

2022-2023

Student and Parent Handbook

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Developed August 2014

Edited July 2020

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Welcome to the Helping Hands Inc. 2022-2023 School Year!

Dear Helping Hands Inc. Families,

Welcome to a brand new year! We hope your summer was filled with fun activities and family adventures. It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Helping Hands, Inc. We are humbled and grateful that you have chosen to entrust us with your children.

Helping Hands Inc. is a private day school that provides education to children with a variety of diagnoses to include but not limited to ADHD, AUTISM, SPD, ED, ODD, Learning disabilities and OHI.Child-driven experiences, movement-based learning, access to manipulatives and individualized activities are approaches we provide to our students. Helping Hands Inc. provides individualized instruction with a 2:5 student teacher ratio in a low stimuli class. Students are instructed using an immersion model. While teaching the general curriculum or VAAP curriculum, teachers and occupational therapists infuse sensory integration therapy, communication, social skills support, regulation support and creative, hands on teaching techniques. Helping Hands Inc. provides an educational environment that focuses on teaching in a way that students can better process and retain concepts.

Our students need our community of support to help each child reach their potential of great thinkers, leaders, and global citizens. We are committed to working together with the families, the public school system, and Helping Hands Inc. faculty and staff to ensure each student’s success. We will be working very closely with you this year and look forward to your participation in the school.

In this handbook you will find a sampling of Helping Hands Inc.’s policies and procedures as well as other useful information.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

We are going to have a beautiful year

   Director of Education Services Director of Related Services

## Helping Hands Inc.

## VISION STATEMENT

Helping Hands, Inc. OT Immersion Program uses OT therapy-based strategies as a vehicle for academic instruction. Each classroom will include Co-Learning Facilitators! A Special Education Teacher AND an Occupational Therapist will provide best practice academic instruction and OT based strategies to increase comprehension, retention, stamina, and access to education. Our teachers and therapists will join their powerful skill sets TOGETHER to meet the expectations we have for our students and ourselves.

Helping Hands Inc. students will learn to their fullest capacity. They will be respected for their individuality and will develop a quest for life-long learning. Students will become thinkers, as well as doers, and be able to transfer their learning and problem-solving skills to real life situations using given technology.

 Students’ self-respect is viewed as essential to their personal development and as a necessary precursor to respecting others. Helping Hands Inc. students will demonstrate responsible decision-making and understand the cultures of the world, enabling them to become good citizens both in school and within the community.

The staff, as a collegial supportive unit, will work in conjunction with the family and the public-school system to support student growth and success. Their cooperative efforts will have a positive impact on this educational vision.

## HELPING HANDS INC.

## Core Values

We are a COLLABORATION of COMPASSIONATE professionals who provide INNOVATIVE and HOLISTIC services to a DIVERSE population in our community.

 Helping Hands Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status or age in its employment, programs and activities.

**HELPING HANDS INC. FACULTY AND STAFF**

Danielle Stevens, Director of Education

See website for full staff list

**HISTORY**

Our founder, Lisa Worcester has owned Helping Hands Pediatric Therapy Clinic, for over 15 years. Lisa was invited to attend public school special education meetings to share her OT evaluation results and suggested accommodations for successful classroom learning. Time and time again, Lisa learned about her clients having a difficult time accessing the general curriculum in the public-school due to sensory processing needs, while that same student would be successful during private therapy sessions. For this reason, Lisa decided to investigate the possibility of opening a school that would incorporate sensory integration therapy, communication, and social skills support into the general academic curriculum. Two and one-half years later that vision came to fruition.

**Location**

Helping Hands Inc. is located at

2680 Richmond Highway, Stafford, VA 22554

 The academy not only has the classroom space, but also provides students with a gymnasium, occupational and speech therapy rooms, a sensory room, STEAM lab, OT room, library space and pull out classrooms. Assistive Technology and adaptive devices are available.

**OUR PROGRAMS**

Helping Hands Inc. is a private day school located in Northern Virginia. We serve elementary and middle school students with a nurturing but stimulating learning environment for learners with disabilities. With creative planning, and with assistance from trained support staff, it is the founder's belief that Helping Hands Inc.'s students can obtain optimal levels of independence to enhance their quality of life. Helping Hands Inc. looks forward to meeting the needs of students who will excel in a multisensory, structured, small class environment with all the academic challenge!

Our staff believes that all students can learn, that confidence can be built and that opportunities can be created. We also believe that teaching should be child-centered where learning is joyful and purposeful.

Helping Hands Private Day School offers an OT immersion program to meet the growing needs of children with special needs who are twice exceptional, SOL tracked, or qualified for the Virginia Alternative Assessment Program (VAAP) in grades K-8. Without daily learning and practice of body in space awareness, sensory regulation, and reflex integration, students can struggle to meet school expectations and underperform academically, socially, and behaviorally in a large school setting.

Students at Helping Hands are given a low-stimulus environment, immersed with Occupational Therapy resources and support, visuals, communication supports, and social skills support to acquire the skills needed to grow and thrive.

To move is to learn. Movement allows the complex thinker to process knowledge and retain information. Multiple movement breaks throughout the day allows for new knowledge to be processed and increased ability to retain and comprehend higher level academic challenges. Additionally, movement also decreases frustration tolerance, dysfunctional movement-seeking behaviors, and increases overall attention to task. Social skills awareness is everywhere. It occurs within every academic day, in peer interactions, and in supported community learning environments.

Helping Hands Private Day School will allow students to meet their full academic, social, and functional abilities. Academics are taught in an experiential manner to allow students to soar!

**ADMISSIONS**

If the Admissions Team believes your student will benefit from our program and an appropriate opening is available, s/he will be invited for a tour. An acceptance letter is offered to students for whom Helping Hands Inc. is deemed an appropriate placement.

**Application Process for students placed by the FAPT team/CSA**

Students who are publicly placed will also complete an Admissions Application so we can get to know your child.

Helping Hands Inc. will request the students records from their LEA.

A student interview/evaluation and tour will be scheduled.

Students will receive a letter of acceptance if the program is the correct fit for the learner.

**Health Documentation**

A current physical examination (<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/school_entrance_form/school_entrance_form.pdf>) and current record of immunization, or notarized vaccine exemption form (<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/epidemiology/immunization/documents/SchoolRegulations/cre_1.pdf>), is required for each student. Helping Hands Inc. follows Stafford County School regulations.

Unless a notarized vaccine exemption is submitted, (form can be found on the VA Department of Education website), your child must be immunized against Diphtheria, Pertussis (whooping cough), Tetanus (DPT or DTap), Poliomyelitis (OPV), Measles (Rubella), Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Hepatitis B, and Chicken Pox (Varicella).

All students are required to have a comprehensive physical form and up to date immunization form.

Immunization records must show the month, day, and year of vaccines received. Students who do not have the necessary immunizations, or a vaccine exemption, and/or a physical examination will not be allowed to attend school. However, students may be conditionally enrolled if their health records indicate that they have had a current dose of the vaccines and parents present a written schedule from a physician for completing the immunizations within ninety days of enrollment.

**Health Services**

Our faculty and staff receive yearly training on medication management procedures and epinephrine administration.

In case of emergency, HHI has the Epi Pen and Epi Pen Jr. for use with any person believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction

**Records**

All data in your child’s educational record is available for parents’ and guardians’ inspection and review. Parents/Guardians have the right to:

• Inspect and review the student’s scholastic records within a reasonable

period, but not to exceed 45 days from the day the school receives a request for access;

• An explanation and interpretation of records;

• Copies of records and names of people who have seen the records;

• Give or withhold consent to other people seeing their child’s records except to the extent that The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1993) (FERPA) authorizes disclosure without consent;

• Request destruction of records which are no longer needed;

• Request that information be amended that is inaccurate, misleading or violates privacy or rights;

• File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA (1993) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (1996);

• Review only records pertaining to their child.

No one else, other than authorized school personnel, may review the student’s records without a Release of Information form signed by the parent or guardian, unless as authorized by FERPA. Please see the FERPA Guidelines as provided as part of your yearly back-to-school packet.

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**School Hours:**

**8:30AM-2:30 PM**

The goal of the Basic Educational Program is to help students achieve their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, increase their independence and self-advocacy, utilize their community, express themselves in a variety of ways, promote their health and well-being, and encourage their peer relationships.

The Basic Program includes all academic subjects following the individual child’s curriculum from their Local Education Agency.

ASOL Curriculum

SOL Curriculum

Daily Living Skills

Behavior Support Services

Physical Education/Health class

Computer/Keyboard Skills

Social Skills training and support

(Family Life Education will not be taught at Helping Hands, Inc.)

**IEP RELATED SERVICES**

**SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPY**

Additional one on one Speech/language therapy is available to the students as required by their IEPs. The goal is to provide each student with a functional system of communication using speech, sign, picture symbols, assistive devices, or a combination of these so that the student can express his or her feelings, wants, and needs. A supportive, team approach enables the generalization of communication goals to occur in the classroom as instructed by the Speech Therapist.

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY / HEALTH AND PHYSICAL FITNESS**

One on one occupational is available to students whose IEPs indicate a need for these services. The therapist will work with the classroom teachers on a regular basis. The goal of occupational therapy is to improve fine motor and hand eye coordination so that the student is better able to perform the tasks of daily living, hands on class- room projects, and eventually vocational skills. Occupational Therapy helps to improve gross motor skills, balance, and core development. Occupational therapy also supports the child’s ability to regulate and modulate their sensory experiences to promote focus and engagement and support academic independence on a daily basis for all students.

Our Occupational Therapists also lead a supportive, physical fitness/health program daily for 30 minutes.

 Within the daily schedule will be the following Occupational Therapist lead experiences;

1. Daily Sensory Integration session – this will incorporate a sensory integration session using suspended equipment to provide vestibular input as well as proprioceptive and heavy work to promote organization and regulation. The activities will occur within a large multi-step sequence that promotes motor planning, body in space awareness, regulation and movement principals and concepts.
2. Multiple regulation breaks done by classroom staff, supported and developed by the Occupational Therapy staff. These breaks consist of a variety of tools such as Yoga, brain gym and STIK Kids programming to proactively aid the students in decreasing anxiety, increasing core strengthening, and stimulate bilateral coordination. These techniques are all proven ways to promote a child’s concentration, focus, memory, academics, physical coordination, organization skills and self –responsibility.
3. Social skills support– Daily learning strategies and learning opportunities are provided in the areas of social skill development using a variety of tools to include the Social Thinking Curriculum, SUPERFLEX characters and social detective. These resources improve each child’s social thinking abilities and assist them in learning the nuances of social communication and interactions.

**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

Helping Hands Inc. believes that each student has the right to avail themselves of anything that may remove a barrier to learning. To this end, the staff will help with the selection of and training on any appropriate assistive learning device. This may include adaptive equipment, an augmentative communication device, or a computer program or adaptation.

**Media**

Helping Hands has a media policy to ensure students use technology to enhance classroom learning. The policy and permission form is included in your First Day of School packet.

**How is the Helping Hands Inc. program structured?**

Students are in a multi-age classroom with one certified teacher and one Occupational Therapist or Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. Paraeducators will be placed within the classroom based on IEP accommodations and classroom need.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**IEP Development**

A student’s IEP is developed by the County Public School System. Helping Hands Inc. Faculty will also attend these meetings with you as a team member.

The administration of Helping Hands Inc. keeps in close contact with the school jurisdictions responsible for each student. It is our goal to work as a team in providing the best possible services for our students. Helping Hands Inc. staff members inform the LEA of progress or any other matters of concern involving students including interims, report cards, and attendance.

**Testing and Evaluation**

Students will receive the county curriculum from their LEA and students will take all state standardized testing at their local school with assistance from Helping Hands Inc..

Decisions regarding student assessment are part of the IEP process. Students will take the Standards of Learning Assessments with the accommodations listed on the IEP.

 http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/

Helping Hands Inc. will assess reading, writing, and math skills throughout the year and lessons will be tailored to the individual student. Pre and post tests will be given for each unit. Reading Levels will be monitored continuously. We use educational testing materials to including the Brigance Basics Skills Inventory. Additional testing done by the occupational therapy staff yearly may include the Sensory profile, Print tool, Beery VMI etc.

These testing opportunities are another way to identify areas of needed support as well as tools to gage growth and goal attainment.

**Report Cards, Grading Scale, and IEP Progress Reports**

Progress is noted on interims/report cards and progress notes every 4.5 weeks. These reports are sent home to parents and guardians. The LEA and FAPT will also receive copies of interims/report cards and progress notes.

Daily communication books are utilized for ongoing dialogue between parent/guardian and school staff . Parents/guardians are encouraged to make appointments at any time of the year to review their child’s progress. Mid-year parent-teacher conferences will be held.

**HELPING HANDS INC. GRADING SCALE**

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| **Grading Scale K-5** |
| 4 | = | Exceeds standards |
| 3 | = | Meets standards |
| 2 | = | Works toward standards |
| 1 | = | Performs below standards |

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| **Middle School Grading Scale** |
|   | **Range** | **Quality Pts.** |
| A+ | 98-100 | 4.5 |
| A | 93-97 | 4.25 |
| A- | 90-92 | 4.0 |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.5 |
| B | 83-86 | 3.25 |
| B- | 80-82 | 3.0 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.5 |
| C | 73-76 | 2.25 |
| C- | 70-72 | 2.0 |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.5 |
| D | 63-66 | 1.25 |
| D- | 60-62 | 1.0 |
| F | 0-59 | 0 |

**Home and School Communication**

Each student will be given a home/school communication tool on the first day of school which will go from school to home and back each day. This provides a means of communication between parents/guardians and school staff. Parents/guardians are asked to read the communication daily and either initial the latest entry or enter a comment if needed. Communication is an essential piece of the home-school partnership. In addition, parents receive monthly newsletters informing them of school activities. New staff members will be introduced via the monthly newsletters.

**Transportation**

Children placed at Helping Hands Inc. by the public school are transported to and from school by their local public-school jurisdiction. Problems with transportation should be referred to the students public school case manager or the county transportation department.

**Field Trips**

Students will practice skills in the classroom and then translate those practices on field trips into the community. All field trips will tie in with the SOLs/ ASOLs being learned in class. CPR and First aid certified staff will accompany students on each field trip. Field trips will enhance, not interrupt the instructional program.

**Visitors**

The school welcomes parent/guardian visits. However, to ensure the safety and well-being of our students we must know who is in the building at all times. All daily visitors must report to the office and sign-in with a valid DMV license or military ID before going any other place in the building. If your child forgets something at home, please bring it to the office and we shall be responsible for getting the item to the student. If you are picking up your child during the school day for an appointment, you must sign your child out when you arrive to pick them up from school and inform the office and your child’s teacher. If you bring your child to school, you must come in via the front office and sign in your child there.

**Attendance**

It is required that parents/guardians call the school if their child is absent. You must report your child’s absence by dialing the school number 540-657-1423 x 401. The teachers take attendance each day. The reason for each absence or tardiness is documented. Excessive absence and tardiness are causes for concern. Lawful reasons for absences and tardiness include: illness of a student (a doctor’s note may be required); death in the student’s immediate family; medical appointments; required court appearances; observance of religious holidays; lawful exclusion or expulsion from school by school authorities; temporary closing of school; and other absences approved in advance by the Director of Education upon the written request of a parent or guardian. Vacation time is considered an unexcused absence, and as required by the jurisdiction will be reported as such. If no information is received from the parent/guardian regarding the student’s absence, it is marked as unexcused.

Attendance data will be shared with your child’s LEA.

**Truancy**

Helping Hands Inc. must follow the attendance policies of the placing LEA/school district. The school is required by law to report truancy for children ages 5 - 16/18 (depending on jurisdiction). Generally, if a student accumulates an "excessive" amount of unexcused absences as determined by the jurisdiction, Helping Hands Inc. must hold an attendance conference, and contact the student’s placing LEA. In this situation, every effort will be made to contact the parents and/or guardians of a Helping Hands Inc. student in order to work out a plan for regular attendance.

For your child’s school district’s policies please access the appropriate link below or contact your school district’s attendance counselor (social worker). They will be happy to discuss this and send parents/guardians a copy of the applicable policy.

Virginia:

- <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/studentguide.pdf>

- <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/superintendent/attendance.php>

- [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)

**Inclement Weather**

Helping Hands Inc. will follow the Stafford County Public Schools’ snow closings. On snowy days, please listen to the radio or TV. If the Stafford schools are closed, Helping Hands Inc. is closed; if they open late, Helping Hands Inc. opens late. If school must be closed early, teachers will notify the parents or guardians.

**Medications**

All medication, both prescription and over-the-counter (Tylenol, cough drops, etc.), must be in the original container accompanied by an Authorization of Administration of Medication form. The form must be signed by the physician and the parent/guardian, and is required for all medicines administered at school. Medicines must not be transported to school by the student, nor by the bus driver. Medications may only be brought by the parent/guardian. The school needs to know what additional medications are administered in the home, in the event an emergency occurs during school hours.

All medications will be handled by MAT trained staff.

**Illness**

**Students should stay home if they have a fever of 100 or higher, vomiting or diarrhea. They must also be free from all of these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.**

The office should be immediately informed regarding a child who has a contagious illness or infection, such as strep. Parents and/or guardians will be called if a child exhibits any of the above symptoms or if the administrator believes the child is sick and should not be at school. Parents/guardians must make arrangements to pick students up as soon as possible, if and when they become ill.

**COVID-19**

**Helping Hands Private Day School 2020-2021 Plan:**

• COVID- 19 Team

o Helping Hands Private Day School’s COVID- 19 team includes: Lisa Worcester, Megan Wasson and Sydney McDonald

• Screening

o Daily staff and student screening prior to entering the building o Temperature check

o Hand Sanitizing Station

• Communication Plans

o Communication if COVID- 19 positive test result- All staff and all families will

be contacted, via phone, from either Lisa Worcester and/ or Megan Wasson.

o Communication of new policy or policy change- All policies will be sent home

with students and uploaded on our school website. Extra copies will be available

on site.

• PPE

o All staff will be required to wear a mask throughout the day

o Gloves, face shields and disposable masks will be available for all staff

Promoting Behaviors that Reduce the Spread of COVID –19 and Maintaining Healthy Environments

• Cleaning and Sanitizing

o Hand cleaning stations will be set up in high traffic areas around the building. o Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.

This may include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily (e.g.,

doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops).

o Cleaning kits available with EPA-registered disposable wipes for student and staff space in designated safe area

o Daily cleaning and sanitizing all areas of the school

o Hourly cleaning and sanitizing of all high traffic areas and all hard surfaces

• Daily handwashing strategies:

o To include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol- based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is available in all school locations.

• Classroom and Building Set up

o Each classroom/ school space will have 10 or less occupants at a time o All desks will be 6 feet apart

o Tables will be marked at 6 feet apart

o Gym swing space will be marked at 6 feet apart

o Open and Closed signs will be used in each space to keep occupants at under 10 o All students must pack a lunch daily

o All students must pack a water bottle daily

**Maintaining Healthy Operations:**

• Transportation and Field Trips

• There will be no field trips or transportation during Phase III

• Equipment and Supplies

o Dedicated educational/related services supplies for each student

o Dedicated staff supplies

• Staff Training

o During Staff Work Week, August 17- 21, training will be held for all staff on COVID- 19 safety practices and implementation of our health plan

o Review emergency operations plan in policy manual. Protecting Vulnerable Individuals:

• Review the usual absenteeism patterns at the school among both students and staff.

• Alert local health officials about large increases in student and staff absenteeism,

particularly if absences appear due to respiratory illnesses (like the common cold or the

“flu,” which have symptoms similar to COVID-19).

• Review attendance and sick leave policies. Encouraging students and staff to stay home

when sick, even without documentation from doctors.

• We will identify critical job functions and positions, and a plan is in place for alternative

coverage by cross-training staff.

• If a student or staff member arrives sick to school:

o Separate them from well students and staff until they can leave.

o Contact parent and notify transportation if necessary

• For children that are considered “at risk” due to health concerns – HHI will accommodate needs using distance learning and e-learning as requested by the IEP team to support continuation of education.

**Preparing for When Someone gets sick:**

• When a confirmed case has entered the school, regardless of community transmission o Coordinate with local health officials. Once learning of a COVID-19 case in

someone who has been in the school, immediately notify local health officials.

• Dismiss students and staff from physical location for 2-5 days, education will resume on

a distance learning platform to ensure continuity of education in the event of the school closure.

• Provide communication to discourage staff, students, and their families from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group child care arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend’s house, a favorite restaurant, or the local shopping mall.

• After 24 hours, clean and disinfect affected area thoroughly.

**Meals**

Students are to bring their own meals to school. A microwave is available for heating lunches. A refrigerator is available to keep lunches cool.

**BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

It is the philosophy of Helping Hands Inc. School to foster productive student behavior. Toward this goal, staff is expected to provide: clear rules for student conduct, collegiality among staff members, a pervasive caring environment for students, effective instruction, and a focus on providing positive reinforcement and options for students.

Effective methods for responding to disruptive student behavior include:

• Using positive redirection and reinforcement whenever appropriate;

Teach wanted behaviors and set the students up for success.

• Developing positive personal relationships with students that indicate high teacher expectations and respect for students;

• Closely monitoring performance and behavior;

• Using brief, non-disruptive interventions;

• Handling conflicts calmly and avoiding engaging in power struggles;

• Clarifying students’ choices so that options are clear and students are responsible for the consequences of their choices;

• Using effective listening skills to help students identify problems and gain insight.

When students exhibit serious behavioral difficulties, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) may need to be developed. The development process should include the multidisciplinary team involved with the student and the following six steps:

• Determine the function (s) of the behavior through an FBA;

• Focus on one or two specific student behaviors that need to change in order for the student to have a successful school experience;

• Determine specific interventions to bring about these changes;

• Assign responsibility to staff for implementing each intervention;

• Determine the data to be collected to test the effectiveness of the intervention; and,

• Review the program at a minimum annually, or as determined by the IEP team.

Copies of the FBA and BIP are discussed with and given to parents/guardians and affected staff. A copy is placed in the student’s record.

Helping Hands Inc. staff members are trained in The Mandt System. The program’s proven strategies give human service providers and educators the skills to safely and effectively respond to anxious, hostile, or violent behavior while balancing the responsibilities of care.

The Helping Hands Inc. School Behavior Management Plan strictly prohibits:

• Deprivation of drinking water or food necessary to meet daily nutritional needs;

• Denial of the use of toilet facilities;

• Any action humiliating, degrading or abusive;

• Deprivation of health care including counseling;

• Intrusive aversive therapy;

• Use of mechanical and/or chemical restraints, or seclusion.

Corporal punishment will never be administered by any staff person. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the school will contact Child Protective Services (CPS) or Adult Protective Services (APS). Before CPS/APS comes, a parent/guardian may be notified, unless the parent/guardian is the suspect. CPS/APS may interview the child without consent from the parent or guardian.

**What is Helping Hands Inc. School’s policy on student suspension?**

While Helping Hands Inc. School is dedicated to serving students with challenging behaviors by providing intensive behavior supports, there may be incidents where suspension is deemed necessary. This includes, but is not limited to: drug and/or weapon possession, incidents that may result in serious bodily injury, and other incidents of such nature in which it is felt the safety of the student and others is at risk. Dependent on the seriousness of the offense and/or danger to others, outside authorities may also be contacted. Further disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, may be considered. Parents will be notified via certified mail and phone of this decision within 24 hours of the suspension. If suspension equals ten consecutive or cumulative days over the school year, then a Manifest Determination IEP meeting must be held. A Manifest Determination Meeting, per the LEA, will be scheduled within ten days to determine if the behavior was a manifestation of the child’s disability. Depending upon the outcome of this meeting, the recommendations of the IEP team will be implemented.

**My child has difficult behaviors. Can he/she be discharged from the program?**

 Although Helping Hands Inc. is committed to serving difficult-to-place children, there are times when we feel we cannot provide the intensity of service that a child requires. An IEP to discuss placement would be held in these circumstances and our recommendations of such would be made. The LEA or other jurisdictions would then provide alternate placement options. In terms of day-to-day behavior difficulties, we are dedicated to providing students the needed supports and will not call to have them picked up or sent home unless we feel it is a medical or safety necessity.

**Weapons/Drug Policy**

Any student who brings a weapon or an object that could be used as a weapon to school, brings drugs to school, or is involved in a situation that causes serious bodily injury can be suspended or expelled immediately. Depending upon the seriousness of the offense or the danger to others, outside authorities may be called. Further disciplinary action as noted under the student suspension policy section will be followed.

**Emergency Plan**

Helping Hands Inc. staff has an emergency action plan to be implemented in the event of a chemical or biological attack. If a terrorist action should materialize, we will immediately go into a lockdown mode. This means that parents and guardians should not come to the school, but should wait by the phone. Helping Hands Inc. has cell phones and will use them in the event of service interruption. If you have a cell phone number that we do not have, please call the office and give it to us. The building occupied by Helping Hands Inc. has windows that are sealed. In case of a biological or chemical event, we would shut down our air handlers and close off the ventilation systems to the best of our ability. We will not open the doors to anyone except official security or police personnel since to do so would compromise the air in the building. The school has a delineated plan for fire and other emergency-related events (e.g. earthquake, tornado, violent intruder). All staff are trained in emergency procedures.

In the event of an emergency or crisis-related event, Helping Hands Inc. will send a text message to parents notifying them of the emergency. In order to receive this message, a cell phone number and cell phone provider (i.e. AT & T, Verizon, etc) must be provided by the parent/guardian to the school. If you also wish to receive the message via email, you must provide an email address. This text message system will only be used in the event of an unusual circumstance. We will all do whatever we can to insure the safety of everyone involved.

**Photographs / Video**

Helping Hands Inc. School does not take or release photographs of its students without permission from the parent/guardian. However, sometimes pictures are needed for school publicity or for academic purposes. A photographic release form is provided for this purpose.

**Cell Phones and Electronic Devices Policy**

The use of cell phones and electronic devices (MP3 players, PDAs, iPods, etc) are not allowed during normal school hours. If you need to contact your child, please call the main office and they will be notified. At all times during the school day, student phones and electronic devices should be turned off and put away. If a student continuously disregards school policy on personal cell phone and electronic device use, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, teacher and school administrator as necessary. The school is not responsible for any electronic devices students bring to school as they are highly discouraged.

**Teacher Qualification**

In accordance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), a parent/guardian may inquire about the qualifications of their child’s teacher at any time. All inquiries may be directed to the Director of Education.

School employees are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or Adult Protective Services.

**Dress Code**

Clothing should be safe, comfortable and not restrictive to learning activities. Sneakers are much safer than sandals. Construction/hiking type boots are not allowed as they not only impede mobility but also because serious injury/property damage can occur if a student kicks someone or something. Clothing should be free of loose strings around the neck or other items that could cause injury during active play; this includes, but is not limited to, heavy chains worn as either necklaces, belts, or hanging from belt loops. Undergarments should be worn at all times and students should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Short shorts, dresses/skirts, halter tops and low-cut blouses are not acceptable for school. In the event your child needs a change of clothing, it is requested that you send an extra pair of clothing to school (labeled with your student’s name), including underwear.

**Transition**

HHI will participate in the Transition Service IEP and take an active role in the goals created to help the student transition from our school to another.

Transition planning includes a coordinated set of activities designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from HHI to the next school placement.

Students receive an array of services to help them attain their identified outcome(s). These services may include, but are not limited to; social skill and self-advocacy instruction, technology education, and community outings.

A student's transition plan becomes a part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process beginning at age 14 or younger, if appropriate. Transition planning is a process that may include any of the following:

•Identifying the student's goals for the next school.

•Assessing the student's interests and abilities in relation to identified goals

•Determining courses, experiences, and programs that will prepare the student to reach his/her goals

•Supporting the student in transition-related activities

•Determining the student's anticipated adult service needs

•Linking the student and parent with potential adult services

**If I am dissatisfied with some part of my child’s program what recourse do I have?**

A parent or guardian can ask for a meeting of the Multidisciplinary Team to discuss their child’s program at any time during the school year. If the parent or guardian does not agree with the recommendations of the team, the parent can initiate their due process rights and/or notify the LEA, as needed.

In the event that you are not satisfied with the internal resolution of prefers, they may file a complaint with the Office of Private Day Schools for Students with Disabilities, Virginia Department of Education, P.O. Box 2120, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

 **Discrimination Disclosure**

Helping Hands Inc. admits students and clients of any race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender or age to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made available to students and clients of Helping Hands Inc. It does 3not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age or veteran’s status in educational pro- grams or in other school-administered activities. Helping Hands Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran’s status, or any other factor protected by local, state, or federal law with regard to employment.

**Virtual Classroom Policy**

**Parent Expectations For Virtual Learning:**

In order for a student to be a successful virtual learner, a true partnership must be established between the parent, student, and the virtual teaching team.

**Responsibilities of the parent are outlined below.**

· Parents are expected to maintain the daily school schedule as provided by your classroom teacher/OT team.

· Parents and students are expected to be on time for virtual learning

· Parents are expected to set up a dedicated learning space in the home – free from distractions and interruptions (pets, siblings, television and other electronics)

· In order for your child to be successful with virtual learning, it is important that you be present during their scheduled time or as outlined by the teacher/ OT staff

· Your teaching team has made arrangements and will contact you prior to delivery and pickup of weekly materials, please ensure that you are available for delivery or designate a place that materials can be left (porch, mailbox, etc). You may also make arrangements to pick up academic materials at the school on Friday afternoons.

· Maintain open lines of communication (phone, email) with your team.

· Parents are expected to follow federal and state laws regarding student privacy and FERPA. This includes not recording lessons or sessions and not posting photos and videos on social media.

**Frequently Asked Questions about Zoom Classroom**

**What happens if I am late for my child’s scheduled Zoom session?**

· Your child's teacher/ OT/ Speech and Language Pathologist will remain in the meeting for 15 minutes after the scheduled Zoom meeting. If you have not entered the meeting after 15 minutes, you will need to reschedule your Zoom meeting.

**Am I able to reschedule my child's Zoom session if we miss it?**

· You may reschedule your Zoom session based on a first-come, first-serve basis. Make- up Zoom sessions will be made up on Friday in 30-minute increments. Zoom sessions will not be rescheduled for the same day if they are missed.

**How do I cancel my child's Zoom session?**

· Please call, message or e-mail your child’s teacher/ OT/ Speech and Language Pathologist as soon as possible.

**What’s expected during my child's Zoom session?**

· Materials sent home should be available to access during all scheduled Zoom sessions. Children should have access to a quiet space with adult support as needed.

**What if I am having trouble with accessing Zoom or Zoom features?**

· Ask for a consult with your child’s team. They will be able to guide you step-by-step through the different features Zoom has to offer. Instructions can also be e-mailed to parents, along with picture directions.

**Zoom Classroom Permission**

In order for students to participate in a zoom classroom lesson, a Zoom Classroom permission form must be completed. The permission form reads:

As you know, some of our students will be participating in virtual learning. We would like to give those students access to group lessons and activities throughout the school day. In doing that, we would like to ask permission to have students who are in the building be a part of Zoom sessions with their classmates who are attending virtually. Please fill out the permission form below. I understand that my child will be visible to the other students who are participating, and potentially the other students’ parent/ guardian/ siblings/ etc.

Handbook Revised JULY 2020