Compass Academy Charter School

Parent Handbook
2025-2026

COMPASS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. Katie Felice, Board President
Gladys Lugardo-Hemple, Vice President
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Joel Johnston (Ex Officio)

School Administration

Dr. Alan Burkhardt CSA/Principal
Mr. Doug McGarry Business Administrator

Compass Academy Charter School

23 West Chestnut Avenue
Vineland, NJ 08360
Phone 856- 899-5570
Fax: 856-431-7971

School Office Hours

7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Daily Schedule

Preschool – 5th Grade
Full Day 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Compass Academy Charter School Academic Calendar | 2025-2026

Sep 2025 19 Days

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 2025 22 Days

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 2025 17 Days

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 2025 17 Days

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 2026 18 Days

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 2026 19 Days

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 2026 21 Days

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 2026 16 Days

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 2026 19 Days

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						

Jun 2026 12 Days

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				

All days when school is in session are considered legal attendance days—including early dismissal days. Please note that students must be present for four hours in order for a day to count as attended for the full day.

The last regular school day for students: June 16th, 2026.

25-26 SY Calendar Board Approved on: March 18th, 2025

Early Dismissal at 1:00

Professional Development- No School

School is Closed

3/3/25

Important dates

Parent Conferences

October 22nd -24th—Early Dismissal

February 25th -27th —Early Dismissal

Early Dismissal Days

September 19th – Staff Working Sessions

October 17th – Staff Working Sessions

November 6th – Staff Working Session

November 26th – Thanksgiving Break

December 5th – Staff Working Session

December 23rd – Winter Break

January 30th – Staff Working Sessions

February 20th- Staff Working Sessions

March 27th – Staff Working Sessions

March 21st - Staff Working Sessions

May 1st - Staff Working Sessions

June 11th – Staff Working Sessions

June 12th – Staff Working Sessions

June 13th - Staff Working Sessions

June 15th and 16th Last Days of School for Students—Early Dismissal

Professional Development Days- No School

September 2nd -3rd

January 16th

March 13th

May 22nd

June 17th Last Day of School for Teachers

School Closed

September 1st Labor Day

October 13th Columbus and Indigenous Peoples' Day

November 7th Veterans Day Observance

November 27th -28th Thanksgiving Break

December 24th-31st Winter Break

January 1st – 2nd Winter Break

January 19th Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February 16th Presidents' Day

April 3rd -10th Spring Break

May 25th Memorial Day

School Closed Due to Inclement Weather / Emergency Closing

3/3/25

Equal Educational Opportunity

The Compass Academy Charter School affirms its responsibility to ensure all students in the public schools of Vineland, Millville and Pittsgrove Township equal educational opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, and social or economic status.

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome you to Compass Academy Charter School. Our facility and programs are designed to meet the needs of Pre-Kindergarten (3 & 4 years of age) through fifth grade students. Our staff has been selected to guide the academic as well as personal growth of your child. We are all committed to helping students have a meaningful learning and social experience. We encourage parents to participate in all aspects of our school life. Please feel free to contact our guidance counselor, teachers, and administration to assist you in meeting the individual needs of your child. With your cooperation and support, we will be able to provide the very best educational opportunity for your child.

COMPASS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Compass Academy Charter School's (CACS) mission is to increase the potential of each child's success in learning. To achieve this outcome, the founders chose the Let Me Learn Process, a trademarked, advanced learning system, by which students, parents, and teachers learn how to use their brain-mind connection to achieve:

- a stronger sense of self as learners,
- a greater degree of academic achievement, and
- an enhanced respect for and appreciation of others within their home, their classroom, and their greater community.

OUR CORE VALUES

- We believe in hard work, high expectations and standards for our students, parents, and staff.

- We believe that the most critical element in the learning environment is the interaction between teacher and students, supported by parents, other students, and other staff.

- We believe that every student has unique gifts and talents and is worthy of the highest quality experiences for intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth.

- We believe that our curriculum should be effective, innovative, and comprehensive and should lead to knowledge, skills, and ethical values that stimulate a lifelong commitment to learning and responsible behavior.

- We believe that the effectiveness of our school requires continuous pursuit of excellence through open and ongoing communications and collaboration among all stakeholders.

- We believe in our mutual responsibility to be competent, accountable, and trustworthy.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (AGES 3 & 4)

INSTRUCTION & CURRICULUM

HIGHSCOPE CURRICULUM

Research has substantiated that high-quality preschool education programs for children play a crucial role in establishing a connection between home and school environments, thereby fostering mutual educational expectations for school readiness.

Compass Academy's Preschool Program extends free high-quality full-day preschool education to all three and four-year-old children in the city of Vineland. The program encourages children to engage in hands-on learning experiences, promoting the exploration, interaction, and development of reasoning skills. A strong emphasis is placed on oral language development throughout the preschool day. Each classroom is staffed with a certified teacher and an assistant and is equipped with a diverse array of materials to facilitate the development of children's fine and gross motor skills, social-emotional, language, and math skills.

Preschool serves as the cornerstone for laying the groundwork for advanced learning. Our objective is for every child to depart from preschool equipped with a passion for learning, a solid foundation of skills for commencing kindergarten, and an enthusiastic attitude toward their forthcoming educational endeavors.

Compass Academy's Preschool Program is unwavering in its commitment to furnish your child with a meaningful educational experience through the implementation of the HighScope preschool curriculum.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT (HIGHSCOPE COR ADVANTAGE)

The Preschool Child Observation Record (COR Advantage) is an assessment tool designed for children between the ages of 2 ½ and 6 years. It encompasses a wide range of categories, including Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Health and Development, Language, Literacy, and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and English Language Learning. This web-based assessment serves to monitor a child's developmental progression over time. Our educators utilize various methods such as daily written anecdotes, observations, photographs, and work samples to gather a diverse range of data concerning the child. This information is subsequently employed to cater to the child's requirements, bolster their development, and scaffold their skillset.

PRESCHOOL DAILY SCHEDULE (FULL DAY PROGRAM)

Ensuring a consistent routine of events provides young children with the structure and comfort they need to feel safe and secure at school. To achieve this, our preschool classroom follows a daily schedule which includes the following components:

- Greeting time, breakfast, and message board
- Large-group time
- Planning, work, cleanup, and recall

- Small-group time
- Outside time
- Lunch
- Books and rest
- Snack
- Outside time and departure

Although the exact timing may vary between classrooms, these components are included to provide a sense of structure and security during the school day.

ITEMS TO SEND IN FOR YOUR PRESCHOOL STUDENT

Please remember to pack the following items in your child's backpack for school, with each item labeled with your child's name:

- An additional set of clothing, including underwear and socks, to be kept at school in case of accidents or soiled clothing. Please note that our preschoolers are active and may get messy while using various materials such as paint and markers.
- An extra pair of closed-toed shoes.
- A blanket for rest time. The blanket will be sent home weekly for washing and should then be returned to school.
- For children who are not potty trained: Pull-ups/diapers, wipes, and extra clothing.
- Please make sure to label all outerwear, backpacks, and lunch boxes with your child's first and last name.
- This practice will help eliminate the need to contact parents or guardians for a change of clothing in case of accidents.

Additionally, if your child is sent home with their alternative outfit due to an accident, please send replacement clothing to be kept in the classroom for the following school day.

PRESCHOOL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Compass Academy Charter School is a close-knit community of teachers and families working together to create enriching learning experiences for all children. Our preschool program is dedicated to the learning and development of preschool children. We will continue to use well-researched best practices to help children successfully take part in a high-quality early childhood inclusion program.

Family Engagement is a crucial part of our program. Developing close partnerships with families is essential as we provide personalized support. We will keep sharing strategies, seeking feedback, and having discussions to ensure success. We hope parents will keep collaborating with us and use the strategies we suggest at home, which have proven successful at school.

Our goal is for all practitioners in our program to consistently use the strategies to improve outcomes for children as we continue to build strong relationships with families. The administration and staff will keep using data to make decisions and ensure effective, appropriate support for all children and families.

COMMUNITY PARENT INVOLVMENT SPECIALIST

Our Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) coordinates district-wide preschool parent involvement activities and workshops and facilitates referrals to community organizations. For inquiries, to schedule a meeting, or to request a school visit, please reach out to Mrs. Jane Berger, our CPIS, at 856-899-5570 ext. 102.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

KINDERGARTEN – 5TH GRADE

Compass Academy Charter School program is designed to provide students with a sound foundation for future learning. The program focuses on the child as an active learner with the curriculum designed and implemented to emphasize the processes of learning. The ultimate objective of the instructional program is to prepare students for a responsible, productive existence in a rapidly-changing world through an emphasis on basic skills and concepts, learning processes, responsible behavior, and effective interpersonal relationships.

The objectives for kindergarten through fifth grade are identified for all areas of the curriculum.

Every elementary school in the state of New Jersey is expected to provide a planned and balanced instructional program that meets the New Jersey Core Standards, commensurate with the abilities and educational needs of students in the following areas:

- Language arts
- Mathematics
- Social studies
- Science
- Computer literacy
- Health
- Physical education
- Arts/Humanities

The primary purpose of the instructional program at Compass Academy Charter School is to provide students with a learning environment that is enriched, supportive, and responsive to their academic and social needs.

ENROLLMENT

Compass Academy Charter School is an educational institution open to all K-5th grade students in the state of New Jersey. Our preschool program is open to all Preschool age (3 & 4) children who reside in Vineland. To receive transportation services, the child must reside in Vineland, or Millville with a parent or legal guardian. (Court documents must be sworn to school officials.) All other students are required to provide their own

transportation. To enter preschool a child must be 3 on or before October 1, Kindergarten a child must be five on or before October 1. To enroll a student, the following is required: birth certificate, immunization records, proof of residency (deed, lease, or agreement of sale), and report card from the previous school. To register your child for school, please call the Administrative Assistant at the Compass Academy Charter School office at 856-899-5570.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The Compass Academy Board of Trustees has adopted a Code of Student Conduct prescribing the rules and regulations for the safety, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students. These rules and regulations are intended to promote an atmosphere within the school, which is conducive to learning as well as ensure the protection of the rights of students. Inherent to a democratic society is the fact that rights entail responsibilities. Self-respect and respect for others are major goals of the Code. Students have the right to avail themselves of a free public education. However, students have a responsibility not to interfere with the education of other students. A copy of the discipline code (Board Policy 5500, 5600) is available on the district website at www.compassacademycharter.org.

All pupils shall be held accountable for disorderly conduct in school and during recess and on the playgrounds of the school and on the way to and from school.

In general, teachers shall handle their own discipline problems. When necessary, a pupil may be referred to the School Principal. The teacher shall not leave the class unattended while handling the problem.

The teacher shall fill out a report of the incident on the approved school form and sign it.

Depending on the seriousness of the case and/or when a pupil has had several disciplinary actions, the following course of action may be taken by the Principal:

- Informal Conference: This may be held with the pupil, parent, teacher, guidance counselor, member of the Child Study Team, or a combination of all.
- Principal's Conference: If improvement is not forthcoming, a conference shall be held between the parent and Principal to discuss a specific course of action.
- Disciplinary action (i.e. detention, in-school suspension, suspension, expulsion, etc.). A pupil suspended from school shall have academic instruction either in school or out of school that addresses the Core Curriculum Content Standards within five days of the suspension.
- Referral to I&RS Committee
- All (serious cases) potential expulsions shall be reviewed with the Board of Trustees President.

For specific infractions and the consequences associated, please refer to the Compass Academy Charter School Code of Conduct (attached).

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING

Students are expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other pupils and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

The Board of Trustees prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to earn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment. See Compass Academy Charter Schools Policy 5531.

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that: Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or by any other distinguishing characteristic; and a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. Acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may also be a pupil exercising power and control over another pupil, in either isolated incidents (e.g. intimidation, harassment) or patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior (e.g., bullying).

Procedures and guidelines for reporting acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying can be retrieved by contacting the office at 856-899-5570 for a copy.

PROCEDURES

VISITORS/SECURITY

For the safety of our children, all visitors must report directly to the office upon entering the building. Visitors must wear a visitor badge while on school property. All doors in the building will be locked during the school day for safety.

Parents are asked not to enter the building at the beginning or end of the school day. If you need to enter the building, for any reason, you must show up at the office and log in.

EARLY ARRIVAL

School begins promptly at 8:00 AM

We expect children to arrive at school between 7:45 AM and 8:00 AM unless they are enrolled in the Before School Childcare Program. Children are not to arrive before 7:45 AM as there is no supervision.

Please know that children, unless enrolled in the Compass Care Childcare program, are expected to be dropped off between 7:45-8:00. If you choose to drop your child off earlier than 7:45, your child will be placed in the Compass Care program, and you will be billed accordingly.

TARDINESS AND ABSENCES

Students are tardy if they arrive at school after **8:10 AM.** Students arriving late must be signed in at the office by a parent or responsible adult before going to their classroom. Students who are habitually late will receive a letter with a record of their tardiness.

Compass Academy Charter School Pupil Attendance Policy 5200

The Compass Academy Charter School Board of Trustees requires the pupils enrolled in the school attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The educational program offered by this school is predicated on the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in a well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of the competent teacher are vital to this purpose.

Attendance at school may be excused for certain absences as defined by the Board. Absence from school that is caused by a pupil's illness, an emergency in the pupil's family, the observance of a religious holiday, a death in the pupil's family, or by the pupil's compliance with a request or directive of an administrator will be considered justified and is excused. All absences for reasons other than excused, shall be unexcused.

Pupils who miss school for any excused reason cited in the preceding paragraph are required to bring a note from their parents explaining the reason for the absence. Pupils absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence. No pupil excused for a religious holiday shall be deprived of an award or eligibility to compete for an award or the opportunity to make up a test given on the religious holiday.

Prolonged or repeated absences excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive the pupil of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level.

Pupils shall be subjected to the school response for unexcused absences during the school year as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.8 (a) 4 and Regulation 5200. In addition, unexcused absences from school or from classes within the school day shall subject a pupil to the disciplinary rules of the Board, which may include the denial of a pupil's participation in co-curricular activities and/or athletic competition. Repeated truancies that interfere with efforts of this Board and its staff in the maintenance of good order and the continuity of classroom instruction may result in the suspension or expulsion of any pupil from the course of study during which absences have occurred or the suspension or expulsion in accordance with Policy Nos. 5610 and 5620.

The Principal shall calculate and monitor the average daily attendance rate for the school. Whenever the average daily attendance rate for the school does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements the Principal or designee shall develop performance objectives to improve pupil attendance pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.2 (a) 3.

Unexcused Absences

If a pupil is absent more than fifteen unexcused days, he/she is at risk of failing to achieve the academic requirements needed to move on to the next multiage class. Children who have missed more than fifteen days of school and have not been able to demonstrate proficiency with the academic requirements of their current grade will be required to attend summer school in their local district in order to meet legal standards. Proof of attendance will be required in order for the child to progress to the next grade level.

Any pupil who has excessive, unexcused absences and/or tardiness may be required to disenroll and re-apply for admission for the succeeding school year.

- N.J.S.A 18A:36-14 et seq.; 18A:38-25 et seq.
- N.J.S.A. 34:2-21.1 et seq.
- N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1

CONTACTING THE MAIN OFFICE FOR CHILD ABSENCE OR LATENESS

Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school by 8:30 AM when a child will be absent and for informing the school of the reason for the absence via a note or phone call. Phone calls will be made to all homes for security purposes who fail to do this. Please be considerate and remember to contact the office to alleviate the Administrative Assistant from having to bother you at home or at work.

ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

Bus Riders

Students who come to school on their assigned bus will depart the bus at the front of the building where the busses stop, will enter the building in an orderly fashion with mask in place, pass through the temperature scanner, apply hand sanitizer and will then report to their classroom.

Car Riders

Preschool – 5th Grade

Students who are brought to school in a fashion other than the school bus must be dropped off at the end of the fourth-grade wing. (Same place as car rider pick-up) Parents are not permitted in the building. Parents will stop one at a time, drop their child off and will then continue around the back of the building and exit into the parking area through the playground drive. All adults should be mindful of buses who may be pulling

away from the front of the school and exiting in the same path as cars will be exiting. Students will exit their vehicles, enter the building in an orderly fashion with their mask in place, pass through the temperature scanner, apply hand sanitizer and will then report to their classroom.

It is CRITICAL that parents are considerate of the drop-off/pick-up procedures. Traffic guidelines are set for our children's safety. If your child is arriving to school after 8:10AM you MUST bring your child into the main entrance and sign him/her in with the office staff.

EARLY DISMISSAL/RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Students who need to be dismissed before the end of the school day are to submit a note from a parent/guardian to the child's classroom teacher which will be forwarded to the office. Parents are encouraged to schedule medical appointments, etc., after school. Parents are required to meet their children and sign them out at the main office. **Please note that you will be expected to produce picture identification when you arrive if we are not familiar with you.**

Please be considerate of the main office staff and their VERY BUSY end of the day routines. Please refrain from calling at the last minute to change your child's mode of leaving school. This makes for confusion between the office staff and classrooms and is often the cause of a child not getting to where they need to be at the end of the day. All changes to your child's departure must be called into the office by 1:00 PM. The sign out sheet is generated by then and changes can be made accordingly. Also please know that if you are picking your K-5 child up at the end of the day, you must arrive prior to 2:45 for them to be called out of class. (This will be reflected in their daily attendance). If you arrive after 2:45, you will be directed to report down to the pick-up location to wait with the other parents for dismissal.

All dismissal changes must be made in writing. A note must be sent to the teacher and office when you are changing your child's normal dismissal routine. **We ask that you not change afternoon plans unless it is an emergency.**

Please know that children are expected to be picked up promptly at the end of their school day. If you realize you are going to be late, please be considerate and call the office to let us know and we will inform the teacher and your child. Children often get very concerned and worried when you are late to pick them up. While we understand traffic and unexpected delays can make us all late, excessive lateness or continued lateness will result in your child being sent into the After School Childcare program and you will be billed accordingly.

We **WILL NOT** release a pupil to anyone except the parent unless there is a note of permission signed by the parent. Students may be released to either parent/guardian provided there is no custody order from a court forbidding custody by a named parent/guardian. Warn children **NEVER** to ride home after school with any stranger who may claim he/she was sent by the parent.

If you wish to arrange for another person to take care of your child in the event an illness occurs when you are not at home, please make a note on the emergency care form.

DISMISSAL SAFETY

If a child is to be detained after dismissal for any reason by the school, the teacher or office will have made arrangements with the parents/guardian in advance of the occurrence.

Please have children come directly home each day before going elsewhere except when the teacher has a note from the parent to the contrary. If your child is to go to another student's house after school, we must have a note from both families. These notes are to be presented in the school office on the morning of the day that permission is requested. **Pupils may not ride a bus, other than their assigned bus, for the purpose of visiting friends. Parents must call to make special arrangements with the Vineland transportation office if a child must ride a bus for child care purposes.**

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

A **Car Rider** is a student who will be met at the designated side door, rain or shine, by a parent who has pulled up to the sidewalk and is waiting in their vehicle. Your child will not be released until you have been seen and identified by a staff member, produce your picture identification and are checked off on the dismissal sheet for their dismissal.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR BUS RIDERS

Bus transportation is provided for those children who live in Vineland, Millville and Pittsgrove. School bus riders are required to observe the rules of safety and good citizenship while riding on a bus and while waiting at a designated bus stop. Standards for safe, courteous conduct will be in effect beginning the first day of school. It is essential that bus riders cooperate and adhere to the bus regulations, including sitting in assigned seats and wearing their masks. Students who commit continuous and/or serious infractions may be excluded from the bus, as may children who commit repeated infractions.

For additional information please call the appropriate school district transportation office. Students may not ride a bus other than the one they are assigned to ride.

Students will be dismissed to their assigned bus and will exit according to their grade level plan.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

School closings, delayed openings and early dismissals will be broadcast in the following manner:

- **School Website**
  - www.compassacademycharter.org
- http://www.vineland.org/pages/Vineland_Public_Schools
- Remind App

- Email

Note: If Vineland Public Schools are closed for inclement weather, CACS is closed. Vineland BOE transports the majority of our students and will not transport them if they, themselves, have closed their schools due to safety concerns.

There are very infrequent times when school may close early (unscheduled) while the children are in attendance. We will do our best to reach out to parents to inform them of the early closing. Therefore, it is IMPERATIVE that you keep the office and teacher up to date with your contact information. We will NOT put a child on the bus without you knowing they are being transported home early. In addition, we will not allow your child to go home with another adult unless it has been prearranged. If you would like to leave a standing order with your child's teacher AND the office that your child can be transported by certain individuals in case of emergency closing, etc... please do so at the beginning of school. **PLEASE PLAN WITH YOUR CHILD WHAT TO DO SHOULD HE/SHE ARRIVE HOME EARLY AND YOU ARE NOT THERE.**

FAMILY VACATIONS

Student absence for family vacations interrupts the educational process and is discouraged. When a student is absent due to a family vacation, the student and parent/guardian will assume responsibility for planning to complete missed assignments and/or tests. Teachers are not required to provide homework and/or class work to take on extended vacations, although they may do so if requested one week in advance. When the child returns from vacation, they will have the same number of days to make up all assignments as they were absent. For example, if your child was absent for five days due to vacation, they will have five days to make up all missed assignments. If a vacation extends for 10 days or more, NJ Code requires that you withdrawal your child from school and re-enroll them upon your return. The school secretary will provide you with the appropriate withdrawal paperwork.

HOMEWORK

Homework is defined as additional reinforcement in each subject area. Such assignments are valid only if they provide essential practice in needed skills and/or enrich, enhance, or extend school experiences. Homework encourages growth in responsibility, gives practice in developing good work habits, and affords opportunities for increasing self-direction and learning how to budget time wisely. Homework is assigned according to the student's age and ability.

While it is agreed that children should receive homework, the amount of homework a student receives has been a long-debated question. The following time allotments for homework are for <u>all</u> subject areas and are intended to be a framework that teachers can use to guide their best judgment given a particular instructional circumstance. On any one evening students and parents should expect all of that day's homework assignments to last about as long as 20 minutes multiplied by the student's grade level.

Not to exceed:

Grade	Time per day	Time per week
Pre-K	0	0
K	10 minutes	40 minutes
1	20 minutes	1 hour 20 minutes
2	40 minutes	2 hours 40 minutes
3	60 minutes	4 hours
4	100 minutes	6 hours 40 minutes
5	120 minutes	8 hours

Although homework in the traditional sense is not part of the early childhood (pre-Kindergarten through kindergarten) program, students in the lower elementary grades may be asked to collect items/information for sharing at school or to take home classroom items or information for sharing with parents/guardians or siblings.

Homework assignments will be incorporated into the final grade(s) for each report period. The degree to which they affect the pupil's grade will vary depending upon the grade level.

HOMEWORK ACCOUNTABILITY

While homework is not a graded subject area, it is an essential part of the school experience and serves a purpose in the students' education. As such, please know that it is noted on student report cards and children are responsible for the daily completion of all assignments. Failure to do so may result in any of the following: loss of recess, remaining after school for completion, meeting with parents, and/or meeting with Principal.

To continue to motivate students to complete homework assignments, teachers need to evaluate, check and comment on homework. Teachers will encourage the completion of homework by employing strategies including but not limited to the following:

Teacher's Role:

- Ensure students record daily homework tasks that serve an instructional purpose in their homework agendas/planners.
- Make instructions verbal and written related to homework clear and, when necessary, provide a short period of supervised study or a period of questioning to ensure that the students understand the assignment.
- Monitor and provide constructive feedback to students and parents regarding homework completion.
- Provide alternative ways (differentiated assignments) for students with various instructional levels or special needs to complete assignments. Consideration should be given for modification/accommodation when appropriate.
- Collaborate with appropriate teaching staff regarding homework assignments to ensure that overload does not occur.

To assure the completion of homework assignments, students and parents will be required to support academic homework assignments.

Student's Role:

- Record homework assignments in an agenda/planner book and return assignments on the due date.
- Set aside a regular studying time and have the materials you need to complete the homework assignment.
- Be sure all assignments are clear. Ask questions if you are uncertain. Ask your teacher for help the next day if you do not understand the assignment.

Parent's Role:

- Take an active part in the supervision of the student completing the assignment.
- Provide the student with the time, materials and an appropriate place to complete the homework assignment.
- Contact the school in the event questions and/or concerns regarding the homework assignments arise.
- Monitor the completion of homework assignments and communicate with the child's teacher when appropriate.

HOMEWORK REQUEST POLICY

Homework is a reinforcement of daily instruction. Therefore, if a student is absent due to illness for one day, they will be expected to make up the work when they return to school. If a student is absent for **more than one day**, a parent/guardian may call the school and request homework for each consecutive day of absence. Please call the school in the morning so that the teacher can attempt to prepare work to be sent home. Understand that there may be times when it is impossible to gather assignments and materials together during that same day. In such a case, work will be sent home the following day with the student or will be prepared and waiting in the office.

STUDENT DRESS

The Compass Academy Charter School Board of Trustees has established a school uniform as the proper mode of dress for the Charter School. All students are required to wear a uniform every day unless specifically excused by the school.

The uniform is comprised of the following:

- Boys:
  - Khaki pants/shorts
  - Navy short or long sleeve polo shirt w/insignia
  - Brown or black belt
  - Sneakers or brown or black dress shoes
  - White or navy socks
- Optional:
  - Navy Crew neck sweatshirt
  - Navy sweater
- Girls:
  - Khaki pants/shorts/skorts/jumper
  - Navy short or long sleeve polo shirt w/insignia
  - Brown or black belt
  - Sneakers or brown or black dress shoes
  - White or navy socks or tights
- Optional:
  - Navy crew neck sweatshirt
  - Navy sweater

Uniforms are to be purchased through Cheryl's Uniforms in Vineland.

An exception has been made that pants can be purchased through retail stores as long as the khaki color is kept consistent. Under no circumstances should khaki colored cargo pants or shorts be worn. Pants are to be of the 'Docker', style.

All tops (long and short sleeve polos, sweatshirts, sweaters, and jumpers) are to have the appropriate CACS insignia monogrammed or silk screened on them.

Shoes should be closed-toe dress shoes (brown or black) and/or sneakers. Please remember that this is a uniform. Leave the CROCS, Uggs, knee high boots, cowboy boots, slippers, moccasins, heels, etc... home for the weekend or dinners with the family. Winter boots or rain boots may be worn on the way to school and when leaving, but it is expected that students will bring a change of shoes with them for the school day.

SPIRIT WEAR CAN BE WORN INSTEAD OF UNIFORM

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PUT YOUR CHILD'S INITIALS ON THE LABELS OF THEIR SWEATSHIRTS AND SWEATERS! It is amazing the number of pieces of clothing we have that mysteriously belong to no one!!

FLAG SALUTE

Each morning teachers will conduct a salute to the flag, as required by New Jersey state law. Students with beliefs, (conscientious scruples) prohibiting such patriotic exercises, are not required to salute the flag; however, they must stand and be respectful to those who are participating in the ceremony. Please be sure to communicate this to your child's teacher.

MAIL FOR STUDENTS

Occasionally, mail addressed to individual students is sent using the school address. Sometimes this mail comes from unsolicited sources, and sometimes this mail is inappropriate for children. Therefore, it is the practice for Compass Academy Charter School to open and screen suspect mail prior to giving it to students. Mail deemed inappropriate will be discarded. Mail that has illegal content will be turned over to the police. Parents who do not want their child's mail opened should notify the principal in writing. Any mail received for that student will be returned to the postal service.

CLASSROOM BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Compass Academy Charter School understands the importance of recognizing a child's birthday during the school year. With that in mind, we also must stay mindful of our primary role in your child's life which is to provide a thorough and efficient education each and every day of the school year. Consequently, parent organized birthday parties are not permitted during the school day. **If you would like your child to be able to share their special day with their peers by having a small treat, you may contact the school in advance and we will provide you with a form on which you will be able to choose and purchase from our special treats.** The only exception to this is if you are purchasing treats from an outside vendor, the package must come with all ingredients clearly printed on the outside of the package and all treats individually wrapped. All birthday celebrations will occur in the cafeteria during the child's lunch period. Please contact the school office for the appropriate form to order the special treat. **Invitations to private parties should not be passed out at school unless the whole class will be receiving one.**

An option for food would be sending in stickers, pencils, and other non-food items which are always welcome. Parents may wish to donate an item to the classroom or the library in honor of their child's special day.

Please note: Teachers cannot allow students to distribute treats outside their own classroom.

CLASS TRIPS

Class trips enrich and expand educational programs. Students will only be allowed to participate in class trips with the written permission of a parent/guardian. Permit forms must be returned on the dates specified by the teachers. Class trips are part of the curriculum. When students go on a trip, they represent our school. If a parent decides to exclude their child from the trip, they will be marked as absent. Students may be considered for exclusion from a class trip if they exhibit inappropriate behavior. If this is a problem, every effort will be made for that child to have a personal family escort on the trip, rather than exclusion.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL

Students are not permitted to bring the following items to school unless given specific permission by the teacher for special occasions:

- **Gum**
- **Candy**
- **Electronic devices (i.e. iPod, Game Boy, cell phone, pager, etc.)**
- **Trading cards, Pokeman cards, Yu-Gi-Oh cards**
- **Yo-yos**
- **Silly Bandz**
- **Toys (Bakugan, Beyblades, Yugioh cards, etc.)**

Large sums of money and articles of real or sentimental value should not be brought to school. The school cannot be responsible for any item of value that may be stolen or broken as a result of having been brought to school.

LOST BOOKS

Lost and/or damaged books shall be paid for by the student. Students are required to return the same text books they were issued by their teachers. It is the responsibility of each student to keep books covered and in good condition

LOST AND FOUND

Unidentified articles found in the school are turned in to the office or placed in the Lost and Found box. It would be helpful if coats, boots, mittens, etc. (clothing items that will be removed during the day) are labeled. It has been our experience in the past that items of this nature tend to be forgotten or mislaid and we would like to be able to identify the apparel for a particular child.

PETS

Children are not permitted to bring pets to school without permission and a specific reason. Pets are not permitted on school grounds; this includes before and after school. In addition, pets are not to be walked on school grounds for obvious health reasons. Safety precautions require that the Animal Control Officer be called to pick up stray animals on school grounds. The only exception to this is our Annual Pet Show Day.

EMERGENCY DRILL PROCEDURES

New Jersey School Law requires that each school have two drills each month, one fire and one emergency response drill.

The following guidelines will govern all fire drills.

- Everyone must leave the building through the nearest exit.
- Before leaving the room, all doors and windows must be closed by the teacher or a responsible student, and the lights turned off.
- The evacuation plan showing the designated exit for that room will be posted near the door of the room.
- Students should leave the building quickly, in single file, and proceed to their designated areas silently. Students should wait quietly in the assigned area.
- Upon signal, students will quietly return to the building escorted by their teacher. It is imperative that silence be maintained throughout fire drills.

During an emergency response drill (bomb threat, active shooter, evacuation), teachers and students will follow the guidelines as set forth in the specific emergency response procedure. Those parents who wish to peruse these procedures should contact the office and they will be made available to you.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

Our cafeteria operates under the National School Lunch Program. The Type A breakfast and lunch is balanced to meet two thirds of the daily food requirements of the child.

Effective July 1, 2024, Compass Academy Charter School has met the criteria to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). This program, integrated with the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), enables Compass Academy to furnish breakfast and lunch to all enrolled students at no charge.

A monthly menu will be given to each child in order to help parents plan different foods for dinner as well as to plan the ordering of lunch in advance.

BREAKFAST

A small breakfast will be available to any child whose parent wishes them to eat breakfast at school. It is not a requirement that all children eat breakfast at school. This is a family choice. It is important that you speak with your child and your child's teacher about

whether you expect your child to be eating breakfast at school. **If you do NOT wish your child to eat a breakfast at school, please let their teacher know.**

LUNCHES

A balanced lunch will be available to all students daily. Students will be eating their lunches in the classrooms on Mondays and in the cafeteria for the rest of the week. If you are packing lunch for your child, please refrain from packing things that would be exceptionally messy if dropped or spilled on Mondays so we can help to keep the rugs in good condition.

INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES TEAM

The Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS) is a committee to help teachers serve diverse learners in a regular education classroom. The committee is comprised of teachers, administrators, and a Child Study Team member. Their purpose is to provide assistance and to develop strategies to utilize with a student who is experiencing difficulties within the classroom.

CHILD STUDY TEAM

A Child Study Team is composed of a learning consultant, social worker, and psychologist who work cooperatively to evaluate students and develop educational programs. They receive referrals from teachers, principals, and parents, who have identified students needing additional educational services. Their major task is to diagnose the problem, meet with teachers and parents to develop an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), and implement and monitor the recommended program. In addition, they provide counseling for parents and students, crisis intervention, program development, and in-service.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

The role of the school counselor is to be able to meet the following goals:

- Enhance instruction by guiding and supporting teachers in their curriculum instruction, working with teachers as they are analyzing student data, and increase student and parent communication.
- Instruct, model, and support teachers in their use of the Let Me Learn Process® both personally and as a facilitator within their own classrooms.
- Teach all students about character education through the Voices® curriculum that promotes healthy social and emotional awareness.
- Support students based on needs both in the classroom and at home. This is done via individual counseling, small groups, or creating individualized behavior or learning plans.
- Harassment Intimidation and Bullying Coordinator for Compass Academy Charter School.

This year the school counselor will be focusing on many different aspects of counseling both in and out of the classroom. Projects and awards include the following:

- **Bucket Filler Program**- students are recognized in their classrooms for filling another peer's bucket with kind words, actions, or deeds. Bucket fillers will be recognized during their class morning meetings.
- **Character Education Student of the Month**- students will be selected monthly by their teacher based on the criteria from the character education trait for that month. Students will have learned about that character and will seek to model it in their classrooms. Character Education monthly themes are: citizenship, caring, trustworthiness, fairness, respect, responsibility, and self-control. Children who are awarded this honor will receive a certificate during our morning program, their picture in the front entrance, and a lunch with the principal.
- **Service Learning Days-** All students will participate in monthly service learning activities that include the following: Habitat for Humanity, Soup Kitchen, Boxes for Soldiers, Animal Friends Foundation, Hug-a-Bear, Library Visit, and hosting the Vineland Service Organization.
- **Garden Education**- All students will be working with Cumberland County 4-H Master Gardeners in our school garden and classrooms during the winter months.
- **Reading Buddies**- Children will be working with a reading buddy throughout the year. These children will include second or first graders working with one another or with the kindergarten students.
- **Small Groups or Individual Counseling**- Groups or sessions will be held throughout the year. Various groups will focus on Coping with Change, Developing Positive Relationships, and Personal Growth. Member selection for groups is based on parent or teacher referral and signed parental permission.

HEALTH OFFICE

EMERGENCY CARE FORM - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The main purpose of the emergency care form is to help us to locate the parent in the event of illness or emergency involving your child. Hospitals and private doctors will not give emergency medication or treatment or perform any kind of surgery except when the parent or guardian is present. It is very important that we be able to locate you at any time. Please list phone numbers of neighbors who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when he/she feels ill and you are not at home. In special cases, you may wish to call and give the school secretary a number where you can be reached for the day.

SCHOOL NURSE

Compass Academy Charter School has a full-time nurse assigned to our school. Students requiring simple first aid or medication will be handled by the nurse. No medication can be taken by a child without having been dispensed by the nurse. In case of any accident at school you will be notified by the nurse. It is not the nurse's job to deal with injuries or

illnesses that occurred before the child left home on any morning. Children should stay home if they are sick.

In addition to providing excellent medical care, the nurse provides programs in vision and hearing, TB screening, classroom health education lessons, first aid instruction, and assistance during physical examinations. The school nurse would be happy to talk to you concerning any specific medical or physical problems experienced by your child. You can contact the nurse by calling 899-5570.

POLICY OF MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION TO STUDENTS BY NURSE

This policy has been recommended by the Office of Health, Safety and Physical Education of the State of New Jersey Department of Education and adopted by the Lawrence Township Board of Education.

Pupils are prohibited from bringing medicine to school. If the child is receiving over the counter or prescription medication, he/she should under normal circumstances remain at home. However, if the family physician advises that the health of the child is such that he/she should attend school and he/she must have medicine administered during school hours, a written notification is required from the private physician on the form provided by the school. The form may be obtained from the school nurse. The completed form with the over-the-counter medication or medication in a prescription bottle and labeled with the child's name, date, and contents must be presented to the school nurse before the nurse can administer the medication to the child. The medication form is to be signed by the parent as well as the child's physician. Please contact the school nurse and request the form for your doctor. **ONLY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN CAN BRING ANY MEDICATION TO SCHOOL! NEVER SEND ANYTHING IN WITH YOUR CHILD!**

If you have further questions, please call the nurse at 899-5570. This policy was made in the interest of the children to prevent possible harm to students through the improper administration of medicine and treatment.

MEDICATION ON FIELD TRIPS

Please review the following options regarding field trips and school nurse administered medication.

Students with asthma or potentially life-threatening illnesses may carry their medication and self-medicate, if necessary, if it has been determined the student is capable of self-medicating and the proper forms are completed by the physician and parent. (NJ A-2600)

The medication times can be adjusted for before or after the trip, or the medication can be omitted for the day. Possibly, a long-acting dosage can be given for that day after checking with your doctor.

If the medication time cannot be adjusted or omitted, the parent or guardian may consider accompanying the child on the trip to administer the medication. An

alternative plan would be to meet the trip to give the medication rather than stay on the trip.

If the parent or guardian is unable to go on the trip, and the medication cannot be adjusted or omitted, a substitute nurse will be requested but cannot be guaranteed.

We are committed to meeting the health needs of your child, but we must also consider the health and safety issues of the students remaining in the school building.

Please call your school nurse several weeks before a scheduled trip if you need to make special arrangements for your child.

HEALTH POLICIES

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE:

Children who have symptoms of a communicable disease should remain home until fully recovered. Listed below are the most commonly seen illnesses and the required time students should remain home from school. A note from your physician stating the condition is not contagious may be requested by the school nurse.

Communicable Disease Exclusion from School

Fever - Any student with a temperature of 100 degrees or more is excluded from school and shall not return until the temperature has returned to normal for 24 hours.

Vomiting - Any student who vomits is to be excluded from school and should remain home until able to tolerate meals.

Cough - Any student with a persistent and annoying cough may be excluded from school.

Chicken Pox – Seven (7) days after onset of rash and all lesions are crusted.

Streptococcal Infections (strep throat, scarlet fever) - 24 hours of anti-microbial therapy and fever-free for 24 hours.

Pink Eye (bacterial conjunctivitis) - 24 hours of anti-microbial therapy and disappearance of purulent discharge or inflammation.

Ringworm - Until proper anti-fungal treatment is verified.

Head Lice - Application of a pediculicide agent as prescribed by your physician and the removal of all lice, lice eggs (nits), and egg cases from the hair. Students must be examined by the school nurse before readmission to school.

Impetigo or rash - Doctor's certificate stating the condition is not unknown nature contagious.