hearts, and creativity of every child who walks through our doors.

At PAA, we believe that the arts have the power to transform—not just classrooms, but lives. Our unique model blends rigorous academics with dynamic, hands-on arts education. Whether your child finds their spark on stage, at an easel, behind an instrument, or through thoughtful inquiry in the classroom, we are here to help them grow into confident learners and compassionate leaders.

This year, our students will engage in challenge-based learning, small group instruction, and integrated arts experiences designed to stretch their thinking and inspire their creativity. Our talented faculty and staff work tirelessly to ensure every child feels seen, known, and celebrated for who they are and the gifts they bring.

But PAA is more than a school—it's a community. A place where families, educators, and students partner together in the shared goal of excellence and belonging. As a fellow parent, I know how important it is to trust where your child spends their days. I want you to know that your child's growth, safety, and joy are at the center of every decision we make.

Thank you for choosing Premier Arts Academy. We're honored to be a part of your journey.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Molyneaux". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and larger than the others.

Ashley Molyneaux
Head of School, Premier Arts Academy
ashleym@premierarts.org

2025-2026 Premier Arts Academy CALENDAR

August 2025

6-12- Teacher PD Days
11th - Back to School Night
13th 1st Day of School
13-14 Kindergarten ½ Days
14th- Boys and Girls Club Starts

AUGUST 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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FEBRUARY 2026						
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February 2026

4-5 - P/T Conferences
6th- Elearning/Ed Camp
12th- Valentines Party
13-16th Presidents Weekend- No School
19th - Open House for New students

September 2025

1-Labor Day No School
2- 1st Day for LifeLine
22- Board Meeting

SEPTEMBER 2025						
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MARCH 2026						
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March 2026

14th- All School Musical
16th- Elearning/EdCamp
23rd- Board Meeting

October 2025

1-2 P/T Conferences
3- Elearning/Ed Camp
22- Community Expo
23-24 Fall Break
31- Halloween Party
31- No Aftercare

OCTOBER 2025						
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APRIL 2026						
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April 2026

3rd- No Aftercare
6-10th Spring Break
16th - Kindergarten Parent Night

November 2025

7th Elearning/Ed Camp
17th - Board Meeting
21st- Special Person's Day
21st- No Aftercare
24-28th Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER 2025						
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MAY 2026						
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May 2026

1st - Elearning/Ed Camp
18th- Board Meeting
25th- Memorial Day
28th- Community Expo
29th- Field Day
29th- Last day of School No Aftercare

December 2025

4th- Expo
19th- Holiday Party
19th No Aftercare
22-31st- Winter Break

DECEMBER 2025						
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JUNE 2026						
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June 2026

1-5th Kindergarten Camp

January 2026

1-5th - Winter Break
19th - Martin L. King Day
26th- Board Meeting
28th- 100th Day of School
29- Open House for New Students

JANUARY 2026						
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JULY 2026						
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July 2026

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR ELEMENTARY (GRADES K-5) STUDENTS M-Th

7:30a.m.-3:30 p.m. Premier Arts Academy Office Hours (Mon-Thu)

- 6:00a.m.-8a.m. Before Care (\$5 per day/per student- must register)
- 7:40 a.m.-7:55 a.m. Arrival and Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m.-2:30p.m. Instructional Day
- 2:30 p.m. Car Rider Dismissal

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-7) STUDENTS M-Th

- 6:00a.m.-8a.m. Before Care (\$5 per day/per student- must register)
- 7:40 a.m.-7:55 a.m. Arrival and Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m.-3:00p.m. Instructional Day
- 2:30p.m. Younger Siblings of Middle School Students Supervision
- 3:00 p.m. Car Rider Dismissal

FRIDAY STUDENT SCHEDULE (All Students)

7:30am-2:00p.m Premier Arts Academy Office Hours (Friday)

- 6:00a.m.-8a.m. Before Care (\$5 per day/per student- must register)
- 7:40 a.m.-8:00 a.m. Arrival and Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m.-1:45p.m. Instructional Day
- 1:45 p.m. Car Rider Dismissal
- 2:00pm-4:00pm. Premier Arts Academy After Care (\$5 per day/per student)

2 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE (WEATHER EMERGENCIES)

- 6:00am-8:00am- NO BEFORE CARE
- 9:40-9:55- Arrival
- 2:30- Elementary Dismissal
- 3:00- Middle School Dismissal

School Procedures:

ARRIVAL:

For safety reasons, children should not arrive before 7:40am. Please follow the directions of our school staff during drop-off. Reference the map below for procedures for drop-off.

Grades K-4 (and ANYONE who eats school breakfast): Drop-Off is between 7:40 - 7:55 at the south parking lot. After 8:00am students will need to be walked into the main building entrance and signed in by an adult. Students are considered tardy if they arrive in the classroom after 8am. **Tardy minutes now accrue toward unexcused absences.**

Grades 5-8: Drop-Off is between 7:40 - 7:55 in the north parking lot. Students will go through the gate to the annex. 5-8 graders that eat school breakfast should go into the front door of the main building and will then be accompanied to the annex. After 8:00am students will need to be walked into the main annex entrance (off Hively) and signed in by an adult. Students are considered tardy if they arrive in the classroom after 8:00am. **Tardy minutes now accrue toward unexcused absences.**

NOTE: Families that have both an elementary and middle school student may be wondering how to avoid 2 different drop off lines. You may drop off both your students in the north parking lot. Your 5-7 grader will go through the fence to the annex and your K-4 grader will go directly into the front door of the building.

We may adjust this procedure for convenience and efficiency as needed.

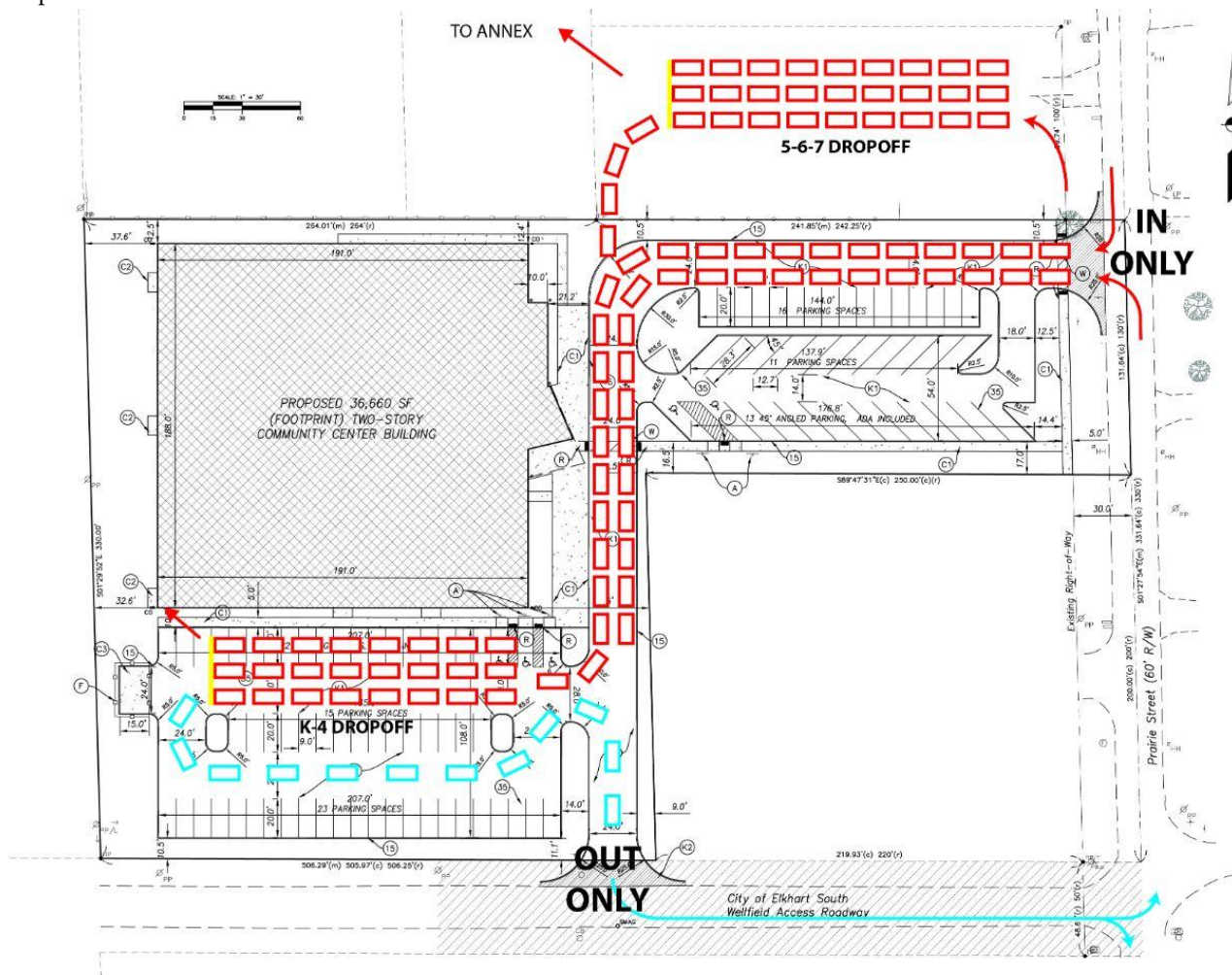
DISMISSAL:

Grades K-5: Dismissal begins at 2:30pm on Monday through Thursday and at 1:45pm on Friday in the south parking lot. Follow the same traffic pattern for dismissal as in the arrival procedures. Any changes to dismissal (ie. students staying for after care, riding home with someone other than their guardian) will not be allowed without prior written notification or a call in to the office prior to 2:00pm on M-Th or 12pm on Friday.

Grades 6-8: Dismissal begins at 3pm on Monday through Thursday and at 1:45pm on Friday in the North parking lot. Follow the same traffic pattern for dismissal as in the arrival procedures. Any changes to dismissal (ie. students staying for after care, riding home with someone other than their guardian) will not be allowed without prior written notification or a call in to the office prior to 2:00pm on M-Th or 12pm on Friday.

*NOTE: Families that have both an elementary and middle school student may be wondering how to avoid 2 different pick up times. Younger siblings of middle school students will be walked to the annex and supervised until middle school dismissal. You may pick both children up in the north parking lot at 3pm.

PARENT DROP OFF/PICK UP LINE PROCEDURE: Please pull in from the Prairie St. entrance and follow the map directions:



Transportation: Self-Transportation Consent

At Premier Arts Academy, student safety is our top priority—especially during arrival and dismissal times. Our standard expectation is that families provide transportation for their children and follow our established drop-off and pick-up procedures. These routines help ensure a smooth, safe experience for everyone on campus.

We understand that some families may wish for their child to walk or bike to and from school. In those cases, we ask that you work with us to keep your child safe by following these important guidelines:

- **Self-Transportation Consent Form Required**

If you choose to allow your student to walk or bike to and/or from school, you must submit a signed *Student Self-Transportation Consent Form* to the main office. This lets us know your child has your permission to travel without a parent or guardian and helps us support them appropriately during arrival and dismissal.

- **Supervision on Campus**

Please note that Premier Arts Academy staff are responsible for your child only once they have entered the

building and checked in with a school official—such as the front desk, an administrator, teacher, or instructional assistant. The same applies at the end of the day: our responsibility ends when your child leaves the care of a staff member, following the plan outlined in your consent form.

- **Drop-offs Outside School Property**
We strongly discourage families from dropping students off at off-site locations (like nearby parking lots or businesses) in order to avoid car line wait times. These areas are not supervised, and this practice creates safety concerns and potential liabilities. We ask that all families participate fully in our drop-off procedures to ensure each child has a secure hand-off between home and school.
- **Unapproved Self-Transportation**
For safety and compliance with state guidelines, students may not walk or bike to school without a signed *Self-Transportation Consent Form* on file. If a student is observed doing so without permission, the school is required to report the situation to the Department of Child Services for further review.

Thank you for helping us keep your child safe. If you need a copy of the *Student Self-Transportation Consent Form* or have questions about your child's arrival or dismissal plan, please contact the school office.

VISITORS: For the safety of our students, ALL visitors must register in the office and pick up a visitor's badge. A state issued ID is required to leave the office area and gain access into the school building.

ATTENDANCE: Good attendance is critical for student success. If your child is unable to attend school you must notify the office by phone at 574-971-ARTS (2787) , via the PAA app, or by sending a note within 48 hours after the student returns to school. If your child is absent for 3 consecutive days or more he/she will need a doctor's note upon return. Excused absences include: student illness, family illness or funeral, medical appointments and approved vacations. If the school is not notified as to the reason for the absence, it will be recorded as unexcused/truant. Chronic absences for all or part of the day may be cause for referral to the following: Administration; Office of Family and Children, Child Protective Services. If your child needs to be picked up early for any reason, the parent must come to the office and sign the child out. If the student arrives late, the parent must come into the building and sign the child in. Please note the following **Attendance and Tardy policy:**

Regular attendance and being "on time" are critical for learning success. When a student is late, they miss the outline of the day and their mode for learning is disrupted from the very beginning. The teacher must also pause for the student entering class and getting them settled in, disrupting the educational process for all students. When students are chronically absent, they fall behind and require a disproportionate level of assistance from the teacher and instructional assistant. Of course, when a child is sick, it is best to stay home.

The accountability is codified by the Legislature of the State of Indiana, and policies and procedures are set in place by our school board and approved by our authorizer, Ball State University. We have attendance levels that guide decision making:

Level 1: 3 unexcused absences - A notification is sent to the guardian of accumulated student absences.

Level 2: 6 unexcused absences (OR 5 unexcused absences within a 10 week period for students in grades K-6)
- Parent contact to make an attendance improvement plan.

Level 3: 10 unexcused absences - A conference with an administrator and guardian is held. Phone call made to the Department of Child Services. Students who reach this level are considered to be on ***attendance probation***.

Level 4: 15 unexcused absences - Legal notice is sent to the guardian and called into the Department of Child Services. A conference with administration and the guardian is held. The guardian is warned of expulsion at 20 absences.

Level 5: 20 unexcused absences - Legal notice is sent to the guardian and copied to the Prosecuting Attorney, Intake Officer of the Juvenile Court, and Department of Child Services. A hearing with the Head of School, School Board President and guardian is held. *Students who are expelled will have until the end of the current semester to enroll in a different school.*

Note: *Unexcused tardy times are cumulative to attendance.* When students are tardy, those minutes are calculated and equal an unexcused absence when they reach the daily meeting time threshold.

FAMILY VACATIONS: A family vacation request form must be completed at least 2 weeks prior to a scheduled family vacation and turned into your child's teacher or the main office for administrative approval. This is the protocol in order to be sure your child's absence will be recorded as "excused". Turning in the form does not guarantee approval for excused status.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS: In the event of a school closing due to severe weather, heavy snow, temperature, or fog, all students will participate in eLearning from home. Visit the Premieartsacademy.org website, the Premier Arts Academy app or the Premier Arts Academy Facebook page for Premier Arts Academy closings. Please opt into text and email notifications through our communication app.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION: Emergency information must be on file for your child(ren). Contact the office if you move or change phone numbers. Please be sure the office has your current home address, phone number, work phone number, and the names and phone numbers of at least two people we can contact if we are unable to reach you. This information is extremely important for your child's safety and in case of an illness or accident.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM:

Grades K-8: Breakfast will be served from 7:40 a.m. to 7:55 a.m. Lunch times will vary per grade level. If students choose to bring their lunch to school, we are asking that NO SODA be sent to school with lunches for nutritional reasons. Free/Reduced lunch forms are available in the office and online through LINQ. *Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch. You must check in at the office.

Kindergarten (Mon-Thur) 12:35-1:00 (Fri) 11:25-12:50	4th Grade (Mon-Thur) 11:05-11:30 (Fri) 10:25-10:50
1st Grade (Mon-Thur) 12:35-1:00 (Fri) 11:25-12:50	5th Grade (Mon-Thur) 11:05-11:30 (Fri) 10:25-10:50
2nd Grade (Mon-Thur) 12:05-12:30 (Fri) 10:55-11:20	6th Grade (Mon-Thur) 10:35-11:00 (Fri) 9:55-10:20
3rd Grade (Mon-Thur) 12:5-12:30 (Fri) 10:55-11:20	7th Grade (Mon-Thur) 10:35-11:00 (Fri) 9:55-10:20
	8th Grade (Mon-Thur) 10:35-11:00 (Fri) 9:55-10:20

BEFORE CARE: Premier Arts Academy will provide childcare from 6am-8am Mon-Friday (except on emergency weather 2-hour delays). Students will have access to games, puzzles, gym time, breakfast (fees apply), and supervision.

DO NOT SEND PHONES OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO BEFORE CARE! Before Care is \$5/day per student and maxes out at \$15/day per family. Families must register students for Before Care in advance. You will be invoiced weekly by our online system, PRO CARE, for the days you utilize Before Care Services. You must stay up to date on payment otherwise you will not have access to Before Care. Parents must walk their children into Before Care and sign them in on the iPad. You MAY NOT drop them at the door and go. Before Care closes at 7:20. After that time, you must wait in the drop off line.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE:

Option 1: Lifeline (Grades 1-8)- From Monday to Thursday, beginning at 2:30 pm and extending until 5:00 pm, Lifeline will be offering a character-based program at The Hub. We are truly grateful for this partnership, as it allows our students to engage in additional activities that promote character development, academic support, athletics, nutritious meals, games, and small group mentoring. It is important to note that Lifeline's after school program is NOT an aftercare service (babysitting), but a character-education program. Lifeline programming is completely separate from Premier Arts Academy and is an *OPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY* offered free of charge to Premier Arts Academy families. All information regarding Lifeline programming will be distributed by Lifeline Youth Ministries. All questions should be directed to Lifeline.

Option 2: Boys and Girls Club (Grades 1-8). From Monday to Friday beginning at 2:45 and extending to 6:00pm, students can be transported to the Boys and Girls Club in Elkhart at Beardsley Elementary School. The cost of transportation is \$10 per week and will be invoiced through our online payment system, PRO CARE. Boys and Girls Club requires a \$30/year membership fee and a parent orientation before they are allowed to begin attending. Visit <https://www.greatfutures.club/become-a-member/> to sign up ASAP as space is limited.

Kindergarten Aftercare

The Kindergarten Aftercare Program will be offered from 2:30–5:00pm, Monday through Thursday. The cost is \$30 per week. You must register for the program for the entire semester and will be billed weekly regardless of how many days you use the program. You will not be billed during holiday weeks or summer vacation. You can opt out or into the program after winter break. Sign up with our online payment system, ProCare.

Friday After School Care

Premier Arts Academy will provide childcare from 2pm-4pm on Friday afternoons. Students will have access to games, puzzles, gym time, a snack, and supervision. Friday Care is \$5/day per student and maxes out at \$15/day per family. Families must register students for Friday After Care in advance. You will be invoiced weekly by our online system, PRO CARE, for the days you utilize Friday Care Services. You must stay up to date on payment otherwise you will not have access to Friday Care. Parents must walk in and sign students out on the iPad. A \$1 per minute late fee will be assessed for late pickups from After Care.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: School staff may care for minor ailments or injuries. If an emergency arises, it is the policy of the school to contact the family if possible. This will be done before calling an ambulance, when time permits. School personnel will not attempt to treat or diagnose cases of illness or injury. Administration of medication prescribed by a licensed physician and supplied by a parent must be arranged with the school by filling out the required form. Nonprescription medication will be administered only if there is written permission from the student's parent or legal guardian and if it is sent in the original container. Medications will not be sent home with students but must be picked up in the office. If a child is absent due to a contagious disease, he must be free of all symptoms before

returning to school. Do not send your child to school if you detect evidence of illness (temperature or vomiting). Please the following Health Policy:

Health Policy

- Fever: Children will be sent home if their temperature is 100.0 or higher and must stay home the next day for observation. Children must be free of fever (any temperature above 100 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. The same policy applies if your child develops a fever at home. They must be fever free (any temperature above 100 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- Diarrhea – Having loose poop (stool) more often than isn't caused by a change in diet. — Your child can return to school when they have not had diarrhea for 24 hours. You may need to keep your child home longer if they have an infection like norovirus, which is highly contagious. If diarrhea is caused by a known allergy or non-contagious medical condition, this policy does not apply.
- Throwing up (vomiting) – Children may return to school 24 hours after the last time they vomit if they don't have a fever. Exceptions can be made for students with known food allergies or non-contagious medical conditions that cause vomiting.
- Thick White, Green or Yellow Discharge: Children will be sent home if they appear to have any thick white, green or yellow discharge from their nose. This is often indicative of an infection and they must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact they do not have an infection we need a doctor's note stating they are not contagious.
- Flu: Children can return to school after the flu when they no longer have a fever and feel well enough to participate in class. Because the flu can cause a variety of symptoms, a child may not be ready for school even if they are fever free. Parents should use their best judgment to determine if their child is close to being back to their normal level of activity before returning to school.
- Contagious Disease: A contagious disease is one that can be spread by close contact with a person or object. Your child must stay home from school if they have a contagious disease. They may be contagious before showing any signs of illness. *Please notify school of any communicable diseases including COVID 19. Some common contagious diseases include:
 - Influenza
 - Pinkeye (conjunctivitis)
 - Strep throat
 - Measles
 - Chickenpox
 - COVID-19 - Students who test positive for COVID19 should quarantine until fever free per the CDC recommendations. They can return to school in a mask for 5 days.

iPad Use & Technology Expectations

At Premier Arts Academy, every student is issued a school iPad to support their learning in the classroom and at home. These devices are essential tools for instruction, research, collaboration, and creativity. iPads will travel home regularly, and it is expected that students return each day with their iPad **fully charged and ready for learning**.

To complete homework and participate in E-Learning Days, students will need access to the internet at home. If your family needs support finding affordable internet service, please reach out to our front office—we're happy to connect you with helpful resources.

Before an iPad can be issued, every family must review and sign the **Premier Arts Academy Technology Agreement**, which outlines student responsibilities and usage expectations. Below is a summary of the guidelines:

Acceptable Use

- Students may only use their school-issued iPad for learning activities that align with classroom instruction and the school's code of conduct.
- Inappropriate content—including adult material, illegal activity, or anything that promotes violence, weapons, tobacco, or alcohol—is strictly prohibited.
- Cyberbullying, hacking, or attempting to bypass security settings is never allowed.
- Students should **respect digital privacy**, never attempting to access, edit, or delete others' work.
- All communication via school technology should be respectful and appropriate.

iPad Care & Maintenance

- Students must handle their iPads with care and follow all school guidelines for carrying, charging, and storing devices.
- Keep the iPad safe and secure. If it is lost or stolen, notify the school immediately.
- Students should not attempt to repair or alter the device in any way.
- After **two instances of damage**, families may be held responsible for repair or replacement costs unless they've purchased an optional protection plan.

Internet Safety & Compliance with the Law

- Students and families are expected to follow state and federal technology laws, including COPPA and FERPA, in addition to school policies.
- Students **may not use VPNs, proxy servers, or alternate browsers** to bypass safety filters or access restricted websites.
 - Violating this policy results in an automatic **1-day school suspension**.
 - If the violation leads to access of inappropriate material, a data breach, or online threats, **an additional day of suspension may be assigned**.
 - **Repeated violations may lead to expulsion**.
- Students may not sign into websites or online platforms unless they've been approved by their teacher.

Our iPads are powerful learning tools, and with great power comes great responsibility. Thank you for working with us to ensure technology is used safely, responsibly, and with purpose. If you have questions or need help understanding any part of our technology program or the Technology Agreement, please don't hesitate to contact our team.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

OVERVIEW: The Premier Arts Academy's teaching philosophy combines strategies such as arts integration, challenge-based learning, and small group instruction that are proven to benefit children, improve outcomes, and cultivate 21st century skills. Students will thrive in our "hands-on-minds-on" environment.

CURRICULUM: Every parent must sign the CURRICULUM ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM and agree to the challenge process outlined below.

English Language Arts (ELA)

Grades K-5: Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Our K-5 students benefit from the Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program, which emphasizes a strong foundation in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. CKLA integrates rich, content-based texts that build knowledge across subjects, helping students develop comprehensive literacy skills and a deep understanding of the world around them.

View scope and sequence here: <https://amplify.com/pilotpacks/ckla-scope-and-sequence/>

Grades 6-8: Amplify ELA For our middle school students, we use Amplify ELA, a curriculum that challenges students with complex texts and interactive lessons. Amplify ELA focuses on developing critical thinking, analytical skills, and effective communication, preparing students for high school and beyond. Explore the detailed scope and sequence of Amplify ELA here: <https://amplify.com/programs/amplify-english-language-arts/whats-included/>

Mathematics

Desmos Math by Amplify In Mathematics, we utilize Desmos Math by Amplify for all grade levels. This innovative program combines interactive digital tools with a comprehensive curriculum to help students understand mathematical concepts deeply. Desmos Math encourages problem-solving, logical reasoning, and the practical application of math skills. Learn more about the scope and sequence of Desmos Math by Amplify here ([K-5](#), [6-8](#)).

At Premier Arts Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every student receives a high-quality education that prepares them for future success. Our ELA and Math curricula are key components of this commitment, providing a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Process for Challenging Materials:

We understand that as parents/guardians, you may have concerns about specific instructional materials within our chosen curricula. We value open communication and respect your right to express these concerns. At the same time, we kindly request that you entrust the choice of curriculum materials to the expertise of our school and teachers. It is our firm belief that our chosen curricula provide a well-rounded and rigorous education for your child. Challenging materials should be a rare event, as our curriculum choices are thoughtfully selected and aligned with educational standards. However, if a situation arises where you wish to challenge specific materials, we have established the following guidelines:

Initial Review:

If you have concerns about specific materials, we encourage you to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher. During this meeting, the teacher will discuss the materials in question and provide further context regarding their inclusion in the curriculum.

Collaboration and Discussion:

The teacher will collaborate with you to gain a comprehensive understanding of your concerns. This collaborative discussion is essential to address any misunderstandings or explore potential alternatives.

Further Evaluation:

If, after the initial review and discussion, you still have reservations about the material, the matter will be referred to the Head of School and School Board. They will conduct a thorough evaluation of the content, considering its alignment with academic standards, pedagogical goals, and educational values of our school.

Decision and Resolution:

After careful consideration, a decision will be made regarding the inclusion or modification of the challenged material. The Head of School, in consultation with the curriculum coordinator, will communicate the decision to you within a reasonable timeframe. If necessary, alternative materials will be chosen for the child in question, not the entire class.

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS:

The Academy believes that homework reinforces the learning happening in the classroom as well as gives students the opportunity to learn important lessons in responsibility and accountability. Therefore, homework is provided as an integral part of the students' education. In general, The Academy attempts to assign approximately ten minutes of homework per grade level to students. While we strive to use these guidelines, we like to make clear that it is impossible to gauge perfectly how long an assignment will take a given child, as some students take longer to complete tasks than others. Parents are encouraged to communicate with classroom teachers regarding questions about homework. Families should expect daily reading practice for grades K-8 that should take 15-20 minutes. Students in grades 5-8 may also be assigned a variety of long-term projects such as posters, models, or research papers that will require additional time outside of the classroom.

PROGRESS UPDATES:

Parents will receive a quarterly progress report with a comprehensive explanation of your child's progress toward mastery of core standards. Premier Arts Academy utilizes standards-based grading and the use of student portfolios to capture standards attainment. Twice a year, you are invited to attend a conference with your child's teacher to receive an in-person update and to view the portfolio together with your child and their teacher. Parents are welcome to reach out to our teachers with questions or concerns at any time. Please allow at least 24 hours (work day) for a response.

ARTS CONCENTRATIONS: Students will choose 2 Arts Concentrations in their 6th grade year for focused daily instruction in their chosen subject area. Arts concentrations will be taught by highly credentialed professional teaching artists. Students may choose from Dance, Visual Arts, Theater, Music, and Digital Arts.

COMMUNITY EXPOS: A hallmark of our school will be regular community expos and performances to demonstrate the work of students and in an authentic way. Our quarterly community expo events will further help us in measuring academic and 21st Century skill growth. Students will publish and present the results of their Challenge

Hour and Arts in Action projects to the wider community. This also allows for more regular engagement from parents and the community and for students to act on the solutions they've been seeking in their projects. Parents will see growth in their child's communication skills as the children present their work to the wider community. Check the school calendar for dates.

ALL SCHOOL PRODUCTIONS: PAA students will participate as a student body in all-school productions throughout the academic year. Rehearsal for these productions will be completed during the school day in their arts classes.

EXTRACURRICULARS

Band & Orchestra: 6th-7th grade students may participate in the Premier Arts Academy Band & Orchestra. Band and orchestra will meet in the Hively Annex and will begin at 7:15am. This schedule allows any student, regardless of their chosen arts major, to participate in the Band & Orchestra program.

Choir: 4th-6th grade students may participate in the Premier Arts Academy Choir. Student musicians will stay after school Mon-Thursday from 2:30-3:30. This schedule allows any student, regardless of their chosen arts major, to participate in the Choir program. You can expect to view performances at the quarterly community expos.

Clubs/Activities: Faculty members and/or students may propose a club/activity utilizing the NEW ACTIVITY FORM. The administration will make every effort to seek out a leader/coach and approve any new activity with enough student interest. Some clubs/activities may have modest dues depending on the amount of consumable materials required for the activity. New approved clubs will be advertised on the website, school app, and in-person to students for sign-up. Parents will need to complete the online sign-up and permission slip for their child to participate.

SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

Class Parties: Premier Arts Academy believes we should celebrate together! You can expect class parties for Halloween, Winter Holidays, and Valentines Day. Room parents will collaborate with the classroom teachers using a set of parameters set by school policy. We encourage parents to sign up to assist with parties and/or contribute requested items for the festivities.

Birthdays: We are excited to help you celebrate your child's birthday at school. Birthday boys and girls will receive a birthday shout out on the morning newscast, will get a special button to wear for the day, a prize from the office treasure chest, and may bring in goody bags (without food) to pass out at the end of the school day. You are welcome to sign in at the front desk and eat lunch with your student on their birthday if you wish. **Please refrain from bringing in baked goods or food as severe allergies in the school community could cause serious bodily harm.**

PREMIER ARTS ACADEMY BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

BEHAVIOR: Students are expected to follow Premier Arts Code of Conduct as well as specific classroom rules. Please review the guidelines with your child. The Student Code of Conduct and excerpts from the Discipline Policy are included below. You may read the complete Discipline Policy on the School Board page on the PAA website.

Premier Arts Academy Student Code of Conduct

At Premier Arts Academy, we believe in creating a safe and inclusive environment that fosters learning and growth. To achieve this, we expect our students to follow this code of conduct at all times:

Good Behavior in the Classroom

- Come to class on time and be prepared to learn
- Respect your teacher and fellow students
- Listen actively and participate in class discussions
- Use appropriate language and tone of voice
- Follow instructions and complete assignments on time

Bathrooms

- Use the bathroom only for its intended purpose
- Leave the bathroom clean and tidy
- Respect the privacy of others
- Report any vandalism or damage immediately to a teacher or staff member

Cafeteria

- Use good table manners and eat quietly
- Clean up after yourself and leave the table clean
- Respect your classmates' space and belongings
- Follow the rules regarding food and drink in the cafeteria

Hallways/Path to Annex

- Walk on the right side of the hallway
- Keep the noise level down
- Respect other students' space and belongings
- Do not run or push others

Recess

- Follow recess rules and regulations
- Use equipment appropriately and safely
- Respect others' space and feelings
- Report any injuries or unsafe conditions immediately to a teacher or staff members

Buses

- Follow the bus driver's instructions at all times
- Remain seated and keep your seatbelt fastened
- Respect other students' space and belongings
- Do not distract the driver or engage in any behavior that could endanger the safety of yourself or others

Field Trips

- Follow the instructions of the teacher and chaperones
- Respect the rules and regulations of the location being visited
- Represent the school in a positive manner
- Report any incidents or issues immediately to a teacher or staff member

DRESS CODE:

The School expects student dress and grooming to be neat, clean and in keeping with community standards, so that each student may share in promoting a positive, healthy and safe atmosphere within the School. This expectation encompasses the School day and school sponsored extracurricular activities. Students may wear special clothing necessary for a school-sponsored event, as permitted by the Head of School.

The dress and grooming of the student body affects the educational environment and the climate for learning in our school. We believe that helping students become aware of the appropriate dress for various activities is part of the educational process. The nature of our curriculum demands that students have the correct clothing and footwear in order to be safe and to learn effectively.

Upper garments will consist of any shirt that is available through the PAA apparel line. The Academy students will have a wide selection of school gear to choose from to wear as their shirt. A wide range of colors and styles, all featuring the PAA logo, will be available in our school store and our online ordering portal. Students will be expected to be in a branded shirt every day unless it is a special dress-up or dress-down day. Students may wear a long-sleeve shirt (solid color) underneath their PAA shirts. Shirts must be properly fitted (not oversized or overly tight, and must cover the top of the lower garment). Shirts must not have holes. Sweatshirts or sweaters available through the PAA apparel line may be worn during the school day. A PAA logo must be visible at all times. We ask that students keep their hoods down during the school day.

Lower garments will consist of appropriate jeans, khaki pants, walking shorts, capris, skirts or athletic pants (including sweatpants or yoga pants). Pants and shorts must be properly fitted (not oversized or overly tight) and must not have holes. Pants must fit at the waist, or a belt must be worn to prevent them from falling.

Shoes or boots must have both closed heel and toe. Gym shoes are recommended. You must also provide appropriate dance shoes as necessary.

WEAR WHAT YOU WANT WEDNESDAYS! Wednesdays are “out of uniform” days for all students. Clothing must be school appropriate. Wednesdays are not pajama days unless specified by the classroom teacher.

Cell Phones: Effective communication and focused learning are essential to the academic and artistic development of our students at Premier Arts Academy. In order to create a conducive learning environment and ensure the safety and well-being of all students, we have implemented the following cell phone usage policy:

Restricted Use:

- a. During Class: Cell phones must be turned off and kept in lockers. Students are not permitted to use cell phones for personal purposes while in class, including texting, making calls, or browsing the internet.
- b. During Rehearsals and Performances: Cell phones should not be used during rehearsals or performances unless explicitly permitted by the teacher or director for educational or production-related purposes.

Outside of School Hours:

- a. Students are not to use their cell phone during before care, after care, clubs or activities. Cell phones may only be used to call or text parents at the conclusion of these activities for a ride.

Personal Responsibility:

- a. Students are responsible for the security and safekeeping of their cell phones. The school will not be liable for any loss, theft, or damage of personal devices brought to the premises.
- b. Students should avoid sharing their personal cell phone numbers with individuals they do not know or trust.

Respectful Use:

- a. Students must use their cell phones responsibly, respecting the privacy and rights of others. This includes refraining from capturing or sharing unauthorized photos or videos of fellow students, staff, or school events.
- b. Students should refrain from using cell phones in a way that disrupts the learning environment, such as playing games, listening to music, or engaging in inappropriate online activities.

Consequences of Violation:

- a. Any violation of this cell phone usage policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to warnings, temporary confiscation of the device, parental notification, or other consequences as deemed appropriate by the school administration.
- b. Repeat or serious offenses may result in more severe disciplinary actions, including loss of privileges, detention, or suspension.

We believe that by adhering to this cell phone usage policy, students will benefit from a focused and respectful learning environment that encourages their academic and artistic growth. We appreciate the cooperation of students and parents in supporting this policy and fostering a positive educational experience for all.

Please note that this policy is subject to periodic review and updates. Any changes will be communicated to students, parents, and staff accordingly.

Bullying:

Our school is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. We believe that every student has the right to learn and grow without fear of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. As a result, we have implemented the following policy to address incidents of bullying at our school.

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is any repeated intentional behavior that causes harm or distress to another person, either physically or emotionally. This can include verbal, physical, or psychological abuse, and can occur in person or online.

Reporting Bullying:

Any student who has been the victim of bullying or who witnesses bullying should report the incident to a teacher or other school staff member immediately. Students may also report bullying anonymously using our school's reporting system that can be found on the PAA app or on the PAA website.

Investigating Bullying:

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated promptly by school staff. The investigation will involve interviewing the victim, the alleged bully, and any witnesses to the incident. The school will also gather any other relevant evidence before making a determination as to whether bullying has occurred.

Consequences for Bullying:

Students found to have engaged in bullying behavior will face appropriate consequences, which may include discipline, counseling, or other interventions designed to prevent future bullying. Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior, consequences may range from a warning to suspension or expulsion.

Preventing Bullying:

Our school is committed to creating a positive and respectful school culture that values diversity and promotes inclusion. We will provide ongoing education and training to students, teachers, and parents to raise awareness of bullying and its impact, as well as strategies for prevention and intervention. Additionally, we will encourage students to develop positive relationships with their peers and promote kindness and empathy through school-wide activities and events.

We take bullying very seriously at our school and are committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. By working together, we can prevent bullying and promote a culture of kindness and respect.

Discipline Policy Overview:

The Academy believes that children deserve the opportunities to learn and grow in a variety of ways. By intentional design, we will provide students with procedures and skill development that will allow them to practice positive choices. We also believe that with a strong instructional program, behavioral problems are less likely to occur when students are engaged in the learning. However, we realize that issues may arise which require staff to address unacceptable student behavior. In doing so, we intend to provide students with the support that they need to develop behavioral skills and cooperatively be accountable for their actions.

The Head of School shall provide to all students and their parents the rules of this Academy regarding student conduct, the sanctions which may be imposed for breach of those rules, and the due process procedures that will be followed in administering the Academy Code of Conduct. The Academy shall abide by Federal and State laws in matters relating to discipline, suspension, and expulsion of disabled students.

***Parents may not alter discipline consequences for their children. Discipline at PAA is not a “choose your own adventure” experience. We always aim to make our code of conduct and consequences fair, transparent, and with student growth at the forefront.**

Behavioral Consequences

The following is a list of possible consequences that may be given to students for inappropriate behavior. In certain instances, other consequences that appropriately match the misbehavior may also be used.

Verbal Warning

If a student is exhibiting a relatively minor behavioral infraction, the staff at their professional discretion, will give the child verbal warnings that their behavior is inappropriate, and the warning may be documented by that staff member for future reference.

Lunch/Recess Detention

If the behavior was a minor infraction and/or was the first or second occurrence, the student may receive a lunch/recess detention to let the student know that if similar inappropriate behavior continues there will be similar and more significant consequences in the future. This notice will be documented in PowerSchool and parents will be notified via email or phone call.

After School Detention Suspension

Middle school students may be issued an After School detention.

Detention Details:

- **Days:** Tuesdays and Thursdays
- **Time:** 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
- **Pick-Up:** Students must be picked up by a parent or guardian promptly at 4:00 PM.

Students have been informed of the behaviors that may result in detention, and we have clearly outlined what constitutes a warning versus an automatic detention. For your reference, these guidelines include:

- **Warnings for Detention:**
 - Disrespect in classroom / Talking over teacher
 - Inappropriate use of iPad / Off-task in iPad
 - Touching other people's bodies/belongings
 - Refusal of work
 - Inappropriate language
- **Automatic Detention:**
 - Intentional rude remarks / name-calling
 - Stealing
 - Shoving / rough-housing
 - Damage of learning environment

***Failure to serve a lunch/recess detention or after school detention will result in a 1 day suspension.**

Removal of Students

A student's behavior may require that he or she be temporarily removed from class or from a class activity for a brief period of time. This may be done to provide the student an opportunity to reflect on their behavior. It may also be done to ensure either the continued academic growth of other students or the health, safety, or welfare of everyone involved. If necessary, the student may meet with an administrator to discuss the concern and ways of remedying the situation.

Out-of-School Suspension

An out-of-school suspension will be time away from school to consider and reflect on their misbehavior. While suspended, students are not allowed to participate in any school related activities. It is the student's responsibility to complete all of the work from missed time.

Premier Arts Academy Student Expulsion Policy

Policy:

1. Grounds for Expulsion: A student may be considered for expulsion if they engage in any of the following behaviors:

- Possession, use, or distribution of illegal substances or weapons.
- Physical violence or threats of violence towards students, staff, or others.
- Severe bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Theft, vandalism, or destruction of school property.
- Repeatedly accessing inappropriate websites through a school issued device
- Repeated and severe violations of the school's code of conduct despite prior interventions.

2. Investigation and Documentation:

- Any incident that may warrant expulsion will be thoroughly investigated by the administration.
- All relevant facts, evidence, and witness statements will be documented.
- The student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the investigation and given an opportunity to present their side of the story.

3. Notification and Hearing:

- If the investigation concludes that expulsion is warranted, the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing.
- The notification will include the specific reasons for the proposed expulsion and the date and time of the expulsion hearing.
- The expulsion hearing will be conducted by a designated panel, which may include school administrators, teachers, and board members.

4. Expulsion Hearing:

- During the hearing, the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the opportunity to present evidence, call witnesses, and make a statement.
- The panel will review all evidence and testimony before making a decision.
- The panel's decision will be communicated in writing to the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s).

5. Appeals Process:

- The student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to appeal the panel's decision to the school board.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing within ten (10) school days of the expulsion decision.
- The school board will review the appeal and make a final determination.

6. Re-entry Plan:

- If a student is expelled, they may be eligible to reapply for admission after a designated period, contingent upon fulfilling certain conditions set by the school.
- A re-entry plan may include evidence of behavioral improvement, completion of counseling or intervention programs, and a written commitment to abide by the school's code of conduct.

7. Confidentiality:

- All proceedings related to student expulsion will be conducted in a confidential manner to protect the privacy of all parties involved.

Due Process

The Board recognizes the importance of safeguarding a student's constitutional rights, particularly when subject to disciplinary procedures. The Board recognizes exclusion from the educational programs of the Academy, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student and is one that cannot be imposed without appropriate due process, since exclusion deprives a child of the right to an education. In all cases resulting in short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion, appropriate due process rights must be observed. The Head of School shall check to make sure the student is not classified as disabled under Section 504. Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with their rights under Federal law.

For purposes of this policy, suspension shall be either short-term (not more than ten (10) days) or long-term (for more than ten (10) days but less than permanent expulsion) removal of a student from school. The Head of School may suspend a student for a period not to exceed 10 school days.

In all cases resulting in short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion, appropriate due process rights must be observed. In determining whether a student is to be suspended or expelled, the Head of School shall use a preponderance of evidence standard.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent Booster Club: The Premier Arts Academy Parent Booster Club is a dedicated group of parents and guardians who work together to support and enhance the educational and artistic experiences of students at Premier Arts Academy. As a Parent Booster Club member, you have the opportunity to actively participate in various activities and initiatives that contribute to the overall success and well-being of our students.

The Parent Booster Club serves as a bridge between parents, teachers, and the school administration, fostering open lines of communication and collaboration. Our primary goal is to promote a strong sense of community and create a supportive network that ensures the highest quality of education and artistic opportunities for our students.

Key objectives of the Parent Booster Club include:

Supportive Engagement: We strive to engage parents and guardians in meaningful ways that support the academic, artistic, and personal growth of our students. By working closely with teachers and school staff, we aim to create an environment where students can thrive and reach their full potential.

Volunteerism and Assistance: The Parent Booster Club coordinates and mobilizes volunteers for various school activities, events, and fundraisers. We encourage parents to actively participate in volunteering opportunities, whether it be assisting in the classroom, chaperoning field trips, supporting extracurricular activities, or helping with fundraising initiatives.

Fundraising and Financial Support: We organize and coordinate fundraising activities to provide financial support for programs, resources, and initiatives that enhance the educational and artistic experiences of our students. Funds raised

through our efforts directly benefit Premier Arts Academy and contribute to the enrichment of the learning environment.

Advocacy and Communication: The Parent Booster Club serves as an advocate for students, parents, and teachers. We strive to facilitate effective communication, address concerns, and promote positive relationships between all stakeholders. We encourage open dialogue, transparency, and collaboration to foster a strong partnership between home and school.

Community Building: We organize social events and activities that foster a sense of community among parents, students, and staff. These events provide opportunities for families to connect, build relationships, and celebrate the accomplishments of our students.

By joining the Parent Booster Club, you become an integral part of a supportive and engaged community committed to the success of our students. Together, we can make a significant impact and contribute to the growth and development of Premier Arts Academy. We welcome and encourage all parents and guardians to join the Parent Booster Club and actively participate in creating an exceptional educational experience for our students. For more information or to get involved, please visit the PAA Booster Club page on our website

Room Parents: Premier Arts Academy would love for every classroom to have 1-2 room parent volunteers. Your involvement as a Room Parent will not only enrich the lives of our students but also provide you with an opportunity to actively engage in your child's educational journey. It is a fulfilling role that allows you to contribute your time, talents, and ideas to make a positive impact on our school community. As a Room Parent, you will play a crucial role in facilitating communication and collaboration between teachers, parents, and the school administration. Your active participation will contribute to building a strong partnership and enhance the overall educational experience of our students.

Job Description:

Classroom Support:

- Assist the teacher in organizing and coordinating classroom activities, special projects, and events.
- Help recruit and coordinate volunteers for classroom activities, field trips, and school-wide events.
- Coordinate parent volunteers for special projects, such as creating classroom displays, organizing classroom parties, or providing support during performances.

Fundraising Support:

- Collaborate with the school's fundraising initiatives by promoting and coordinating fundraising events within the classroom or grade level.
- Assist in collecting and tracking funds, if necessary, and provide support in distributing fundraising materials.

Classroom Enhancement:

- Collaborate with the teacher to identify and implement ways to enhance the learning environment, such as organizing classroom library resources, assisting with classroom decoration, or sourcing materials for special projects.

If you are interested in becoming a Room Parent or have any questions regarding the role, reach out to Room Parent Chair, Kristen Widmeyer via email at kristenwidmeyer@gmail.com. Thank you for considering this important role at

Premier Arts Academy. Together, we can create an exceptional educational experience for our students and build a vibrant community of learners.

Volunteering: We are excited to have your support and participation as a volunteer at Premier Arts Academy. The involvement of parents and guardians is essential to our mission of providing a high-quality education for all students. As part of your commitment to Premier Arts Academy, we are asking that each family complete a minimum of 10 hours of volunteer service during the school year. We appreciate your time and effort in supporting our school community.

Every parent/guardian has signed a VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT committing to:

- Complete 10 hours of volunteer service at Premier Arts Academy during the school year.
- Abide by the school's policies and procedures, including those related to confidentiality, student safety, and behavior.
- Submit required information for a background check. This is necessary if the volunteer will have unsupervised contact with students.
- Notify the school if you are unable to fulfill your volunteer commitment for any reason.

In return for your commitment, Premier Arts Academy will provide:

- Opportunities for meaningful volunteer involvement in the school and its programs.
- Recognition for your contributions to the school and its students.
- Support and training to ensure a positive and productive volunteer experience.
- Free background checks as needed.

Disclaimer

Please note that this Family Handbook is intended as a general guide for the policies and procedures at Premier Arts Academy. While we strive to provide comprehensive and accurate information, this handbook may be updated from time to time to reflect changes in school policies, regulations, or other pertinent information. It is not fully inclusive of every school policy or procedure.

For the most current and complete information, please refer to official school communications or contact the school administration. We encourage families to stay informed and engaged with the school's updates to ensure a positive and successful experience for all members of our school community.