



**Youth Advancement Academy**  
**Student Handbook**



**“Watch Us Soar”**

**Youth Advancement Academy Ombudsman**  
**“A Strict Discipline Academy”**

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## **Welcome to Youth Advancement Academy**

The administration and staff of Youth Advancement Academy are looking forward to getting to know each of you personally and sharing with you this exciting period of your life. The educational program offered at Youth Advancement Academy provides the opportunity for you to be involved in planning your future and becoming a positive, contributing member of our school community.

**Purpose:** This handbook has been prepared to assist you in pursuit of a meaningful, positive educational experience whether you are new to our academy or a returning student.

**How the handbook is to be used:** This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know.

Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the School. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not contain every rule or policy of the district or high school. Rules, policies, procedures and/or activities are subject to change during the school year, with sufficient notification to the students. Students should notify their parents of these changes. The rules, policies and procedures in this handbook do not supersede federal, state or local laws or ordinances.

No person in the Youth Advancement Academy will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability or any other legally protected status. Inquiries by students and/or parents/legal guardian related to discrimination on the basis of disability/handicap should be directed to:

Jon DeCou  
Center Director  
Ombudsman Educational Services  
269-353-4193

## **Notice of Nondiscrimination Disclosure**

It is the policy of the Youth Advancement Academy not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion or age in its educational and career technology program as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age of Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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Ombudsman Educational Services

1-800-833-9235

Scott Russell

Regional Vice President

Rachel Black

Assistant Vice President

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Board of Education**

Mr. John Lotz, President

Mr. Randy Fielder, Vice President

Ms. Sandra Standish, Secretary/Treasurer

Mr. Scott Ryder, YAA Board Attorney

Ms. Mandi Smith, Recording Secretary

Dr. Hal Jenson, Member

Ms. Yvonne Davis, Member

Ms. Latonia Raines, Member

Mr. Will Brennan, Member

### **Administration**

Jon DeCou, Center Director (269) 353-4193

### **Faculty/Staff**

Logan Piper, Teacher

Carolyn Sutherland, Special Education Teacher

Maurice Reynolds, Transition Specialist

### **School Mission**

Our mission is to provide a high-quality education and life skills for all students.

### **Philosophy and Approach**

We believe in the transformational power of education and embrace a philosophy that values each student as an individual who can and wants to learn.

Our approach honors the choice students make to attend class, enables them to recognize their ability to learn, and celebrates and builds on their successes. These values transform students' outlook on learning, helping them develop self-esteem and envision new opportunities for their future.

### **About Youth Advancement Academy**

The Youth Advancement Academy offers a “best practices” program for expelled, suspended or court-ordered adolescents in the area served by KRESA. The Academy works with the court system, parents and legal guardians, local law enforcement agencies and area social service agencies to focus on the needs of this unique group of students who are traditionally underserved and overlooked. YAA meets all state and federal mandates for a strict discipline academy and all curriculum and assessment guidelines of the state.

## **Enrollment Process**

Students are eligible to attend Youth Advancement Academy by meeting the following qualifications as stated in Michigan Revised School Code 380.1311g(3) to (5):

- a. Placed by a court or by the department of health and human services or a county juvenile agency under the discretion of the court
- b. Pupils who have been expelled under section 1311(2)
- c. Pupils who have been expelled under 1311a or another provision of this act
- d. Pupils expelled from school, or pupils who have been suspended from school for a suspension that is for a period in excess of 10 school days, and who are referred to the strict discipline academy by that pupil's school or placed in the strict discipline academy by the pupil's parent or legal guardian.

Parents should contact Youth Advancement Academy to set-up an intake interview. The intake interview is the first and most important step for our students. It is, therefore, absolutely critical that the intake take place with both the parent and the student. This meeting gives the parent and student an opportunity to meet the staff, tour the facility and to fill out enrollment forms detailing pertinent student and parent/guardian information. Most importantly this meeting sets the expectations and goals to ensure student success.

All students (former and new) will participate in the intake process yearly. The following documents are needed in order to conduct the intake interview: Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, and Immunization Record. Students who have attended in the past should check to see if records are needed.

## **Immunization Policy**

Students are required to provide an up-to-date immunization record at the time of intake. Students will not be admitted into the school building if a current immunization record is not on file. This policy is subject to change but reflects the current Michigan Department of Education policy released August 29, 2019. For more information regarding this policy, please visit the website below for the official state policy.

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/2019\\_Immunization\\_664591\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/2019_Immunization_664591_7.pdf)

## **Session Times**

7:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. High School

12:00 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. Middle School

Session times are set to accommodate the specific needs of students. Due to the age and difference in programs, high school and middle school students will be required to attend their assigned session time. The safety and security of all students was taken into account in determining the session times and placement of students.

## **ABOUT OUR GRADUATES**

All YAA Graduates will be:

### **SELF-DIRECTED, COMPETENT LEARNERS** who

- Plan and organize effectively.
- Apply basic academic skills competently
- Think logically and independently.
- Problem solve efficiently.
- Identify access and integrate information.

### **RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS** who

- Involve themselves in the democratic process and community service.
- Understand and implement environmentally responsible behavior.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multi-cultural nature of our society.
- Contribute to family stability by utilizing communication, parenting and conflict management skills.
- Make wise consumer decisions.

### **COLLABORATIVE, QUALITY WORKERS** who

- Communicate effectively through writing, speaking and listening.
- Work cooperatively as a member of a team
- Perform when appropriate as either leader or follower.
- Strive to produce a quality product.

### **INDEPENDENT, HEALTHY ADULTS** who

- Utilize coping and stress management skills.
- Demonstrate career planning and job finding skills.
- Take responsibility for personal work and behavior.
- Set and work toward short and long-term goals.
- Involve themselves in "healthy" leisure time activities.

### **FUTURE ORIENTED THINKERS** who

- Utilize and apply technology to solve problems.
- Demonstrate openness to new ideas and processes.
- Adapt to changing work and societal environments

## **ACHIEVEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Expectations for All Students:**

1. Attendance: Students must attend 100% of the regularly scheduled time.
2. Academic Progress: Student must make reasonable and steady progress toward goals daily.
3. Consideration for Others: Students must participate in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning in and outside of the center
4. Center Rules and Expectations: Electronics may not be used at any time. Students must participate keeping the school drug and smoke free.

### **Instruction**

Through one-on-one instruction in a positive, welcoming environment, teachers guide and encourage students through the process of making positive choices to achieve academic success and become productive citizens.

Coursework is completed in a technology-rich setting, which provides students with immediate feedback and helps them become familiar with tools they will use in a post-secondary school or the workplace. All YAA students follow Individualized Achievement Plans (IAPs), which are tailored to the specific educational needs of each student.

Students are empowered to set goals, develop a plan to achieve those goals and take responsibility for the choices they make. As a result, students have greater accountability for their learning and begin to make better choices — in and outside the classroom.

## **ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

### **Earning Credit**

- Adhere to Attendance expectations mentioned above.
- Satisfactorily complete the prescribed course work as identified in the course syllabus and district curriculum requirements.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Youth Advancement Academy requires students to achieve the Michigan Merit Curriculum guidelines for graduation that require a minimum of 18 credits in the outlined curriculum below. Students are given elective courses based on performance, ability, and interests to pursue their passions and fuel their post-graduation goals. Students can also complete a personalized curriculum as outlined in the Michigan Merit Curriculum guidelines.

## 2019 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### **MATHEMATICS 4.0 Credits**

Algebra  
Geometry  
Algebra  
One math course in final year of high school

### **SCIENCE 3 Credits**

Biology  
Physics and/or Chemistry  
One Additional science credit

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 4 Credits**

English Language Arts 9  
English Language Arts 10  
English Language Arts 11  
English Language Arts 12

### **SOCIAL STUDIES 3 Credits**

Civics (.500)  
Economics (.500)  
U.S. History and Geography  
World History and Geography

**Physical Education .5 Credit**

**Health .5 Credit**

**World Language 2 Credits**

**Visual/Performing/Applied Arts 1 Credit**

**Online Learning Experience**

All students are required to earn at least 18 credits.

Students are assigned grade level classes based on obtained credit. Grade level determination is outlined below.

0.0 – 4.0 Credits Freshman  
4.5 – 8.5 Credits Sophomore  
9.0 – 13.0 Credits Junior  
13.5 – 18 Credits Senior

### **Post Secondary Enrollment Options attendance guidelines are:**

- All information including payments to be made by the district, credit assignment, regulations, etc. are distributed to students and parents prior to students beginning a college course.
- Students must attend community college/college classes if they are in session, whether or not Youth Advancement Academy is in session.
- Arrangements to be absent, for any reason, from a community college/college classes are the sole responsibility of the student.

## **Graduation**

Students that complete the requirements for graduation, will be eligible to receive a district diploma from Youth Advancement Academy and attend graduation ceremony at the culmination of the semester which requirements were completed.

Students that complete graduation requirements before the end of Fall Semester will be eligible to attend the February graduation ceremony at a date to be established. The students will have a cap and gown and all formal graduation procedures will be followed.

Students that complete graduation requirements by the end of Spring Semester will be eligible to attend the June graduation ceremony at a date to be established. The students will have a cap and gown and all formal graduation procedures will be followed.

Students who are graduating will have the following completed and offered:

- Graduation audit and discussion
- A thorough evaluation of the senior's transcript, in the first marking period of the year. YAA plans to help the student establish a specific plan to graduate, on time, with his/her Class.
- Financial Aid Night Presentation: to assist parents and students in preparing to complete the forms and documentation to apply for financial aid for college/training schools.
- Graduation Survey: administered in the spring, to discuss student exit plans and attitudes.

## **REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS**

### **1. Progress Reports:**

Progress Reports are an effective method of communicating an evaluation of student progress and an understanding of a student's educational growth to the student and parent/legal guardian. Progress Reports will be issued at the end of every reporting period. These reports will be mailed at the end of each reporting period.

### **2. Report Cards:**

Report cards are issued every reporting period and show the students grades and progress in each course. Report Cards are discussed at each Parent-Teacher Conference, scheduled at the end of every reporting period.

### **3. Parent Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are scheduled at the end of the reporting period. Conferences are an opportunity for parents and teachers to share information midway through a marking period and to develop strategies for improvement.

### **4. Class Grades**

The grading system used at Youth Advancement Academy is as follows:

A Exceeds Expectations	D Progressing towards satisfactory effort
B Meets with excellent effort	F Failure
C Meets with satisfactory effort	

### **5. Grade Scale**

A	4.00	100-94%
A-	3.70	93-90%
B+	3.30	89-87%
B	3.00	86-84%
B-	2.70	83-80%
C+	2.30	79-77%
C	2.00	76-74%
C-	1.70	73-70%
D+	1.30	69-67%
D	1.00	66-64%
D-	0.70	63-60%
F	0.00	59-0%
I	Incomplete	
CR	Credit	

Students can make up incomplete courses within **one week** of the end of the first and second semester or they will convert to a failure.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

It is our goal to provide a quality education in a safe environment. By utilizing technology and an individualized program, all students have an opportunity to learn in a quiet and orderly atmosphere that respects the rights of others. For every student to have this opportunity they must attend school every day. We believe that daily attendance increases the opportunity for learning, growth and success for our students. Therefore, all students must adhere to this attendance policy to in order to be successful:

The attendance policy has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- A. To raise the student achievement and close gaps in student performance.
- B. To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts.
- C. To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons.
- D. To verify that individual students comply with the educational laws relating to compulsory attendance.
- E. To assure school completion for all students.

### **Categories of Absences**

- *Non-truancies*  
Non-truancies are prearranged absences or absences with documentation. Documentation **MUST** be provided for absences to be excused. Acceptable documentation would include: Doctor's note, hospital stay, court appearance, funeral director's note, etc. In some circumstances, work may be completed to make up for time missed. Documentation from a parent/guardian is **NOT** an excused absence.
- *Truancies*  
Truancies are unauthorized absences, and may include, but are not limited to, skipping school, oversleeping, missing the bus, car problems, dress code violations, and leaving school without following proper procedures. Unauthorized absences will require a conference with your parent/guardian and the center director.

Ten unexcused absences in a semester will result in a student being dropped from the program and a loss of credit for the semester.

### **Accidents/Illnesses at School**

- All accidents at school or school activities must be reported to the Director/teacher immediately. Reports of accidents and injuries will be documented by the staff and reported to the parent immediately.
- If a student becomes ill at school and cannot remain in the classroom, s/he should ask the Director/teacher to contact the parent/guardian to make arrangements to pick up.

### **Appeal Procedure/Absence Extension:**

An extension of the attendance requirement MAY be granted on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to the student's attendance record, including but not limited to, absences, tardiness and truancy. Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the administration.

### *Appeal Process for Attendance Forfeiture:*

- The first appeal must be made by the parent/legal guardian, within one week of notification, in writing to the Director, will the student or the student's parents/legal guardian may present evidence as to why the exception should be granted. The Center Director will render a decision on or before the next full school day following the hearing.
- The second appeal must be made to the School Board within five (5) school days of the Director's decision.

## **STUDENT COMPUTER POLICY**

Students who are currently enrolled at YAA may be granted a network account contingent upon compliance with the terms stated in this protocol. This account is for educational purposes only. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of security problems with other computer systems may be denied access to district network resources. Technology hardware is not checked out to students. Violators will be disciplined.

### **Students will be held accountable for the following protocol:**

- Never be on a computer that is an area not directly supervised by a staff member.
- Damaging computers, computer systems, computer data, or the computer network, including removing hardware and software from school premises will result in removal from the school premises and criminal prosecution.
- You may use only your User ID and password and account name to log onto the network. You are responsible for the protection of your password to your account. If you suspect that others are using your account notify one of your teachers immediately.
- Student e-mail accounts are not permitted unless established and monitored by a classroom teacher and used for educational purposes. Students are also not permitted to access their personal e-mail accounts at school.

- Use of student data devices are discouraged. They should not be brought from home to school and vice versa. These devices may only be used if they meet the following criteria:
  - The teacher grants permission and use of the device is supervised by the teacher.
  - The necessary data needs to be printed for a classroom assignment.
  - Trained personnel scan the device for viruses.

*Students will also be held accountable for all protocols included on the Student Network/Internet use Form.*

### **Student Internet Policy**

1. Access to the Internet is provided to those students who have a current signed Internet Agreement on file with YAA. This form must be signed each year for access.
2. If you unexpectedly access a site with information that is inappropriate, you should use the back button or home button to exit from the site immediately and inform a staff member.
3. You are not to give out personal information i.e. your address, phone number, social security number, school name or address etc.
4. You must ask permission before printing. Adult supervisors should scan for appropriateness of material. Personal printing of graphics and text is not permitted.
5. You are not allowed to delete history of Internet searches.
6. An adult supervisor must always be present and actively supervising in the room while students are on computer. You will be asked to log off and reported if inappropriate use is observed.
7. Be aware when you visit Internet sites you often leave a trail called cookies. Cookies allow a site owner to help it or its advertisers develop a profile about you and the District.
8. Do not assume that just because something is on the Internet you may copy it. Respect the copyright laws.

## **BUILDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Age of Majority**

The policies, procedures and Code of Conduct guidelines are written for and apply to all students of Youth Advancement Academy, regardless of age, during school hours and at school activities/events. They are designated to establish and maintain a safe, positive environment for all students.

### **Building Admittance**

Students are required to turn in backpacks, purses, bags of any kind, hooded sweatshirts, jackets, hats, sunglasses, non-religious headwear, electronic devices, and any other carried items. All items will be housed in the office until the end of the session and returned when the student leaves. Students will also be subject to a metal detecting wand prior to entrance and is required for admittance into the building.

### **Breakfast/Lunch**

Students will be offered breakfast or lunch provided by KPS Food Service. The breakfast or lunch is provided at no-cost to the students and/or families. Students must eat the meal on site and may not remove any meal product from the facility. Students may bring their own meals and they will be stored either with their personal effects or in the office refrigerator. Students have access to a microwave and toaster for use during identified mealtimes. Students are required to clean any mess they may create and take care of any materials used during meals.

### **Damaged, Lost or Stolen Property**

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parent/legal guardian will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

Penalties including replacement cost for damaged, lost and stolen materials will be given:

- Denial of participation in school-related activities, including graduation activities for seniors,
- Withholding report cards and/or transcripts will occur until fines/fees are paid.

### **Dress Code**

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school do not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

To enable students to reach high academic standards, we've put in place a dress code designed to reduce distractions and competitions. Implementing a simple, flexible, cost-effective dress code promotes student learning and increased academic instruction time.

### **All Students**

- Shirts must not reference any drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco products. Additionally shirts may not be ripped, torn, have pieces missing, and/or contain vulgar language.  
**T-shirts and pajama tops are not permitted.**

- Students are expected to dress appropriately with non-suggestive clothing. Any clothing that shows excessive portions of the body and/or parts of reproductive system will result in the student being offered alternative clothing from the community closet or sent home.
- Any pants and/or shorts must be worn around the hips. Any pants and/or shorts that are sagging below the waistline or allowing for underwear to be seen will be given zip-ties to hold in place. If the student declines the temporary belt or is unable to pull their pants and/or shorts up, they will be offered a piece of clothing from the community closet or sent home.
- Students must always have appropriate shoes on. Students can wear open toe sandals and flip flops. If students remove any type of footwear during the day, they will be asked to put footwear back on. If students refuse, they will be sent home.
- During winter months and on days of rain, students are advised to wear different shoes upon entering. This is to limit the impact of external elements on the interior learning environment. If students need additional shoes, community closet shoes are available and other resources will be employed.
- Students are expected to dress accordingly to the weather. Due to the lack of air conditioning, students are advised to bring different shirts to change into as the temperature inside the classroom may fluctuate throughout the day. Students should be prepared in colder months for warm classrooms and should have appropriate clothes on.
- Students are required to have a shirt underneath any coat and/or hooded sweatshirt as coats and/or hooded sweatshirts are required to be removed for entry into the school. If a student does not have a shirt underneath, an alternative will be offered from the community closet. If it is declined, the student will be sent home.

### **Personal Hygiene**

The personal grooming of students should be in accord with the standards set by the uniform dress code. Students should be clean and neat when at school. Students who come to school without proper attention having been given to personal cleanliness, neatness of dress, or compliance to dress code, shall be sent home to be properly prepared for school or shall be required to prepare himself/herself for the school classroom before entering.

### **Driver's Education**

Driver's Education is not offered by Youth Advancement Academy. Private companies use school facilities throughout the year to provide driver education courses to students. Information is available in the main office.

## **Field Trips**

All students must have written permission from his/her parent/legal guardian to participate in off-campus field trips. Those students who have not presented teacher(s) with written permission on the required form will not be permitted to attend.

- Each student is responsible for work missed in all classes on the day of a trip.
- Teachers of other classes may require a student to remain at school due to academic problems in one or more classes.

*All regulations contained in this handbook apply when students are on field trips.*

## **Medication Policy**

Prescription drugs *will only be administered when* the Medication Release Form completed by the parent/legal guardian and also *signed by the physician* who has prescribed the medication. The form needs to be handed in to the center director along with the prescription, in **its original bottle**, and placed on file.

Headache medication will also only be administered when the Medication Release Form is completed, signed by a parent/legal guardian and the parent/legal guardian provides the medication in its original bottle to us. A physician's signature is not required for *over the counter* headache medication.

The Medication Release Form is available upon request from the center director

## **Personal Property**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry, electronic devices, cameras, phones and irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parent/legal guardian.

The school **cannot and will not assume responsibility for personal property items**, which are lost or stolen. Students are encouraged to leave valuables at home.

If a theft of personal or school property occurs, it should be reported to the center director immediately. A report will be taken when the theft is reported, and the property returned if it is recovered.

## **Pictures**

Senior pictures are the responsibility of the student and parent/legal guardian.

## **Privacy of Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 explains the rights and responsibilities of students, parents and the school regarding permanent student records.

The purpose of the Act is to give parents and students knowledge and some control over what information is kept in the student's permanent record.

A procedure has been developed and approved by the Board of Education to implement this Act.

### **Tornado Watch/Warning Policy**

Students will remain in session during a Tornado Watch, a Tornado Warning, or Severe Weather Warning. Building administrators will be notified in the event of potential Severe Weather and appropriate precautions will be taken. If, at the regular school closing time, a tornado warning is in effect for the immediate area, school **will not** be dismissed until the warning is lifted.

Students may be picked up at the school by their parents, if parents come to the center to request their dismissal. No student will be released to a person other than his/her parent/legal guardian except by specific request from parent/legal guardian.

Extracurricular student activities will be canceled in the event of a tornado watch or warning. In the event of a warning, if the activity is in progress, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the safety of the students.

### **Transportation**

The YAA Board of Education will provide bus tokens for all students. Bus tokens are purchased from the Kalamazoo Metro Transit and school expectations are to be followed from Door to Door.

#### *Conduct:*

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. This applies to any Metro Transit bus.

- The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain that transportation safety.
- If a student misbehaves on a bus; his/her actions may warrant riddance of bus privileges and/or tokens.
- If students lose bus privileges students are then responsible to provide other means of transportation.

## **STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES**

The academy is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. As with suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government. A student may have the right to a conference if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND PROCEDURES**

The Youth Advancement Academy has a set of expectations regarding student conduct so that the school operates efficiently and effectively for the benefit and safety of the staff and students. Conduct that interferes with the operations of the school, is threatening or inappropriate will not be tolerated.

The Academy endorses a policy of progressive discipline where students are informed of issues and given an opportunity to improve. Progressive discipline may be used to address either the same recurring issue or a series of unrelated issues. Steps in this process may include, but are not limited to: counseling, reassessment of academic placement, parent meeting, recommitment to program, temporary removal, administrative review, or termination from the program. In cases of serious violations of standards of conduct, progressive discipline may not be used and the disciplinary process will occur in at any level appropriate to the circumstances.

The Academy's ultimate goal is to provide students a quality education in a safe environment and this is achieved through meeting the standards of conduct.

*NOTE: This handbook does not contain every rule or policy of the school. Rules, policies, procedures, and/or activities are subject to change during the school year, with sufficient notification to students. Students should notify their parent/legal guardian appropriately.*

### **Re-Entry/Behavior Contract**

As a condition of reinstatement, a suspended or excluded student may be required to enter into a contract that sets forth terms and conditions of reinstatement. The Behavior Contract is used with students that have repeating issues of severity. The contract will be signed and binding.

- Any violation of the re-entry contract will result in additional suspension or expulsion from school.
- Any violation will result in immediate consequences outlined per the agreement up to and including recommended expulsion or alternative placement assignment.

### **Serious Violations of the Student Code of Conduct**

Any student may be recommended for exclusion or expulsion on the first, second, or third offense if, in the opinion of the administrator, the student's presence is disruptive and/or dangerous to other students, employees, or the educational process.

### **Persistent Violations: Student Conferences**

When a student has received excessive nonacademic referrals in any school year, the parent/legal guardian will be contacted and the School Director will convene a Re-Intake Meeting. All of the student's teachers, the student and his/her parent(s)/legal guardian and,

at least, the administration will meet to discuss the student's future in the High School. A behavior contract will be written for the student as part of the conference.

### **Temporary Removal from the Center**

When it is necessary for a teacher to remove a student from the classroom or other school facility because of behavior deemed unacceptable by the school, the student has demonstrated the necessary commitment to return the program.

- A school administrator may keep a student out of a class or classes due to serious misconduct or continued behavior problems.
- To re-enter the classroom, a parent/legal guardian conference will be required.

### **Administrative Review/Suspension**

Students may be placed on Administrative Review or suspended after a serious violation of conduct occurs. The administrative team, with input from the center staff, uses this process to determine the student's continued enrollment at the school or within the program. The review period may last up to 10 days and students may not attend during that time.

- A suspended student may not be on school premises after school hours while under suspension. A school premise means all properties and buildings operated by the Youth Advancement Academy.
- A suspended student may not participate in or attend any school function (including graduation exercises) while under suspension.
- All suspensions are to be effective until the number of school days have passed.
- A suspended student will not receive credit for any class work while under suspension until all assigned work is completed.

### *Suspension Procedures: Due Process*

- The student shall be informed of the specific charges, which could be the basis for disciplinary action to be taken against him/her.
- The student will have the right to present to the school administrator any relevant information that will support his/her defense.
- When the student is suspended by the school administrator, the administrator will:
  - Notify the parents /legal guardian as soon as possible of the suspension, the reasons for the suspension, and the steps necessary to facilitate the student's return.
  - Meet with the parent/legal guardian and the student to plan the satisfactory return of the student to the school setting, if deemed necessary by the administrator.
  - Suspension of more than one (1) school day but not more than ten (10) school days may be appealed in writing to the principal within two (2) school days of the parents' receipt of the written suspension notice. The written appeal must contain the reason(s) that the suspension is being appealed.

- If the suspension is for a period of more than ten (10) days, the due process for expulsion will apply.

### **Expulsion from the Academy**

A student will be permanently prohibited from attending school in Youth Advancement Academy through action taken by the Board of Education on administrative recommendation. Expulsion will result in loss of credit.

#### *Expulsion Procedures: Due Process*

- Written notice of charges against a student will be supplied to the student and his/her parents/legal guardian by registered mail. Included within this notice shall be a statement of the time and place for the hearing.
- Parents/legal guardian may be present at the hearing. Students against whom charges have been filed will be required to attend this hearing.
- The student shall be given an opportunity to give his/her version of the facts and implications. S/he should be allowed to offer the testimony of his/her witnesses and present other evidence.
- The student and his/her parents/legal guardian may be represented by legal counsel.
- The student and his/her parents/legal guardian or legal agent, shall be allowed to review all evidence offered against him/her. In addition, they shall be allowed to question any witness.
- The hearing shall be conducted by the Board of Education, which shall make its determination solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing. The hearing is not a court proceeding, and court rules of evidence shall not be enforced at such hearing.
- A record shall be kept of the hearings.
- The Board of Education, by a majority vote, shall state, within ten (10) days after the hearing, its findings as to whether or not the student charged is guilty of the conduct charged and its decision as to expulsion.
- The findings of the hearing authority shall be put in writing and sent to the student and his/her parents/ legal guardian.
- The student and his/her parents/legal guardian shall be made aware of their right to appeal the decision of the Board of Education to the appropriate judicial authority.

### **Due Process**

The Youth Advancement Academy Board of Education recognizes the following:

- Students have full rights of citizenship as delineated in the United States Constitution, Constitution of the State of Michigan, the School Code, and other laws passed by the Legislature of the State of Michigan.
- The primary intent of society in establishing the public school system is to provide an opportunity for learning.
- Citizenship rights must not be abridged, obstructed, or in other ways altered except in accordance with due process of law.

- The opportunity for education is one of these citizenship rights.

### **Carry Over of Discipline**

Any student receiving discipline that cannot be completed before the end of the school year will have that discipline carried over to the following year, at the discretion of the Administration.

### **Reservation of Rights**

The school reserves the right to set forth, as part of the Code of Conduct, those rules and regulations necessary and proper for carrying into execution the educational program of the school which are not specifically stated herein as the need arises. When, in the judgment of the administration, the student's behavior reaches such proportion or is of a nature that it tends to influence others adversely and/or interferes with the educational process or infringes on the rights of others, the administration shall require discipline up to and including expulsion.

### **Categories of Misconduct**

Assuming the responsibility granted to it by law, the Board of Education established the following categories of misconduct as those, which may result in temporary separation, suspension, or expulsion from the Youth Advancement Academy. These categories are general in nature and are not to be held all inclusive.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

- Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.
- All computers located in classrooms and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.
- Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee

confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR OUR STUDENTS**

Our school is a community whose laws are the procedures, rules and regulations contained in this handbook. Those who enjoy the rights of citizenship in our school community must know and accept the responsibilities of citizenship. Cooperative supervision of the students by the faculty, staff, administration and parents is a key factor in satisfactory participation of students in the school community.

### **Expectations for Students:**

1. All students should **INVOLVE** themselves in the total school program.
2. All students **MUST BE PROMPT** in arriving at their assigned classes/activities.
3. All students should **UNDERSTAND** and **FOLLOW** school policies, rules and regulations.

All students should **RESPECT**:

- the worth and dignity of each individual.
  - the rights and responsibilities of faculty members and aides as they perform their duties.
  - the rights of fellow students.
  - the rights and responsibilities of other school personnel, such as secretaries, custodians, food services and transportation employees.
4. All students **MUST OBSERVE** the Code of Conduct from Door to Door.
  5. All students are expected to **WORK** to realize their full potential.
  6. All students should **ATTEND** school and **MUST** be prepared for each class, every day.

### **Students and Parents May Expect from The High School Administration, Faculty and Staff:**

1. Assistance for student in the development of his/her capabilities so that s/he may become an effective and productive citizen of the school community and the community, at large.
2. Timely information, either by telephone or mail, if situations arise where achievement, attendance and/or behavior are unsatisfactory.
3. Fair and consistent treatment for each student.
4. No discriminatory practices against any student for any reason.
5. Every effort to provide a safe, secure and productive environment that fosters learning.
6. Courteous interaction with students and parents.
7. Consistency in working with students.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT CODE

### *Overt Amorous Behavior*

- There is a proper time and place for expressing affection; classrooms, hallways, etc, are not considered proper places for this expression. Any physical contact beyond holding hands is unacceptable at school or at school functions or activities, on or off school property.

### *Personal entertainment devices (MP3, IPods, PSP's GameBoys etc.)*

- Personal electronic devices, gadgets, toys, cameras, etc. **ARE NOT TO BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL.** If they disrupt the educational process they will be confiscated and returned to parents.

### **CLASS 2:**

**First violation:** Up to five (5) day suspension from school and conference/contact with parent/legal guardian.

**Second violation:** Up to seven (7) day suspension from school and conference with parent/legal guardian.

**Third violation:** Ten (10) day suspension from school, plus possible recommendation for expulsion; conference with parent/legal guardian.

### *General Conduct*

- Use of profane language or gestures, epithets and/or possession of pornographic/ obscene material.
- Inciting, Contributing to Disruption Inside or Outside the Classroom
- Student Distributed Material: Any material handed out by students or displayed on school property must be approved by the school administration.
- Throwing Objects

### *Closed campus violations*

- Students must come into the school building immediately after getting off the bus or arriving in their car. Students who walk to school must go directly into the building once they are on school property.
- Off Limits areas are:
  - a. Loitering in all restrooms during the day
  - b. Parking lot (all day)
  - c. All outdoor areas
- A student who **leaves the building without permission** from the office will be considered truant.

### **CLASS 3:**

**First Violation:** Up to five (5) day suspension from school and conference with parent/legal guardian, plus possible specific consequence(s) for infraction.

**Second Violation:** Up to ten (10) day suspension from school and conference with parent/legal guardian, plus possible specific consequences for the infraction.

**Third Violation:** Ten (10) day suspension from school and conference with parent/legal guardian to set up a Behavior Contract, plus possible specific consequences for the infraction.

#### *Cheating/Plagiarism*

- In addition to suspension, for every incident the student will receive "O's" for all work related to cheating/plagiarism.
- Forgery of a parent/legal guardian notification letter as well as false I.D.'s are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

#### *Disrespect/Insubordination toward any School Employee including, but not limited to:*

- Interfering with a teacher/aide/staff member fulfilling his/her role in/out of the classroom; verbal epithets and/or profanity directed at a teacher/aide/staff member.

**Violations that appear in Class 4 through Class 7 are subject to be reported to the local police department.**

### **CLASS 4:**

**First Violation:** Up to five (5) day suspension, parent/legal guardian conference.

**Second Violation:** Up to ten (10) day suspension from school, conference with parent/legal guardian and re-entry contract.

**Repeated Violations:** Exclusion with recommendation for expulsion.

#### *Ethnic/Gender/Sexual/Social Intimidation/Harassment:*

**The Youth Advancement Academy has a zero tolerance** regarding this type of behavior. A student is guilty of this type of intimidation/harassment if that person:

- Behaves purposely and maliciously, and with specific intent to intimidate or harass another person because of that person's race, gender, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry
- Uses abusive, profane or vulgar language, gestures, displays or graffiti, including those of an intimidating or hostile nature with respect to race, gender, religion, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, whether directed at a specific person, or not directed toward anyone specifically
- Inflicts behaviors such as unwanted physical contact with another person, damage, destruction or defacing any real or personal property of another person or threats by word or act

- Any staff member/student or applicant that believes s/he has been or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the School Director or his/her immediate supervisor.

### *Bullying*

Bullying is a form of harassment. It is defined as: “The repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks on property of another. It may include, but not limited to, actions such as verbal taunts, name- calling and put-downs, including ethnically-based or gender based verbal putdowns, extortion of money or possessions, and exclusion from peer groups within school.”

Students who engage in any act of bullying while at school, at any school function, in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event, or while en route to or from school are subject to disciplinary action. As may be required by law, law enforcement officials shall be notified of bullying incidents.

### *Inciting, promoting or instigating disruptive behavior*

Gang-related symbols, gestures, graffiti, dress, jewelry and /or activities.

### **CLASS 5:** (Specifics will follow each violation)

#### MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE SAFETY OF OTHERS

- Fighting or Physical Attacks on Students, Teachers or Designee.

**First Violation:** Ten (10) day suspension with possible request for expulsion and parent/legal guardian conference.

**Second Violation:** Exclusion with recommendation for expulsion.

- Threats to Students, Teachers or Other Adult Supervisor

**First Violation:** Up to Ten (10) day suspension, parent/legal guardian conference and re-entry contract.

**Second Violation:** Immediate recommendation for expulsion.

- School Transportation Rules

**First Violation:** Up to ten (10) day suspension and parent/legal guardian notification and loss of bus privileges as determined by Metro Transit.

**Second Violation:** Bus transportation no longer available to the student for the duration of attendance at Youth Advancement Academy.

#### MATTERS RELATING TO PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY

- Theft

**First Violation:** Up to ten (10) day suspension, parent/legal guardian conference.

**Second Violation:** Ten (10) day suspension and conference with parent/legal guardian; re-entry contract.

**Third Violation:** recommendation for expulsion.

- Defacing and/or Destruction of Property including Textbooks, Misuse of Internet, Vandalism of School Computers and any other behaviors not authorized by a teacher/aide/school employee.

**First Violation:** Up to ten (10) day suspension and possible recommendation for exclusion. Reparation and/or restitution, including the obligation to do work in the school related to the type of offense committed and a parent/legal guardian conference.

**Second Violation:** Ten (10) day suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion. Reparation and/or restitution, including the obligation to do work in the school related to the type of offense committed and a parent/legal guardian conference.

- Vandalism of a staff member's personal property, on or off school premises.

**First Violation:** Ten (10) day suspension with possible recommendation for expulsion, depending on circumstances and severity of the vandalism. A parent/legal guardian conference will be held, a complaint will be filed with the police and full restitution must be made.

**Second Violation:** Recommendation for expulsion. A parent/legal guardian conference will be held, a complaint will be filed with police and full restitution must be made.

#### MATTERS PERTAINING TO DISRUPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

- Possession and/or Use of Pagers or Other Telecommunication Devices  
Cell phones are NOT permitted during school hours. During the school day all phones must not be visible. If a cell phone/communication device is visible it will be confiscated and returned to a parent/legal guardian.

**First Violation:** Confiscation, possible detention, and conference with parent/legal guardian.

**Second Violation:** Confiscation, up to a five (5) day suspension, and conference with parent/legal guardian.

**Third Violation:** Confiscation, up to a ten (10) day suspension, and conference with parent/legal guardian.

- Dress Code

**First Violation:** Student will be required to comply with the policy or will be suspended until the standards are met.

**Second and repeated Violations:** Up to three (3) day suspension from school and conference/contact with parent/legal guardian.

\*\* If the violation occurs at a school activity, the student will be dismissed from activity until acceptable standard is met.

## MATTERS PERTAINING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation regardless of age. This means that any activity - sale, use, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student. The sale, distribution, possession, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. This includes nonalcoholic beers and wines, and the like. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

- Tobacco, all Types, Including Chewing Tobacco

**First Violation:** Confiscation, up to five (5) day suspension, a parent/legal guardian notification.

**Second Violation:** Confiscation, up to ten (10) day suspension, parent/legal guardian conference, possible behavioral contract.

**Third and each additional Violation:** Confiscation, ten (10) day suspension, recommendation for exclusion, police and parent/legal guardian notification, behavioral contract.

- Possession or Use of Alcohol/Other Controlled Substances/Drug Paraphernalia

**First Violation:** Confiscation and ten (10) day suspension, parent/legal guardian conference, and police notification; counseling by qualified district personnel at administrator discretion.

**Second Violation:** Confiscation, ten (10) day suspension, recommendation for exclusion, parent/legal guardian and police notification; behavioral contract, counseling by qualified district personnel at administrator discretion.

**Third Violation:** Confiscation, ten (10) day suspension, recommendation for expulsion, parent/legal guardian and police notification.

- Sale/Furnishing of Controlled Substances or attempting to sell or furnish controlled substances.

**First and repeated Violations:** recommendation for expulsion, police involvement, notification of parents/legal guardian.

### Class 6:

#### **Violation of Federal/State/Local Laws and Ordinances**

- Abuse of fire alarms, safety equipment
- Bomb threats
- Arson
- Possession and/or use of weapons

**First Violation:** Ten (10) day suspension with possible request for expulsion and parent/legal guardian conference.

**Second Violation:** Exclusion with recommendation for expulsion.

Pursuant to Section 1313 article 2 of the Michigan School Code, students may be expelled if in possession of or uses a weapon on school property. Weapons include firearms, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles, pepper spray or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. All school property, school vehicles, or property used for school purposes to deliver/impact instruction are part of the Weapons-Free School Zone. (Knives of any size are unacceptable).

**Class 7: Matters pertaining to private transportation and high school driving policy.**

Violation of Driving Policy

**First Violation:** Loss of driving privilege for up to ten (10) days and parent/legal guardian notification.

**Second Violation:** Loss of driving privilege for up to thirty (30) days.

**Third Violation:** Permanent loss of driving privilege.

- All vehicles driven to school by students must be properly registered with the Attendance Office. Parking IDs must be displayed on the rearview mirror.
- All vehicles driven to school must be parked within **ONE** designated parking area.

\*All vehicles will be operated legally on school grounds. Any improper operation will result in the suspension/removal of driving privileges for that student and the authorities may be notified.

- Parking on school property is a privilege that can be revoked at any time.
- Students who are provided the opportunity to ride school transportation are encouraged to do so. Students and their parent/legal guardian assume full responsibility for any transportation to and from school not officially provided by the school.
- Students are not to sit in cars in the parking lot at any time during the school day. The parking lot is off limits.
- Any student involved in an accident in the student parking lot should immediately report the incident to the office and contact the Kalamazoo County Sheriff Department.
- A student must have permission from parent/legal guardian and the office to drive or ride in a car at any time during the school day. Permission may be obtained for the following:
  - Emergency
  - EFE/EFA/Co-op
  - Attending classes at other locations

**Student & Parent Handbook Discipline Procedures**

*Acknowledgements and Verification*

By signing this page, you are acknowledging and verifying that you have received and take the responsibility to review with your child the documents referred below which can be found in this handbook, including without limitation, the district’s policy on transportation privileges, due process and dress code.

**This form must be returned within 10 days of enrollment.**

Parent Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Last School Attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Discipline Procedures – Discipline Expectations and Consequences**

As a parent in the Youth Advancement Academy School District, you have the right to a quality education for your child(ren). To make sure that every student enjoys that right, the district has established procedures regarding disruptive behavior. The procedures for student responsibilities are designed to create an orderly environment that is safe for all students and staff. We ask that you carefully read the Youth Advancement Academy’s Code of Conduct detailing infractions and consequences. The Youth Advancement Academy School District has severe consequences for drugs, weapons or threatening behavior. Any such act may result in a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion. Some infractions may result in a referral to a local law enforcement agency in addition to school consequences such as suspension and/or expulsion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please Note: Federal privacy laws prohibit the district from naming students involved in disciplinary actions and from revealing the consequences of those actions to the parents of other students.**