

# **Englewood on the Palisades Charter School**

## **Student and Parent Handbook**

65 West Demarest Avenue, Englewood, New Jersey 07631

Link to Website: [Englewood on the Palisades Charter School](http://www.EnglewoodonthePalisadesCharterSchool.org)

Link to Padlet: [EPCS Information Station](https://www.padlet.com/EnglewoodonthePalisadesCharterSchool)

Telephone: (201) 569-9765 • Fax: (201) 568-9576

**Revised: September 3, 2025**

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## **School Overview**

### **Mission Statement**

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School provides a nurturing, caring, child-centered, constructivist learning community, modeling skills and habits necessary for attaining a high degree of achievement in our increasingly complex, interdependent global society.

### **Philosophy**

Englewood on the Palisades Charter School empowers scholars with both the knowledge and flexibility to adapt and help shape our ever-changing world. Critical thinking, communication, as well as solid basic academic skills are vital to children's success. "I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand." In keeping with that old adage, the Charter School seeks to empower children in their construction of knowledge. Key areas of ongoing concentration are parental involvement, basic skills mastery and fluency, critical thinking, and classrooms that are safe for risk taking and model skills for collaboration, interdependence, democracy, conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation. Respect is the thread that holds the school together; respect for one another, respect for diversity, respect for uniqueness, respect for the materials we use, and respect for our work. Children and teachers work in an environment in which they are valued, and they value one another.

### **Commitment to Equality and Inclusion**

At Englewood on the Palisades Charter School, we are dedicated to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all students, staff, and community members. We strictly prohibit any form of bias, harassment, discrimination, or segregation within our school community. Our commitment to equality ensures that all educational programs, activities, and opportunities are accessible to everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, or any other characteristic. Together, we strive to create a school where every individual is valued and respected, enabling everyone to reach their fullest potential.

### **EPCS: School of Choice**

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School is a school of CHOICE. Families who choose our school are expected to uphold the mission, values and policies that have been developed by the school. Parents who enroll their children in our Charter School agree to adhere to all rules and regulations designed to promote a safe and productive learning environment. Failure to abide by the school's mission, values and policies will have a negative impact on the child's social, emotional and educational progress.

### **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees of the Englewood on the Palisades Charter School is the official governing body for the school. The members of the Board shall consist of parents, members of

the community at large, and the Lead Person and School Business Administrator, serving in an ex-officio capacity.

Parents are encouraged to serve on the Board. Each trustee must possess talents in one or more of the following categories: business, education, finance, legal, managerial, and public relations. The Board members must also be willing to work hard, and display general wisdom and good judgment.

If interested, please provide a letter of intent and at least two letters of recommendation. Board membership requires attendance at its public monthly Board meetings and at a monthly Board Committee meeting.

### **Philanthropy**

The Foundation for the Advancement of Children is a tax-deductible 501©(3) entity formed to raise money for exclusive use by the Englewood on the Palisades Charter School. All contributions by parents, students, staff and interested supporters are greatly appreciated.

### **EPCS Chant**

E-P-C-S E-P-C-S

Where we feel safe and learning is fun.

We show the world we're #1.

We study hard and do our best

With pride and glory, outshine the rest.

My brain is ready to start the day

And respect for each other is the only way.

I'm #1 and my goals I'll achieve

I'm going to college, where I will succeed!

E-P-C-S E-P-C-S

Gooooo Cougars!!

### **Hours of Operation**

Early Drop Off	Starts at 7:00 a.m.
Staff hours	7:45 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
Student Hours	8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Lunch Periods	Grades K - 4 10:53 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Grades 5 - 8 12:13 p.m. - 12:50 p.m.
Drop Off	Starts at 7:45 a.m
After School Program	3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

### Emergency Closings

The school community will be notified of emergency closings or any other unexpected emergency by a telephone call through the School Messenger system. Parents can also check our school website at <https://www.inglewoodcharter.org/>

### School Calendar

You will find a link to school calendar below

[2025-2026 School Calendar](#)

### Marking Periods and Progress Reports

Marking Periods	Start Dates	End Dates	Number of Days
1	September 3rd, 2025	October 31st, 2025	41 Days
2	November 3rd, 2025	January 15th, 2026	40 Days
3	January 16th, 2026	March 26th, 2026	42 Days
4	March 27th, 2026	June 2nd, 2026	40 Days

Progress Reports	Dates	Communication
1	October 9th, 2025	In Person
2	December 5th, 2025	OnCourse
3	February 23rd, 2026	OnCourse
4	May 1st, 2026	OnCourse

### Visitors/Parent Conferences

All guests must schedule an appointment prior to meeting with our staff. Upon arrival, all visitors should check in at Door #1. A unique identification tag or badge will be provided to each visitor, and it must be visibly worn while inside the school premises. Visitors will be accompanied to and from their intended destination by a staff member. If you wish to observe a classroom during a session, you must first seek and receive permission from the Principal. The Principal holds the authority to exclude any visitor from a classroom if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that their presence may disrupt the educational process or jeopardize the well-being of students or staff. Visitors are strictly prohibited from entering any classroom to meet a student or teacher

without prior authorization from the school Principal or a designated representative. Any visitor displaying disruptive behavior or with a history of disruptive conduct may be asked to leave the school premises. In the event that a requested departure is not adhered to, the Principal may seek assistance from the Englewood Police Department.

## **Student Attendance**

### **Student Tardy Policy**

***The school day begins at 8:00am. A student is considered tardy when he/she arrives at school after 8:10 a.m.*** All students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. are required to report to the Administrative Office with an adult to be signed in.

If a student is marked tardy, his/her attendance will be reflected on their Report Card.

### **Absences**

If a student is going to be absent and the absence has not been pre-arranged, parents must notify the EPCS Administrative Office either via phone at (201)569-9765 when prompted **Dial 1**, by email at [absence@englewoodcharter.org](mailto:absence@englewoodcharter.org), or by filling out the [2025-2026 School Absence Form](#) **no later than 8:10 a.m.** The parent/guardian is also required to send a note to the homeroom teacher on the student's day of return, stating the reason for the absence(s). The note must state the date(s) of the student's absence, and be signed and dated by the parent or legal guardian. A student who has been absent for having, or being suspected of having a communicable disease must present a doctor's note indicating that they are able to return to school. This includes, but is not limited to, *Covid-19, flu, hepatitis, measles, MRSA, rabies, tuberculosis, West Nile virus, norovirus (stomach flu), chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice and ringworm.*

New Jersey Statute 6A:32-8.4 explains that an "**Excused Absence**" is a pupil's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for one or more of the following reasons:

- The pupil's illness
- Requirements of a pupil's individual health care plan
- A death or critical illness in the pupil's immediate family, or others with permission of the Principal
- Quarantine
- Observance of the pupil's religion on a day approved for that purpose by the State Board of Education
- Participation in "Take Our Child to Work" Day
- Participation in observance of Veteran's Day
- The pupil's suspension from school
- Requirements of the pupil's Individual Education Program (IEP)
- Short or long-term accommodations for pupils with disabilities
- The pupil's required attendance in court
- Interview with an admissions officer of an educational institution



- Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day
- Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Building Principal

New Jersey Statute explains that an **"Unexcused Absence"** is a pupil's absence for all or part of a school day for any reason other than those listed above. Absence is expressly not excused for any of the following purposes (This list is intended to be illustrative and is not inclusive.)

- Family travel unrelated to the instructional program
- Performance of household or babysitting duties
- Other daytime activities unrelated to the school program

### Family Vacations

We understand that there will be times when a student's family vacations can only be scheduled while school is in session; however, we strongly discourage families from scheduling family vacations during the school year as these days are considered **unexcused** absences.

We respectfully request that families schedule such important, often educational experiences, during the school's vacation times. In the event that such arrangements are not possible, the office and respective teachers are to be notified in advance of the absence.

- After 4 unexcused absences, an informational letter will be sent home.
- After 9 unexcused absences, a second informational letter will be sent home.
- At 10 unexcused absences/tardies, parents/guardians will be required to attend a mandatory meeting with the Principal and I&RS Committee to establish an action plan promoting regular attendance.

**Important: A student may be denied promotion to the next grade when the number of excused and unexcused absences combined exceeds 18 in a specific grade or course.**

Students absent for extended medical reasons will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

If this happens...	Parents should do this...
If a student is absent from school for any reason	<p>Fill out the <a href="#">2025-2026 School Absence Form</a> or call the Administrative Office <b>no later than 8:10 a.m.</b></p> <p><b>Phone:</b>(201)569-9765  <b>Dial 1</b> to report an absence or tardiness.</p> <p><u>In addition, the parent/guardian must send a note on the student's day of return, otherwise the absence will be</u></p>

	<p><u>considered unexcused.</u></p> <p><b>When absent for 3 or more days, a doctor's note is required.</b></p> <p>A doctor's note is required for any absence due to contagious illness (flu, ringworm, chicken pox, pink eye, head lice, etc.).</p> <p>The student will need to make up the work that was missed during their absence. Excessive tardiness has the potential of impacting grades and, in some cases, promotion.</p>
In case a child must leave school early	Parents must come into the Administrative Office and sign the student out of school.

### **Unreported Student Absences**

As stated above, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the administrative office when their child is going to be absent. If the administrative office has not received a call by 8:10 a.m., the school nurse will conduct a wellness call that day. All attempts will be made to contact parents using the work and/or emergency numbers that were submitted to the office.

If a student is absent for three consecutive days without notification, or the school nurse is unable to make parent contact, the school guidance counselor and school social worker will conduct a joint home visit.

### **Student Drop Off**

Parents, family members or visitors will not be permitted to enter the school building during the morning drop off. Please do not drop off your child or allow your child to arrive at school earlier than 7:45 a.m., as they will not be permitted to enter the building. Only students who are enrolled in the before school program will be allowed to enter the building between 7:00-7:45.

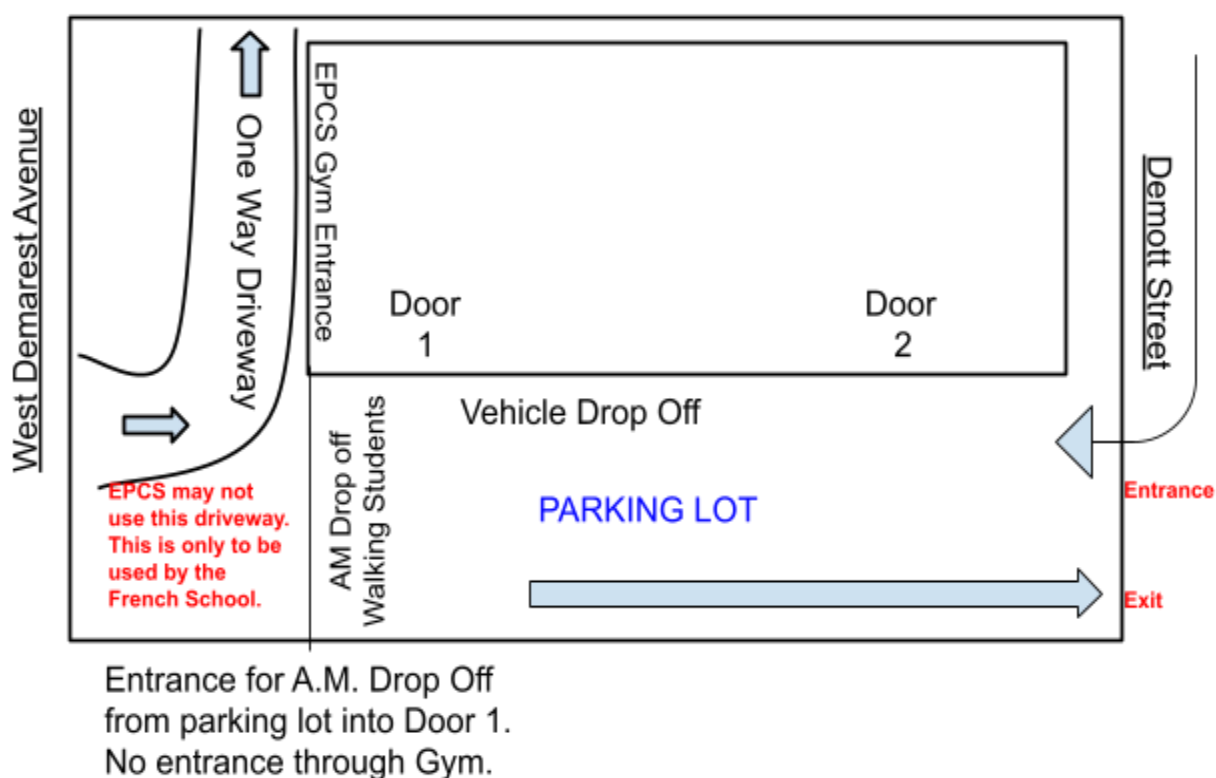
#### ***Elementary and Middle School Arrival Procedure***

*Beginning at 7:45 a.m.*, students enter Door #1 and are sent directly to the gym, where breakfast is available. Vehicles can enter the parking lot from the Demott Street entrance. Parents/Guardians must drive South on Prospect Street, make a left onto Demott Street, enter the parking lot, and drive along the school to Door #1. All students will enter the school through Door #1. Vehicles will turn left at Door #1, then make another left to exit the lot from the Demott Street side. Hand sanitizer stations will be at the entrances for students to use upon entering the building. (See diagram below)

### ***Van, Bus, and Walking Student Arrival Procedure***

All students who walk to school will enter through Door #1. Vans and buses will drop students off so that they can follow the procedures above. Hand sanitizer will be set up for students to use upon entering the building.

**\*\* Vehicles are not permitted to park in the parking lot, or drive through the circle driveway during drop off and pick up times. Also, please adhere to all city parking rules and regulations. The Englewood Police Department will ticket vehicles parked on the street illegally.\*\***



### **Student Pick Up**

Students will be dismissed from the assigned doors facing the school parking lot. **Adults must park their cars on the street, and walk to the appropriate door to receive their child from their classroom teacher.** Students who are being picked up are **not permitted** to walk through the parking lot alone. This policy also includes early dismissal. **Those who are permitted to walk home may leave.**

#### **Grade Level Student Pick up/Dismissal:**

<b>Door # 1</b> <b>Door closest to W. Demarest Ave.</b>	<b>Grades:</b> <b>K, 1st, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Grades</b>
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<b>Door # 2</b> <b>Door closest to Demott St.</b>	<b>Grades:</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, &amp; 5<sup>th</sup> Grades</b>
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Due to the movement of students throughout the school building during the scheduled dismissal time, parents, family members and visitors are not allowed in the school during this time. **All appointments with administrators and teachers must be made after 3:15 p.m., or after 12:15 p.m. on half days.**

**Important:**

**It is our expectation that parents or approved designees will arrive at the school on time for the scheduled dismissal at 3:00 p.m. (12:00 p.m. on half-days).**

An “Approved Designee” is a person who is listed on a student’s Emergency Contact Form. Students will not be released to any adult if the adult’s name is not listed on the Emergency Contact Form.

**SUNRISE Early Morning Drop Off Program**

For a nominal fee, students may be dropped off for before school care between 7:00 a.m.-7:45 a.m. Breakfast is available beginning at 7:15 a.m. for students enrolled in the program. For students who are not enrolled, breakfast will be available when they enter the building. For more information, click the link below.

[SUNRISE and COUGAR CARE Parent Handbook, 2025-2026](#)

**Early Pick Up Procedure**

If a student must leave school before the scheduled dismissal time, a note will be sent to the classroom teacher to indicate the time and a valid reason (example: unavoidable medical appointment) for the early pick up from school. This note will be shared with the Administrative Office. All students must be signed out of school by a parent/guardian or adult that is listed on the student’s emergency form. It is the student’s responsibility to get their homework assignments before leaving school, if possible. The Administrative Office will call for the student to be sent down upon the arrival of a parent/guardian. **There will be NO early pick-up between 2:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. with the exception of extreme circumstances.**

Parents are not permitted to pick their child up from the classroom. Students will be called to the office and walked to the door by a School Safety Officer.

**COUGAR CARE After-School Program Pick up**

All students will be located in the gym for the dismissal starting at 5:30 p.m. At that time, the staff members will be called to send students to Door #1, which will be monitored by a School Safety Officer.

## Student Dress Code

All students are expected to report to school dressed appropriately and adhering to our school uniform policy. It has been proven that a uniform provides students with school uniqueness, enforces discipline, and maintains a wholesome learning environment that will contribute to academic achievement, and have many other advantages including saving money for families, removing distractions and trend competitions, and peer pressure. **We are asking for your support and cooperation.**

**\*Please see the list below outlining the current uniform requirements.**

### EPCS Elementary School Uniform

#### BOYS

Shirts:	Light blue long or short sleeved Polo shirt <b>with logo</b> .
Pants:	Navy pants, no visible brand labels. <b>NO JEANS</b>
Shorts:	In warm weather, any solid navy walking shorts.
Shoes:	<u>Solid black or solid navy blue</u>
Sneakers:	<u>Solid black, solid white, or solid navy blue, low top sneakers</u> <u>(NO LIGHTS or COLORS) to be worn on gym days only.</u>
Socks:	Navy
Sweater:	Navy v-neck sweater vest <b>with logo</b> , or navy v-neck cardigan <b>with logo</b> , or navy polar fleece jacket <b>with logo</b>
Gym Shirt:	Light blue gym t-shirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Shorts:	Navy micro-mesh nylon gym shorts <b>with logo</b> to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatshirt:	Navy heavyweight sweatshirt , <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatpants:	Navy heavyweight sweatpants, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.

#### GIRLS

Shirts:	Light blue long or short sleeved Polo shirts <b>with logo</b> .
Pants:	Navy pants, no visible brand labels. <b>NO JEANS</b> .
Shorts:	In warm weather, any solid navy walking shorts.
Skorts:	Navy skort. Skort must be knee length.
Shoes:	<u>Solid black or solid navy blue</u>
Sneakers:	<u>Solid black, solid white, or solid navy blue, low top sneakers</u> <u>(NO LIGHTS or COLORS) to be worn on gym days only.</u>
Socks:	Navy blue
Stockings:	Navy blue stockings or tights
Sweater	Navy v-neck sweater vest <b>with logo</b> or navy v-neck cardigan <b>with logo</b> , or navy polar fleece jacket <b>with logo</b>
Gym Shirts:	Light blue gym t-shirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.

Gym Shorts:	Navy micro-mesh nylon gym shorts, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatshirt:	Navy heavyweight sweatshirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatpants:	Navy heavyweight sweatpants, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only

**The items listed below will NOT be accepted in school:**

- Spaghetti straps (unless worn under a sweater)
- Tight, ripped, or low rider jeans
- Leggings
- Cut-out tee shirts
- Shirts with inappropriate words
- Short length skirts or skorts
- High heeled shoes
- All sandals must have straps around the ankles

\*This information is also available on our website: [Elementary School Uniform Policy](#)

## **EPCS Middle School Uniform**

### **BOYS**

Shirts:	Navy long or short sleeved Polo shirt <b>with logo</b> .
Pants:	Khaki pants, no visible brand labels. <b>NO JEANS</b>
Shorts:	In warm weather, any solid khaki walking shorts.
Shoes:	<b>Solid black or solid navy blue</b>
Sneakers:	<b>Solid black, solid white, or solid navy blue, low top sneakers (NO LIGHTS or COLORS) to be worn on gym days only.</b>
Socks:	Navy
Sweater:	Navy v-neck sweater vest <b>with logo</b> , or navy v-neck cardigan <b>with logo</b> , or navy polar fleece jacket <b>with logo</b>
Gym Shirt:	Light blue gym t-shirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Shorts	Navy micro-mesh nylon gym shorts, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatshirt:	Navy heavyweight sweatshirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatpants:	Navy heavyweight sweatpants, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.

### **GIRLS**

Shirts:	Navy long or short sleeved Polo shirts <b>with logo</b> .
Pants:	Khaki pants, no visible brand labels. <b>NO JEANS</b> .
Shorts:	In warm weather, any solid Khaki walking shorts.
Skorts:	Khaki skort. Skort must be knee length.
Shoes:	<u>Solid black or solid navy blue</u>
Sneakers:	<u>Solid black, solid white, or solid navy blue, low top sneakers (NO LIGHTS or COLORS) to be worn on gym days only.</u>
Socks:	Navy blue
Stockings:	Navy blue stockings or tights.
Sweater:	Navy v-neck sweater vest <b>with logo</b> or navy v-neck cardigan <b>with logo</b> , or navy polar fleece jacket <b>with logo</b>
Gym Shirts:	Light blue gym t-shirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Shorts	Navy micro-mesh nylon gym shorts, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
Gym Sweatshirt:	Navy heavyweight sweatshirt, <b>with logo</b> , to be worn on gym days only.
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**The items listed below will NOT be accepted in school:**

- Spaghetti straps (unless worn under a sweater)
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- Leggings
- Cut-out tee shirts
- Shirts with inappropriate words
- Short length skirts or skorts
- High heeled shoes
- All sandals must have straps around the ankles

\*This information is also available on our website: [Middle School Uniform Policy](#)

Any clothing which will have the effects of disrupting the educational process is not to be worn in school. Footwear must be worn in the building and on the bus. **Hats should not be worn in the school building as a matter of courtesy.**

### **Dress Code Discipline Policy**

If a student comes to school dressed out of uniform:

#### **First Offense**

The student will receive a verbal warning.

**Second Offense**

The teacher will inform the Administrative Office and the parent/guardian will be contacted in writing.

**Third Offense**

The teacher will inform the Administrative Office and the parent/guardian will be contacted by phone to bring a uniform to school. If a parent refuses to bring a uniform, the parent will be requested to take their child home for the day.

**Fourth Offense**

The teacher will inform the Administrative Office and the parent/guardian will be contacted by phone/writing. We will require a uniform to be brought to school. If a parent refuses to bring a uniform, the parent will be requested to take their child home for the day. The student will also be required to attend one day of accountability session from 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. The parent will be required to pick the student up at 3:45 p.m. If the student remains after 3:45 p.m., the parent will be charged the daily rate of the After-School Program.

**EPCS Uniform Company**

Flynn O'Hara

**Order online:** <https://flynnohara.com/shop/englewood-on-the-palisades-charter-nj143/>

In-person purchase/pick-up:

Emerson Plaza

489 Old Hook Road

Emerson, NJ 07630

201.634.0111

**Special Programs****SUNRISE Before School Care**

**Students Up 'N Ready In a Safe Environment**

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School has an Early Morning Drop Off option to provide childcare before the school day begins. This option is available, for a nominal fee, to all students who require an early drop off.

**COUGAR CARE After-School Program**

**Caring Opportunities for Uplifting Growing and Achieving Responsibly  
Community Activities and Recreation Enrichment**

Greetings! Our esteemed after-school program, COUGAR CARE, proudly presents diverse extracurricular classes, allowing young students to delve into new hobbies and interests while honing crucial skills like confidence and socialization. Our program operates during full-day sessions, from 3:00 - 5:30, and we cordially invite parents to peruse our Parent Guide for additional insight into our policies and procedures.



Should you have queries after reviewing the [SUNRISE and COUGAR CARE Parent Handbook, 2025-2026](#) please do not hesitate to contact us.

Our email address is [outofschool.time@englewoodcharter.org](mailto:outofschool.time@englewoodcharter.org)

To reach us by phone: (20) 569-9765, when prompted **Dial 8**

To register, click the link: [Sunrise and Cougar Care Program Registration \(2025-2026\)](#)

Para registrarse, haga clic en el enlace: [Registro para el programa Sunrise y Cougar Care \(2025-2026\)](#)

***Payments can be dropped off to the school during our school business hours, or mailed to EPCS, 65 W. Demarest Ave., Englewood, NJ 07631, Attn: Kelly Williams, Business Manager. Please include the name and grade of the child or children whom the payment is for.***

### **S.W.A.G. (Students Who Achieve Greatness) After-School Tutoring Program (Grades K-8)**

Our school is proud to offer the "S.W.A.G." After-School Tutoring Program, a free and comprehensive initiative designed to provide students in grades K-8 with the additional support they need to excel in reading and math skills. This program is rooted in our commitment to fostering academic excellence and ensuring that every student reaches their full potential. It runs from January to April, from 3:15-4:15.

#### **Program Goals:**

The S.W.A.G. After-School Tutoring Program aims to achieve the following goals:

1. Improve Academic Performance: Enhance students' reading and math skills, ensuring they meet or exceed grade-level expectations.
2. Boost Confidence: Build students' self-esteem and confidence in their abilities.
3. Encourage a Love for Learning: Foster a positive attitude towards learning and create a supportive educational environment.
4. Promote Individualized Learning: Provide personalized instruction to address each student's unique needs and learning style.
5. Enhance Parent Involvement: Engage parents in their child's educational journey and offer resources to support learning at home.

#### **Program Features:**

1. Certified Instructors: Our program is staffed by qualified and experienced teachers who are dedicated to helping students succeed. These instructors possess the expertise needed to tailor instruction to meet individual student needs.

2. **Small Group Sessions:** To ensure personalized attention, we maintain small class sizes, with a low student-to-instructor ratio. This allows tutors to focus on each student's specific challenges and strengths.

3. **Comprehensive Curriculum:** Our program is built upon a structured curriculum aligned with state and national educational standards. It covers essential reading and math concepts while integrating engaging and interactive activities.

4. **Positive Learning Environment:** Our program fosters a supportive and encouraging atmosphere where students feel safe to ask questions, make mistakes, and grow academically and personally.

5. **Progress Monitoring:** Continuous assessment and progress tracking ensure that students are making significant strides in their academic growth. Adjustments are made to instruction as needed.

#### **Enrollment and Accessibility:**

Enrollment in the S.W.A.G. Program is open to all students in grades K-8 who require additional support in reading and math skills. The program is free of charge and accessible to all, regardless of financial circumstances.

Our school is committed to empowering every student to reach their full potential academically and personally. The S.W.A.G. Program reflects this commitment by providing high-quality, personalized support in reading and math skills. Together with dedicated instructors, engaged parents, and motivated students, we believe that every child can succeed on their path to academic excellence.

### **Cougar of the Month Program**

#### **Overview:**

The Cougar of the Month program at Englewood on the Palisades Charter School recognizes and celebrates outstanding students in each grade from Kindergarten through 8th grade. Every month, one student from each grade level will be selected based on various criteria, highlighting their exemplary performance and character. The selected students will have their pictures and biographies displayed on a designated bulletin board and shared on the school's Class Dojo platform. Additionally, all nominated students will be entered into a drawing for a monthly grand prize.

#### **Nomination Process:**

The homeroom teachers on each grade level are required to collaborate to nominate one student per month. Nominations are based on a detailed rubric that evaluates students across multiple categories.

Teachers are asked to provide supporting data and/or a brief anecdotal, factual statement from their professional observations and interactions with the nominated students.

The criteria for the selection process are listed below:

1. **Academic Performance**-Demonstrates strong understanding of academic concepts, consistently performs well in classwork and assessments, shows enthusiasm for learning.
2. **Attendance**-Maintains regular attendance, arrives on time, and has minimal absences or tardiness.
3. **Behavior**-Follows school rules, exhibits self-discipline, shows respect for authority, and contributes to a positive classroom environment.
4. **Character**-Displays honesty, integrity, and respect for others, takes responsibility for their actions, and shows empathy.
5. **Effort**-Demonstrates perseverance, strives for improvement, shows determination in completing tasks, and participates actively in class.
6. **Social Relationships**-Cooperates well with peers, shows leadership skills, is kind and inclusive, and contributes to group work effectively.

### **National Junior Honor Society (Grades 6-8)**

The National Junior Honor Society is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding middle-level students. More than just an honor roll, NJHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since its beginning in 1929.

Five main purposes have guided chapters of NJHS from the beginning: to create enthusiasm for scholarship; to stimulate a desire to render service; to promote leadership; to encourage responsible citizenship; and to develop character in the students of secondary schools. These purposes also translate into the criteria used for membership selection in each local chapter. Induction into the EPCS NJHS chapter is based on five characteristics. These are scholarship, leadership, citizenship, character, and service.

### **Peer Leaders (8th grade)**

The E.P.C.S. 8th-grade peer leader program is an initiative designed to provide guidance, support, and mentorship to 6th-grade students who are transitioning to middle school. The primary goal of this program is to help the younger students adapt to their new environment, foster a sense of belonging, and navigate the challenges that come with the transition from elementary to middle school.

### **Program Structure**

The program involves a group of experienced 8th-grade students who take on the role of peer leaders. These leaders must apply for the position, and will be selected based on their positive behavior, leadership qualities, and their ability to serve as role models for the incoming 6th graders. The peer leaders receive training that equips them with the necessary skills to effectively mentor and support their younger peers.

### **Mentoring Activities**

**Orientation:** At the beginning of the school year, the peer leaders organize an orientation session for the 6th graders. This session provides essential information about the school layout, class schedules, extracurricular activities, and school policies.

**Regular Check-Ins:** Peer leaders meet with their assigned 6th graders on a regular basis, either during a designated advisory period or at specific intervals during the school year. These check-ins provide opportunities for the younger students to ask questions, share their experiences, and receive advice.

**Academic Support:** Peer leaders assist 6th graders with understanding their class schedules, organizing their assignments, and developing effective study habits. They can also provide tips for managing time and balancing schoolwork with extracurricular activities.

**Social and Emotional Support:** The transition to middle school can be emotionally challenging. Peer leaders create a safe space for the 6th graders to discuss their feelings, make new friends, and address any anxieties they might have about the new environment.

**Group Activities:** Peer leaders organize group activities and workshops that focus on building team spirit, communication skills, and self-confidence. These activities can range from icebreaker games to team-building challenges.

**Conflict Resolution:** Peer leaders offer guidance on resolving conflicts and dealing with challenges that might arise among students. They model effective communication and encourage open dialogue.

### **Benefits**

- Smooth Transition: The program helps ease the transition for 6th graders, making them feel more comfortable and confident in their new environment.
- Role Models: Peer leaders serve as positive role models, demonstrating responsible behavior, good study habits, and respectful interpersonal skills.
- Sense of Belonging: The mentorship provided by peer leaders fosters a sense of belonging and community among the 6th graders.
- Leadership Development: Peer leaders develop their leadership skills, empathy, and communication abilities by taking on the responsibility of mentoring.
- Improved School Climate: The program contributes to a more supportive and inclusive school climate, as older students actively contribute to the well-being of their younger peers.

The 8th-grade peer leader program plays a crucial role in ensuring a successful transition for 6th graders, setting a positive tone for their middle school experience, and nurturing a supportive school environment.

Peer leaders must maintain a grade of C or higher in all classes to participate. Peer leaders must also maintain good attendance throughout the year, and behave in a manner that represents the school in a positive light

### **Student Ambassadors (Grades 5-8)**

The Student Ambassadors delegation is open to all 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Three students from each grade will be selected for the role of Student Ambassador. Applications must be submitted by Friday, September 12, 2025, 8:15am. Click here to apply: [Student Ambassador Application 2025-2026](#). If selected to be a Student Ambassador, you will be notified by Monday, September 29, 2025.

Some of the duties of the EPCS Student Ambassadors are, but are not limited to,

- ➔ Welcoming new students (throughout the year, including Open House events in the summer)
- ➔ Mentoring younger students
- ➔ Greeting families at assemblies and collecting signatures of attendees

Student Ambassadors will be required to:

- ☐ Attend at least one meeting per marking period
- ☐ Know the history and current happenings of the school
- ☐ Maintain good grades and attendance throughout the year
- ☐ Behave in a manner that represents the school in a positive light

#### Qualities of a Student Ambassador

- Caring
- Loyal
- Dedicated to the EPCS school community
- Displays good character
- Upholds the EPCS Behavior Expectations as written in the Student/Parent Handbook

\*Student Ambassadors will serve a one year term, from September-August, and are eligible to reapply next September.

#### **Student Council (Grades 3-8)**

The student council consists of elected students working with adult advisors to represent the needs and desires of the student body. It provides an opportunity to develop leadership and human relation skills. It also gives students a chance to express themselves and cultivate a strong sense of school spirit and improve school culture and climate.

8th Grade - President

7th Grade - Vice-President

6th Grade - Secretary

5th Grade - Treasurer

3rd and 4th Grade - Class representative

Job Title	Description
President (8th Grade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrange and run meetings with other student council members</li><li>• Make sure everyone does their job</li><li>• Approve any events, fundraisers, budgets, or other plans and decisions made by the student council</li><li>• Represent the interests of their grade at student council meetings and events</li></ul>
Vice-President (7th Grade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assist the president with his or her duties</li><li>• Represent the interests of their grade at student council meetings and events</li></ul>
Secretary (6th Grade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Should be a very well organized person who's good at taking notes</li><li>• Take minutes at meetings</li><li>• Keep student council related materials organized</li><li>• Get important information to class officers</li><li>• Schedule meetings (?)</li><li>• Represent the interests of their grade at student council meetings</li></ul>

	and events
Treasurer (5th Grade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the funds of the student council</li> <li>• Keep track of spending</li> <li>• Provide some sort of monthly report outlining financial decisions made by the student council</li> <li>• Represent the interests of their grade at student council meetings and events</li> </ul>
Class Representative (3rd and 4th Grade)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent the interests of their grade at student council meetings and events</li> </ul>

### **Teens for Peace (Grades 7 and 8)**

The Teens for Peace program is run by the Englewood Rotary Club. This program brings together twenty-five 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders from all five Englewood middle schools to build peace and a sense of community. The program helps the students gain mutual understanding, respect, and civic engagement. The program features weekly workshops among five different schools in Englewood, NJ, including The Janis Dismus Middle School, The Elisabeth Morrow School, The Moriah School, The Dwight Englewood School, and Englewood on the Palisades Charter School. Workshops are conducted at the Bergen Family Center. The teens choose a special project to celebrate and commemorate their work.

### **Young Debaters Club (Grades 5-8)**

The Young Debaters Program, the most highly sought-after program offered under Richard Celestin Consulting Group LLC, allows students to become more proficient in public speaking, evidence-based research, reading, and persuasive writing skills, as well as promotes reasoning and communication skills. Implementation of the Young Debaters Program provides an avenue for students to grow academically and socially. In addition, the lessons presented and the skills developed fall in line with the Common Core Standards, the state-implemented criteria for learning within public school. The program curriculum is broken up into three core areas with lessons, exercises and opportunities to debate at the core. Those areas are: How to Think Like a Lawyer, How to Read Like a Lawyer, and How to Debate Like a Lawyer. The program culminates in a debate competition which takes place at a local law school where students debate against opposing schools on current relevant legal and policy issues before panels of practicing attorneys and law school students that serve as judges.

## Health Related Matters

### Medical Forms

As required by New Jersey State law, all students must be properly immunized and all necessary medical forms must be completed and received before a student can start an academic year.

The Board of Trustees of the Englewood on the Palisades Charter School is committed to each student reaching and maintaining optimal physical health. Before the academic year begins, the nurse will make certain that all the students' medical forms are complete.

### Illness

Englewood on the Palisades Charter School requests that a parent keep a child at home if the child appears to be ill. A sore throat, rash, a morning upset stomach, fever, severe cough or crusty, red eyes are reasons for a child to stay at home. If a student comes to school with a condition that the teacher believes is infectious, the teacher may send the child to the nurse. If the nurse believes the student to be infectious, the nurse must send the child home. **A student must be fever, vomit, and diarrhea free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school.**

Parents are asked to report all communicable diseases to the nurse immediately.

Examples of communicable diseases are:

- Covid-19
- Head Lice
- Chicken Pox
- Ringworm
- Strep Throat
- Conjunctivitis
- Whooping Cough
- Scarlet Fever
- Mumps
- Measles
- Tuberculosis
- Rheumatic Fever
- Hepatitis (A, B, non-A, non-B)
- Mononucleosis

A telephone call enables the school nurse and Administration to send proper notification to the homes of the child's classmates.



To contact the school nurse please call: (201)569-9765, when prompted **dial 3**

### **Injuries**

If a student suffers an injury during school hours, the nurse is required to complete an Accident Report. A copy of this form must be submitted to the Administrative Office by the end of the day.

### **Medication**

If a student needs to take a prescribed or over-the-counter medication, the school must receive a written note from the child's physician. The medication must be packaged in its original container, and labeled with the student's name and the required dosage. The medication will be kept in the Nurse's Office or in the Administrative Office. Certain emergency medications may be self administered. Please contact the school nurse or the Administrative Office for further information. **Cough drops are considered medication and must be administered by the school nurse or the Administrative Office.**

### **Student Health Screenings**

Throughout the school year, vision, hearing, and scoliosis (5<sup>th</sup> grade only) screenings will be conducted by the school nurse and school physician. Parents will be notified in advance of all screenings and may choose to have these screenings performed by their family physician.

## **Birthday Party Policy**

### **Elementary School Birthday Policy (Grades K-5)**

Birthday party celebrations may be held on the child's birthday with a 30 minute limit. Prior approval must be received from the classroom teacher. All items must be labeled and dropped off in the Administrative Office on the morning of the birthday party.

Please note:

- No family members are permitted to attend the party. This includes siblings who may attend EPCS.
- No balloons, decorations, candles, or presents are permitted.
- Students must wear their uniform on their birthday.

On the day of the party:

- Cupcakes, cookies, etc. only. No cakes or anything that needs to be cut with a knife.
- Juice or water - either individual boxes, pouches, or bottles or pourable juice with cups
- Snacks - choice of one snack item, i.e. popcorn, pretzels, chips, etc (optional)
- Provide paper goods (napkins, plates, cups)
- Goodie Bags (optional)

### **Middle School Birthday Policy (Grades 6-8)**

Students in the EPCS Middle School are not permitted to have a birthday party during school hours.

- Students cannot bring in food items or any other birthday “goodies” to share with other students.
- Students cannot decorate other students’ lockers for birthdays.
- Parents/guardians cannot decorate their child’s locker.
- Students must wear their uniform on their birthday.

### **Nut-Free School**

Englewood on the Palisades Charter School is a nut-free school. Please do not bring or send any peanuts, tree nuts, or foods containing nuts into E.P.C.S.

#### **Examples of Foods Containing Nuts:**

- Peanut butter or other nut butters (almond, cashew, hazelnut, pistachios, etc.)
- Trail mix or granola containing nuts
- Nut-based cookies, brownies, or pastries (e.g., peanut butter cookies, baklava)
- Candy with nuts (e.g., Snickers®, Reese’s®, Almond Joy®, M&M’s® with peanuts)
- Pesto sauce (often contains pine nuts)
- Nut-flavored spreads (Nutella® contains hazelnuts)
- Certain cereals or granola bars with nuts
- Ice cream or yogurt with nuts mixed in

## Behavior Expectations and Discipline

### Bill of Rights

#### ENGLEWOOD ON THE PALISADES CHARTER SCHOOL BILL OF RIGHTS

##### **Teacher's Rights**

We have the **RIGHT** to teach in a safe and secure environment.

We have the **RIGHT** to EPCS instructional resources.

We have the **RIGHT** to EPCS Curriculum and materials.

We have the **RIGHT** to be treated respectfully.

We have the **RIGHT** to have our concerns addressed in a timely manner.

We have the **RIGHT** to discipline child if needed.

##### **Student's Rights**

We have the **RIGHT** to learn in a safe and secure environment.

We have the **RIGHT** to receive the best education available.

We have the **RIGHT** to receive extra help when needed.

We have the **RIGHT** to be heard ask questions, & have our have our opinion respected.

We have the **RIGHT** to have breakfast & lunch at school.

We have the **RIGHT** to have our concerns addressed in a timely manner.

##### **Parent's Rights**

We have the **RIGHT** to know our children are safe.

We have the **RIGHT** to know our children are receiving the best

We have the **RIGHT** to have our concerns addressed in a timely manner.

##### **Teacher's Responsibilities**

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to implement a management plan.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to educate children.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to plan using the approved lesson plan.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to be respectful to the school community.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to address student, parent, & Principal's concerns in a timely.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to a notify parents of any issues or concerns.

##### **Student's Responsibilities**

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to care for our school & all property.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to do our best & complete all class work.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to actively engage in class & question.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to wait wait our turn to speak & listen to others' ideas thoughtfully.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to use manners while eating.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to refrain from bullying, name calling, harassing & fighting others.

##### **Parent's Responsibilities**

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to be respectful to staff, students & parents.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to see that student work is complete.

We have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to respond to any issue arising with our child in a timely manner.

### **Discipline – New Jersey Law**

Students that violate New Jersey State Law 18A: 37-2, 37-2.1 or the Behavior Expectations will be referred by the teachers to the Principal.

### **Student Behavior Philosophy**

This school exists to meet the educational needs of all the students enrolled. There is a commitment on the part of this school to make certain that students have received the full benefit of a quality education. In order to fulfill this commitment, students' behavior must at all times support the mission of the school. When students interfere with the rights of others to learn, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, which will include steps to help the students modify their behavior.

The process for improving students' behavior will include the involvement of parents and all appropriate school personnel, as well as outside agencies if it is deemed necessary. Teachers, administrators, and the school nurse are among the staff available to assist parents and students. Outside agencies include South Bergen Jointure Commission, the County Mental Health Bureau, the Youth Services Bureau, the family courts, Child Protection and Permanency, New Jersey Department of Children and Families and private professionals and organizations.

### **Behavior Expectations**

#### **Students are expected to:**

- Be on time for school and classes.
- Be prepared for classes; (e.g. books on hand, homework in on time, studying, completing assignments, actively participating).
- Take responsibility for their own behavior, realizing there are always options and consequences for their choices.
- Respect one another's differences and resolve interpersonal conflicts using discussion, peer mediation or assistance from school personnel.
- Commit themselves to constant personal growth and improvement.
- Contribute to the life of the school through active participation.
- Use appropriate language and show common courtesy in school, on the way to and from school, and at school functions.
- Follow all directions the first time they are given.
- Dress in an appropriate and safe fashion.
- Be substance free.

**Parents/guardians are expected to:**

- Be supportive of the staff's authority and responsibility to establish and maintain a positive, productive, safe, orderly and non-threatening learning environment.
- Provide space, time and necessary supervision in which their child can study and complete assignments.
- Be responsible for property lost or damaged by their child.
- Ensure that their child attends school punctually and regularly.
- Respect and follow the traffic, parking and safety rules.
- Respect and follow the visitor policy.
- Be substance-free when visiting school or when attending school events.

**Lunchtime Rules**

- Once seated, the supervising staff members will ask one class at a time to line-up in alphabetical order by last name. The students will be served in this order.
- Students are expected to remain seated and use appropriate "inside voices" for the cafeteria.
- No student is to leave their seat during the lunch period unless they receive permission.
- Staff members will direct the students to clean up their area and discard their garbage by tables. Students will then return to their tables. No individual table will be dismissed if their table and surrounding areas are dirty.
- Supervising staff members will line up students for recess.(Grades K-4 have indoor and outdoor recess)

**Student Conduct Policies and Guidelines**

Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of all persons involved in the educational process and to exercise the highest degree of self-discipline, observing and adhering to legitimate rules and regulations. It is the school's belief that, by accepting and fulfilling their responsibilities, individuals will come to value their privileges.

Our school's Discipline Policy depends on an acceptance of the following assumptions:

- That the safety and welfare of all students must take precedence over the inappropriate actions of a few.
- That no student has a right to interfere with the learning opportunities of others.

In an effort to be fair and provide due process:

- Students should be informed about the standards of behavior they are expected to meet
- Students should be aware of specific behaviors giving rise to any proposed penalties or discipline
- Students should have some opportunity to express or convey their views or rebuttals regarding incidents to the decision-making authority, and

The decision-making authority will base its decisions on the incidents or matter(s) about which a student has been accused of.

The EPCS Discipline Policy has been developed to help students regulate their behavior on school property or at school sponsored events in accordance with school guidelines. Self-discipline is, of course, essential to the effective operation of the school and for the development of every student.

When students fail to exhibit self-discipline, they can expect discipline to be imposed upon them by the school administrators. The imposed penalties usually will follow from minimum to maximum in accordance with the number of violations received by the student (for example, first offense- talk with the student and/or parent). However, there may be times when a higher level of disciplinary action will be invoked due to the nature and/or degree of the infraction and/or inappropriate behavior.

Any disciplinary actions may be concurrent with, or superseded by, established penal law. If the severity of the violation requires notifying the police department, they will be contacted. If this action takes place, parents/guardians will be notified and a parent conference will be arranged.

The [Student Code of Conduct](#) contains causes for disciplinary action. They are not meant to be all-inclusive, but are to serve as a guide. All disciplinary actions apply to all school events and areas of responsibility.

If a student's behavior is persistently poor, additional measures will be taken as determined by the school administrators.

Students will be empowered to take responsibility for their behavior, and will be given an opportunity to reduce points earned for behavior infractions. This opportunity has been implemented to promote positive behavior and encourage students to make better choices.

### **After-School Accountability Sessions**

The Principal (or teaching staff member) may require a student to remain after school provided the parents have been given at least one (1) day's notice and have agreed to be responsible for their child's transportation at the end of the accountability session period. If the student rides on the bus or van, and the Principal cannot verify that the parents agree to be responsible for the student's transportation, an after-school accountability session should not be used. The accountability session Supervisor shall ensure that there is adequate supervision of the student until such time as transportation arrives. The student is to be given a "Think Sheet/Behavior Reflection" form to complete during the accountability session period. If a student does not work or gets removed from an accountability session due to behavior, then that student will be placed

on the next day's accountability session list to serve the accountability session, or s/he may be assigned to out-of-school suspension.

**The rules and procedures regarding participation are to be published in the student handbooks. Rules should include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:**

- A. Students are to have their own reading material for the period of their accountability session. They will also be required to complete a form that will assist in bringing about a positive change in behavior.
- B. Students are not to communicate with each other unless permission is given.
- C. Students are to remain in their designated seats at all times unless permission is granted.
- D. Students will not be allowed to use their Chromebooks, telephones, or to go to their lockers during accountability sessions.
- E. Students will not be allowed to put their heads down or sleep.
- F. Playing cards, magazines, or other recreational articles will not be allowed.

#### **Accountability Session Procedures**

- Accountability sessions will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 3:00-3:45 pm. **There will be no accountability session on half-days.**
- Students who have been assigned an accountability session must report to the accountability session Supervisor in the gym at 3:00pm. The accountability session Supervisor will walk the students to a designated classroom. Attendance will be taken.
- Students must complete the "Think Sheet" assigned for their grade level. "Think Sheets" will be sent home for parents to sign, and will be collected by the students' homeroom teachers. If a student does not return the signed "Think Sheet", the accountability session Supervisor will be notified to contact the parent.
- At 3:45 pm, the accountability session Supervisor will walk the students to the gym for dismissal. The accountability session Supervisor will also ensure that there is adequate supervision of the students until their transportation arrives.
- If a student does not report to the accountability session, another accountability session will be issued, and the parent/guardian will be contacted by the accountability session Supervisor.
- **If a child is unable to attend an accountability session due to a doctor's appointment or other prior arrangements, a parent/guardian must call the main office at 201-569-9765 before 8:30 am on the day of the accountability session to get it approved by administration.**
- If any student fails to obey the rules established for in-school accountability sessions, s/he may be assigned to out-of-school suspension.
- Consecutive accountability sessions may lead to more severe consequences, including, but not limited to, out-of-school suspension, removal from field trips or school activities, the decision is at the discretion of the school administration.

**Accountability sessions may be assigned, but are not limited to, the following reasons:**

- Consistent incomplete/missing classwork/homework (3 or more assignments in one week)
- Persistent lateness/lack of punctuality to class (more than 10 unexcused tardies)
- Behavior that is disruptive to the learning environment
- Behavior that is disrespectful/offensive
- Dress code violation (5th offense)
- Excessive Rough Play
- Use of personal electronic equipment without permission (including cell phones)
- Inappropriate use of technology

**It is the responsibility of the Educational Staff to follow and document these steps of progressive discipline (for level 1 and level 2 behaviors) before assigning a student to accountability session:**

1. Verbal Warning
2. Brief private conference with student
3. Phone Conference with Parent/Guardian
4. Guidance counselor/social worker conference with student
5. Referral to administration for accountability session
6. Administrator and teacher meet with parent/ guardian and student

**Suspension or Expulsion of Students**

The Board of Trustees of the Englewood on the Palisades Charter School believes that through creating a climate in which children truly want to do the right thing, we will be able to reduce incidences of unwanted behaviors and focus on high academic, in-depth, authentic learning. We will always work toward solving problems prior to suspending or expelling a student. Suspension or expulsion will be the last measure after all other possibilities have been tried or have failed.

No student shall be suspended or expelled unless the conduct for which the student is disciplined is related to school activities and occurred on school property, including school buses. This does **not** include cases involving harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Disciplinary action will have no bearing on the student's academic standing, except in cases of dishonesty.

A student may be suspended or expelled from the Charter School based on criteria determined by the Board of Trustees which are consistent with the provisions of the New Jersey State Law 18A:37-2. Suspension or expulsion from the Englewood on the Palisades Charter School would be based upon extremely serious violations of the Code of Conduct. Any expulsion shall be made upon the recommendation of the Lead Person and approved by the Board of Trustees.



## **Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy**

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School Board of Education believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers are required to demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Therefore, the school will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School Board of Education expects all students to treat each other with civility and respect, and not to engage in behavior that is disruptive or violent. The Board expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, for school personnel, for the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The standards of character education are an essential component of Englewood on the Palisades Charter School District's Code of Conduct. The Board believes that with the appropriate infusion of character education into the school curriculum, modeling of appropriate behavior by adults; support and assistance of students in school, the community and home; our students will achieve the above standards of character education.

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School Board prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying against any student. School responses to harassment, intimidation and bullying shall be aligned with the Board approved code of student conduct which establishes standards, policies and procedures for positive student development and student behavioral expectations on school grounds, including on a school bus or at school sponsored functions. The chief school administrator shall be responsible for ensuring the prompt investigation and response to all reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying committed on school grounds, at school activities and on school buses. In addition, the chief school administrator shall ensure that this policy is applied to incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying that are committed off school grounds in cases where a school employee is made aware of such actions. The chief school administrator has the right and authority to impose a consequence on a student for conduct away from school grounds that is consistent with the Board's approved code of student conduct, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6.

The complete HIB policy can be found on Englewood on the Palisades Charter School's website: [Englewood on the Palisades Charter School](#)

## **Student Responsibilities**

It is the student's responsibility to come to school ready to participate in the learning process. Each student is expected to contribute to maintaining a positive, clean and orderly school environment.

### **Dress**

Any clothing which will have the effects of disrupting the educational process is not to be worn in school. Footwear must be worn in the building and on the bus. Hats should not be worn in the school building as a matter of courtesy. Refer to the school [dress code](#).

### **Homework Policy**

Homework is an activity that is assigned to extend learning outside the classroom. Learning is a continuing process that begins in the classroom under the direction of the teacher, and continues at home with meaningful follow-up activities. Homework is an integral part of the learning process. The student, teacher, parent and the school administrators are all partners in this process. We believe that the information provided below will help strengthen this partnership to ensure the success of our students.

The purpose of homework is:

- To enrich and extend classroom learning and experience.
- To develop effective, independent work habits, and study skills.
- To provide essential practice of skills learned in school.
- To encourage students to actively seek and prepare background information for classroom activities.
- To encourage the use of out-of-school resources, i.e. the public library and museums.
- To encourage students to prepare appropriately for tests.
- To provide an opportunity to make up for missed schoolwork.
- To serve as a communication link between home and school in regard to the curriculum.

The amount of time students will spend on homework will vary according to grade, different course requirements and individual student differences and needs. It is believed that students should be assigned homework on a daily basis. The following recommended time allowances for homework, studying and reading at each grade level are approximate. When necessary, a greater amount of homework will be given, which might include additional reading, a research project, a long-term assignment, and/or preparing for the local and state assessments.

### **Recommended Homework Time Schedule**

<b>Time Spent on Academics at Home</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Total Minutes of Homework &amp; Studying Daily Minutes</b>	<b>Total Minutes of Reading</b>
Kindergarten	10 minutes	10 minutes
1	15 minutes	15 minutes
2	20 minutes	20 minutes
3	30 minutes	25 minutes
4	40 minutes	25 minutes
5	50 minutes	30 minutes
Middle School Combined time for all subjects	60 minutes	45 minutes

#### **Written Homework**

It is our expectation that the parent/guardian will:

- Create a positive attitude in the home towards school and homework by making homework a priority, checking the student's planner for daily assignments and teacher comments, and reviewing all communications sent home by the school.
- Establish and monitor a regular daily routine for the completion of homework by providing the time, place and proper study environment.
- Be aware of and support the homework expectations of the child's teacher and sign homework planners when requested.
- Keep ongoing communication with the teacher, especially if academic difficulties arise.
- If necessary, provide guidance while the child completes his/her assignments.

The Student will be responsible for:

- Accurately recording homework assignments in their planner.
- Maintaining and organizing their homework and class work.
- Making a demonstrated effort to complete and submit all of their assignments on time.
- Managing his/her time so that all assigned tasks will be completed in a timely manner.
- Working each day towards the completion of long-term assignments so that they may be completed by the assigned deadlines.

To see your child's homework, please login to [www.onscourseconnect.com](http://www.onscourseconnect.com) and/or Google Classroom to check the class's homework calendar. All homework assignments must be written in their school planner, homework folder or homework packet. **Teachers may request that a parent/guardian sign homework planners. Your signature will indicate to the teacher that you are aware of your child's assignments.**

When a student is absent from school, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to determine the specific work assignments that must be made up. Parents may email their child's teacher(s) to request the homework assignments. **The assignments can be picked up from the administrative office at the end of the day.**

Teachers should not be expected to provide homework assignments in advance of a student's absence from school.

It is imperative that all students understand the importance of completing all required homework assignments. The classroom teacher will monitor all homework assignments. **If the assignment is not turned in, the student will receive a zero on the assignment. At the teacher's discretion, assignments turned in past the due date can receive partial credit. If the student has a total of 3 or more missing assignments, a phone call home will be made.**

### **Middle School Late Assignment Policy**

At EPCS, we believe turning in work on time helps students build responsibility and strong study habits. This policy sets clear expectations so students and families understand how late assignments are handled in middle school classes.

#### **Key Points:**

##### **Due Dates**

- All assignments are due on the date given by the teacher.

##### **Late Work Penalties**

- **1–2 Days Late:** 10% (or 1 point) deducted.
- **3–4 Days Late:** 20% (or 2 points) deducted.
- **5–10 Days Late:** Automatic 5-point deduction (if graded on a point scale). Minimum grade is 50%.
- **More than 10 Days Late:** Not accepted, unless there is a documented excuse (illness, family emergency, or IEP/504 accommodations).

## Grace Period

- Each student may use **one “No Penalty” late pass per quarter** (up to 3 days late). This must be requested by the student to the teacher before the due date.

## Excused Extensions

- Students with an illness, family emergency, or IEP/504 plan may receive an extension without penalty.

## Absences

- Students get one extra day for each day absent to complete assignments without penalty.

## Communication

- Students should speak with their teacher ahead of time if they expect trouble meeting a deadline.

## On-Time Incentives

- Teachers may reward students who consistently submit work on time.

## Textbook Accountability

It is the student's responsibility to account for all textbooks, workbooks, and all other school property issued for instruction by the classroom teacher. Students must understand that all school property made available for their use must be returned in good condition. **Lost or damaged textbooks will be paid for by the parent/guardian. All school issued textbooks must be covered at all times.**

## Electronic Equipment Accountability

For the privilege of using school district owned equipment, students are responsible for school equipment while it is in their possession and agree to return the equipment in the same condition in which it was received.

## Parents/Students must

- immediately inform the classroom teacher if the Chromebook malfunctions, is damaged, lost, or stolen.
- pay a nonrefundable \$50 usage fee.
- pay to replace the Chromebook if it is damaged due to negligence.
- replace the Chromebook charger if it is lost or damaged
- take precautions to safeguard this Chromebook. This includes:

- Using the equipment in a responsible manner and not letting anyone else use it unless given permission by the teacher.
- Respecting that it is an electronic device that should be kept from elements such as water, extreme heat or cold, or situations that could lead to damage from dropping, smashing, etc.
- Always keeping the computer fully charged whenever possible.
- Not accessing inappropriate websites such as chat rooms, unapproved games, etc. If they do, the following consequences will apply:
  - Students will be responsible for any charges or other expenses incurred by my misuse.
  - Students will not be allowed to use the school issued Chromebook for a period of time to be determined by Englewood on the Palisades Charter School administration.
- Not to delete any icons, folders, software, or other items that Englewood on the Palisades Charter School installed on the equipment unless instructed to do so by school staff.

Englewood on the Palisades Charter School is not responsible for any document saved on the Chromebook. Students are responsible for regularly backing up their work.

The Chromebook is the property of Englewood on the Palisades Charter School. This means that official members of the district may read or look at any item on this computer. Students must understand that there is nothing deemed private on school property.

Students must return the equipment on the day it is due.

The Englewood on the Palisades Charter School reserves the right to refuse use of equipment to anyone and to request equipment be returned at any time.

### **Locker Policy and Procedures**

***\*\*All Middle School students are required to go to their lockers between 7:50am - 8:00am. Students must be in their homerooms by 8:00am. It is important that students do not linger at their lockers, and report to their homerooms because of attendance, lunch count, and/or any special announcements made by their homeroom teachers.\*\****

### **Lockers**

- All lockers are the property of Englewood on the Palisades Charter School.
- Locker contracts will be distributed during Homeroom. [EPCS Locker Contract 25-26](#)
- Scholars must retrieve locker combinations from their respective homeroom teachers or principal when needed.
- Access to lockers is permitted before homeroom and at the end of the day. Students must adhere to the locker schedule, posted in the hallways, during the school day.
- Lateness to class because of lockers could mean loss of locker privileges.

- Lockers are to be kept clean. Abuse of lockers will forfeit privilege.
- No items can be placed on the outside of the lockers. All items placed on the inside of the locker must be magnetized. No tape, glue, or any other adhesive can be used.
- Lockers are made available for scholars to use to store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school.
- The school assumes NO responsibility for loss or damage of any item in a locker, locked or unlocked.
- School administrators and School Safety Officers can search lockers to assure safety for the school.
- A scholar using a locker which is the property of the school is presumed to have no expectations of privacy in that locker content.

### **Inspection of Lockers**

- Inspection of lockers will be conducted at the end of every year
- Inspections will be done if it is believed that there is a risk of:
  - i. An interference with school purposes or educational function
  - ii. Safety
  - iii. Physical injury or illness of any person
  - iv. Damage to personal or school property
  - v. Violation of school rules such as drugs, alcohol, weapons, etc.
  - vi. Retrieve school material/equipment

### **Seizure**

- School administrators and School Safety Officers may seize any illegal or unauthorized items in the locker, or any other items reasonably determined to be of a potential threat to the safety and security of others.

### **Locker Maintenance**

- It is the scholar's responsibility that the locker remains in good condition.
- Scholars are to use lockers exclusively to store school related materials.
- Scholars are solely responsible for the contents of the locker.
- Scholars shall not share lockers with any other scholars.
- **Scholars will pay a fee to replace locks. A fee will also be charged for damaged lockers.**

### **Clearance of Lockers**

- All lockers will be cleared out at the end of the year.
- Any items left in the lockers will become school property.
- Locks will be changed for every locker over the summer.

### **Backpack Use in Middle School**

Students are permitted to use backpacks or similar items to carry their school books, materials, or equipment while traveling to and from school. However, because of the importance of

maintaining a safe environment in the school, such items must be stored in lockers or designated areas during the school day. The school principal will have the authority to make exceptions based on medical or health conditions, or disability. Englewood on the Palisades Charter School shall not assume responsibility for the theft, loss, or damage to a student's backpack or similar item, or its contents.

The following conditions shall apply:

1. Bookbags, backpacks, etc. shall be stored in the student's assigned locker or designated area.
2. Musical instrument cases shall be stored in the music room or designated storage area.
3. Chromebook cases shall be permitted for use during the school day.
4. Drawstring bags no larger than 13"x16" shall be permitted for use during the school day.

If any student is determined to be in violation of this policy, the school administrator will take corrective action, including, but not limited to the following: *f*

- Requiring the student to place the item in his/her locker *f*
- Taking reasonable steps to notify the parent *f*
- Initiating progressive disciplinary action for repeated violations or insubordination as appropriate, which may include accountability session, or suspension from school.

The school administrator may make a reasonable search of a student, including the search of a student's backpack or other belongings, on the school premises if he or she has a reasonable belief that the student is in possession of an item, the possession of which is a criminal offense under the laws of this State or a rule or policy of the Board of Trustees. This search shall be made in the presence of a third party.

### **Toys**

Students **are not permitted** to bring any toys or card games to school except when requested by the teacher for a specific class activity. The school will not be held responsible for lost, broken, or theft of personal property.

### **Use of Cell Phones/Smart Watches**

Students are not permitted to have phones or smart watches out during the school day, *even as they are exiting the building, or attending after school activities*. Any devices must be powered off, in the backpack, in the student's locker. If the device is found, it should be taken from the student, and returned to the student at the end of the day with a phone call home to parents to inform them of what happened. If it happens a second time, the parent/guardian will be required to pick up the phone from school.



## Use of Restrooms

All students are responsible for the maintenance of the restrooms by making sure that they throw all paper products in the appropriate receptacle, and to respect the privacy of their peers.

## Student Use of Passes in the Hallways (Middle School)

Middle School students are required to have a pass to move through the hallways while classes are in session. Students in each class must use the bathroom one at a time. Students must ask for permission from the teacher to use a pass. Teachers must monitor the students as they take and return the passes. Repeated offenses of not possessing a pass may result in contacting the parent/guardian, and/or accountability session.

## Snacks

Students will be permitted to have a snack at a time designated by the classroom teacher. At the teacher's discretion, schoolwork may continue while the students are consuming their snacks. It is important to keep snacks simple, healthy and mess-free. **Specifically, not permitted are peanuts, any products containing nuts, candy, desserts and carbonated drinks of any kind.**

## Academics

### Academic Honor Roll

Students earn Academic Honor Roll recognition based on the report card grades for all academic areas, including Physical Education, Health, Music, Art, and Spanish. The criteria are as follows:

High Honors- All A's

Honor Roll- All A's and B's

### Elementary Grade Scale

A - 90-100%

B - 80-89%

C - 70-79%

D - 65-69%

F - 0-64%

X - Not Applicable

### Middle School Grade Scale

Grade	GPA	Percent
A+	4.33	97-100%

A	4.00	93-96%
A-	3.67	90-92%
B+	3.33	87-89%
B	3.00	83-86%
B-	2.67	80-82%
C+	2.33	77-79%
C	2.00	73-76%
C-	1.67	70-72%
D+	1.33	67-69%
D	1.00	63-66%
D-	0.67	60-62%
F	0.00	0-59%

#### Grade Exemptions

P- Pass

I- Incomplete

F- Fail

X- Not applicable at this time

#### Performance and Behavior Indicators

4- Exceeds expectations

3- Meets expectations

2- Approaching expectations

1- Partially meets expectations

0- Does not meet expectations

X-Not applicable at this time

#### Curriculum

EPCS provides a rigorous, standards-based curriculum in all content areas and offers ongoing professional development for teachers and administrators on vital instructional methods that will assist them in addressing the needs of their diverse learners.

## Local and State Assessments

Students participate in formative and summative assessments throughout the school year.

- **i-Ready** is a Common Core Standards aligned computer based diagnostic assessment used to measure growth and proficiency in Literacy and Mathematics. This assessment is administered to all grade levels, at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Once students complete the Diagnostic, *i-Ready* builds an individualized learning plan with a starting point for each student based on their individual results.
- **New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA)** is a state mandated, computer based assessment in English Language Arts and Mathematics given to all students in grades 3 through 8, and Science to all students in 5th and 8th grade. The NJSLA is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. This test is administered in the spring. For more information please visit <https://nj.mypearsonsupport.com/practice-tests/>.

## Special Services

At Englewood on the Palisades Charter School, we believe that all children can succeed. We make every effort to meet the individual needs of all students and accommodate their learning styles. EPCS uses the Response To Intervention (RTI) model to provide support and services for all students from the lowest performing to the highest. Basic Skills Instruction, English Language acquisition support, and Special Education Services are available for students who qualify. Recommendations will be based on, but not limited to, report cards, teacher observations, i-Ready assessments, and state assessments.

- **Basic Skills Instruction**  
Basic Skills Instruction (BSI) is supplemental instruction in either Language Arts Literacy or Mathematics for students who are struggling to meet grade level expectations. Students receive additional instruction in a small group setting to learn skills and strategies within the general education program to help them achieve success.
- **Language Instruction Education Program**  
The Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) is supplemental instruction for students who are developing English Language fluency or struggle to learn effectively in English. Students in this program often live in homes where English is not the primary language spoken, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both English language acquisition and in their academic courses.
- **Special Education Services**  
Special Education refers to a range of educational and social services provided by the public school system and other educational institutions to individuals with disabilities. Special Education is designed to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with an environment that allows them to be educated effectively. The Intervention and

Referral Service Committee and the Child Study Team will determine eligibility for these services.

## Staff Directory

### Instructional Leadership

Principal	Dana Clark	<a href="mailto:dana.clark@englewoodcharter.org">dana.clark@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Assistant Principal/Supervisor of Specialized Services	Michael Owens	<a href="mailto:michael.owens@englewoodcharter.org">michael.owens@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction	Megan Hartmann	<a href="mailto:megan.hartmann@englewoodcharter.org">megan.hartmann@englewoodcharter.org</a>

### Administrative Leadership

Business Administrator	David Block	<a href="mailto:david.block@englewoodcharter.org">david.block@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Business Manager	Kelly Williams	<a href="mailto:kelly.williams@englewoodcharter.org">kelly.williams@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Assistant to Principal & B.A.	Frank LeRose	<a href="mailto:frank.lerose@englewoodcharter.org">frank.lerose@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Administrative Assistant	Andrea Robinson	<a href="mailto:andrea.robinson@englewoodcharter.org">andrea.robinson@englewoodcharter.org</a>

### Elementary Faculty

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Kindergarten Teacher	Shannon O'Connor	<a href="mailto:shannon.o'connor@englewoodcharter.org">shannon.o'connor@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Kindergarten Teaching Assistant	Romaine Hassanah	<a href="mailto:romaine.hassanah@englewoodcharter.org">romaine.hassanah@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Kindergarten Teaching Assistant		
First Grade Teacher	Alin Gelin	<a href="mailto:alin.gelin@englewoodcharter.org">alin.gelin@englewoodcharter.org</a>
First Grade Teacher	Jaclyn Keegan	<a href="mailto:jaclyn.keegan@englewoodcharter.org">jaclyn.keegan@englewoodcharter.org</a>
First Grade Teaching Assistant	Fanny Chapa-Lozada	<a href="mailto:fanny.lozada@englewoodcharter.org">fanny.lozada@englewoodcharter.org</a>

Second Grade Teacher	Kristen Croce	<a href="mailto:kristen.croce@englewoodcharter.org">kristen.croce@englewoodcharter.org</a>
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Fifth Grade Teacher	Kelsi Bailey	<a href="mailto:kelsi.bailey@englewoodcharter.org">kelsi.bailey@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Fifth Grade Teacher	Stella Kim	<a href="mailto:stella.kim@englewoodcharter.org">stella.kim@englewoodcharter.org</a>

#### Middle School Faculty

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6th Grade Teacher	Rose Nappi	<a href="mailto:rose.nappi@englewoodcharter.org">rose.nappi@englewoodcharter.org</a>
7-8th Social Studies Teacher	Ryan Bernardo	<a href="mailto:ryan.bernardo@englewoodcharter.org">ryan.bernardo@englewoodcharter.org</a>
7-8th Language Arts Teacher	Chouchan Karalian	<a href="mailto:chouchan.karalian@englewoodcharter.org">chouchan.karalian@englewoodcharter.org</a>
7-8th Science Teacher	Enid Lowery	<a href="mailto:enid.lowery@englewoodcharter.org">enid.lowery@englewoodcharter.org</a>
7-8th Math Teacher	Edwin Rivera	<a href="mailto:edwin.rivera@englewoodcharter.org">edwin.rivera@englewoodcharter.org</a>

#### Specialized Area Faculty

ELA Interventionist	Liliana Oliveira	<a href="mailto:liliana.oliveira@englewoodcharter.org">liliana.oliveira@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Math Interventionist	Sara Welish	<a href="mailto:sara.welish@englewoodcharter.org">sara.welish@englewoodcharter.org</a>
ESL Teacher	Tony Arteficio	<a href="mailto:tony.arteficio@englewoodcharter.org">tony.arteficio@englewoodcharter.org</a>
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Special Education Teacher	Drita Colaku	<a href="mailto:drita.colaku@englewoodcharter.org">drita.colaku@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Special Education Teacher	Elizabeth Lucyk	<a href="mailto:elizabeth.lucyk@englewoodcharter.org">elizabeth.lucyk@englewoodcharter.org</a>

Special Education Teacher	Jennifer Loscalzo	<a href="mailto:jennifer.loscalzo@englewoodcharter.org">jennifer.loscalzo@englewoodcharter.org</a>
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World Language Teacher	Rosa Tito-Muller	<a href="mailto:rosa.tito-muller@englewoodcharter.org">rosa.tito-muller@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Art Teacher	Marisol Prieto	<a href="mailto:marisol.prieto@englewoodcharter.org">marisol.prieto@englewoodcharter.org</a>
Long Term Substitute Teacher	Dayamaris Cuello	<a href="mailto:dayamaris.cuello@englewoodcharter.org">dayamaris.cuello@englewoodcharter.org</a>

#### Health & Wellness Staff

School Counselor	Samantha Gerson	<a href="mailto:samantha.gerson@englewoodcharter.org">samantha.gerson@englewoodcharter.org</a>
School Social Worker	Lenika Olivry	<a href="mailto:lenika.olivry@englewoodcharter.org">lenika.olivry@englewoodcharter.org</a>
School Nurse	Ashley Velasquez	<a href="mailto:ashley.velasquez@englewoodcharter.org">ashley.velasquez@englewoodcharter.org</a>

#### School Operations

Custodian	Ernst Marseille	<a href="mailto:ernst.marseille@englewoodcharter.org">ernst.marseille@englewoodcharter.org</a>
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