



School of Arts and Technology
Student and Family Handbook
2013-2014

DuBois Charter Schools Consortium
School of Arts and Technology
4184 Graceland Drive
Memphis, TN 38116

Welcome to a new learning season!

This Student and Family Handbook contains the official policies and procedures of the DuBois School of Arts and Technology. It is issued to DuBois parents/guardians and students annually.

Parents/guardians sign a receipt indicating they have received this handbook and understand that these policies and procedures guide life at the DuBois School of Arts and Technology.

Students and parents/guardians are asked and encouraged to read and understand the contents of this handbook.

Please contact us if you have ideas or concerns about your child's learning and growth. (901) 416-3104

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Greetings and Welcome!

Welcome to the DuBois School of Arts and Technology! We are pleased that you have entrusted us with the education of your child. Our extraordinary faculty and staff are deeply committed to the care and learning of your child. We recognize that you, as parent or guardian, are the first and primary educator of your child; We are honored to partner with you in this most important mission. We hope that you will become deeply involved in our special learning community and share your gifts and talents with all of our DuBois Family. The future of our children and our community depends on all of us.

Why were Dubois Schools founded?

The primary goal of Du Bois Schools is to ensure academic success for all enrolled students by significantly increasing academic achievement. The focus will be to provide students with opportunities for personal attention, a customized academic program, a peer group with positive aspirations, and hands-on activities that challenge and hold students' interest and develop their skills and sense of competence. The school will use visual and performing arts to strengthen the connections between the specific arts disciplines and academic competencies. The school will teach students to discover knowledge for themselves, to "learn how to learn"; integrate multicultural education activities into content-area instruction; engage administrators, teachers and support staff in professional development and collegial learning activities; enhance instructional leadership skill; offer incentives, recognition and rewards to promote excellence and provide opportunities for students to contribute to the community. Schools often have difficulty providing these types of opportunities, yet research indicates they are critical to long term success.

Dubois Schools Vision and Mission

The mission of The W. E. B. Du Bois Consortium of Charter Schools is to improve academic achievement in at-risk students by providing high-quality schools that foster academic achievement through a focus on high expectations, strong school leadership, effective teaching, character development, parental and community engagement and positive results, in a technology-enriched environment. The education delivery system incorporates best practices and research-based teaching strategies that work. The aim is to accelerate cognitive development and foster academic achievement for economically disadvantaged students through theme-based education. Building learning capacity and the retention of students who have been labeled as "difficult to teach" are two main goals. Du Bois schools implement comprehensive, coordinated instructional strategies to help students acquire the skills to become successful in mastering academic content.

Staff, students and parents work together to provide an environment which revolutionizes the education process for each member of the learning community. Program components are aligned with state standards/Common Core Standards, curricula and assessments to ensure that instructional goals and objectives are met. The focus is on high student achievement, effective teaching, high expectations, character development, parental engagement, strong leadership and positive results.

What is our road map for growth?

The Du Bois Elementary School of Entrepreneurship and the Du Bois Middle School of Leadership & Public Policy will be located on the campus of Love Fellowship Ministries, at 4475 S. Germantown Rd.

The Du Bois Elementary, Middle and High Schools of Arts & Technology will be located on the campus of Hillcrest High School.

The Thurgood Marshall Middle and High Schools of Career Development will be located on the campus of Northside High School.

The Du Bois High School of Leadership & Public Policy will be located on the campus of South Side High School. **(Fall of 2014)**

The Du Bois High School of Teacher Education will be located on the campus of Northside High School. **(Fall of 2014)**

Who oversees DuBois?

Governance

DuBois School of Arts and Technology is a Shelby County authorized independent public charter school. We have an independent public Board of Directors (see the end of this handbook for board members) and are a 501c3 corporation of the State of Tennessee.

The Board of Directors assures that the DuBois High School of Arts and Technology is moving toward its stated vision and mission and complying with the expectations of its charter. It writes policy for the school that is implemented by the administration for the care and learning of DuBois School of Arts and Technology children. The members of the board are also responsible for the financial oversight of the DuBois School of Arts and Technology.

The Board of Directors meets every other month through the school year. Please contact the Executive Director for further information about the governance of the DuBois School of Arts and Technology or to contact the board.

Culture of Dubois High School of Art and Technology

How do we create a caring community of learners and leaders?

At the DuBois School of Arts and Technology, we believe that students, families, faculty and staff-- all members of our community-- contribute to creating a positive, productive and orderly culture in our school. Culture is defined as 'how we do things around here.' Children benefit from a structured schedule they follow each day. This helps their learning and prepares them for the work world.

Hours of Operation

7:30-7:50 A.M. Breakfast

8:00 A.M. Classes begin (Students marked tardy at 8:01 A.M.)

11:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. Lunch

3:30 P.M. Dismissal

Before School

Students should arrive at school between 7:30 and 7:55 A.M. All students go directly to the cafeteria when the doors are opened at 7:30 A.M. Our kitchen staff members stop serving breakfast at 7:50 A.M. Students are dismissed to their classrooms at 7:55 A.M. They are to be in their classrooms by 8:00 A.M. A great and timely start to the day leads to a positive day of strong learning. A student's repeated tardiness will be a reason to meet with an administrator.

After School

Student dismissal is at 3:30 P.M.

All children who **walk home, take the city bus or receive rides by car or van** are released through the side doors nearest the parking lot.

Cars are to wait to the right side of the drive and not in the drive path on the left side of the driveway – just as would occur on a city street. Many adults are supervising the area to make our children safe. Thank you for respecting their directions.

Early Departure

It is very important for all students to be at school the entire day, in order to learn as much as they possibly can and to be in step with the class community and events of the day. If a student must leave school early, because of an appointment, a parent or legal guardian must be present at school to sign the child out. Early departure regularly from school is not allowed and falls under the truancy laws of the State of Tennessee just as tardiness and absenteeism do.

Snow Days/Inclement Weather Days

DuBois High School of Arts and Technology closes school when Shelby County Schools (SCS) close. Whenever weather conditions become severe enough to cancel classes, an announcement indicating that SCS is closed will be made over the following local radio/TV stations:

Television Stations:

WREG-TV 3

WMC-TV 5

WHBQ-TV 13

WATN-TV 24

Information is posted on related radio stations.

Attendance Policy

Children are expected to be at school every day by 8:00 A.M. unless they are sick. The DuBois offices will call home by 9:00 A.M. for any child that is not in attendance if a note or call has not explained the child's absence. Extended absence for illness will require a doctor's note for return to class. Extended absence for anything other than sickness requires a conference with the parent and a DuBois Administrator. **Perfect attendance** is awarded quarterly. Students must be **present and on time** every day to receive this award.

Tennessee Truancy Law

The Tennessee State Compulsory Attendance Law (T.C.A. §49-6-3001 and T.C.A. §49-6-2007) requires that pupils of legal age attend school (ages of six and seventeen years, both inclusive) unless special circumstances arise which temporarily or permanently excuse the student from attendance. This also applies to five (5) year old students who have attended school for six (6) weeks. By state law, the student's school year shall consist of a minimum of 180 teaching days exclusive of all vacations, as approved by the Board of Education. (T.C.A. §49-6-3004) The annual calendar is divided into two semesters.

Truancy (Policy #6016)

If a student receives five (5) or more absences during the school year without adequate excuse, the Superintendent shall notify the parents that the student is required to attend school. If within 3 days of receiving the notice, the parent has failed to comply, the Superintendent shall notify the District Attorney General and/or local law enforcement of this fact and legal action may be taken against the parent as provided by T.C.A. § 49-6-3007.

Except as otherwise provided by law, a child may be truant under the law who is less than six (6) years of age, provided that a child may be withdrawn six (6) weeks of initial enrollment without penalty.

Uniforms

UNIFORM POLICY: Each student is expected to be dressed in the specific Du Bois Schools uniform each day. Uniform packages can be purchased from Glory Apparel & Advertising (Michael Farmer, CEO), 3785 Riverdale Road, Memphis, TN 38115, 901-795-6950. The child must accompany you to be measured and a deposit of at least one-half of the cost is required at the time the order is made.

We engage children's interest, curiosity, and energy through:

- a clear understanding of the expectations,
- opportunities to see quality models of expected work,
- an engaging and imaginative vision of what is possible for them, and
- challenging, active, thematic learning and growing opportunities.

Student Leadership Council

This is a group of children who are leaders in our community. SLC members make decisions for our school and help run school-wide events. SLC meets once a week for one hour, during the regular school day.

Teaching and Learning

What do we believe about learning?

Community of Learners

School leaders, teachers, and staff at the DuBois School of Arts and Technology are members of a community of learners. We work together to share expertise, improve the school's program, build background knowledge, and model collaborative learning for students. Staff culture is characterized by a respectful collegiality where teachers resist judgment and blame and support each other in improving teaching in a safe community that fosters high quality work. Professional development for individual teachers and for the staff as a whole is at the heart of the school.

Ideal Graduate

Our goal at the DuBois School of Arts and Technology is to work with your child and family to empower your child in striving toward the qualities of the Ideal Graduate. We believe that these qualities will help your child to be a **competent learner** and a **confident leader**. DuBois's culture and curriculum focus on your child becoming: a caring self, a communal person, a confident leader, a conscious learner, an effective communicator, and a powerful problem solver – not just at graduation, but at every step along the way. Character development is at the heart of becoming the Ideal Graduate and a healthy, whole person. Reaching this ideal is the work of students and teachers at every grade. It is based upon each successful school year, quarter, month, week, and most essentially, each day.

Report Cards

Parents receive a formal report card each academic quarter. Report cards are given directly to the parents during each quarter conference. Parents also receive a mid-quarter report to insure they are informed about their child's progress.

Grades

Letter grades are assigned in all sixth through ninth grade classes. Grade point averages are figured on a four point scale and include all school subjects, including art, music, physical education:

A = 4.0

B = 3.0

C = 2.0

D = 1.0

F = 0.0

Honor Roll

Honor roll is based on grade point averages for sixth through ninth graders. There are three levels of honor. These are calculated after each of the four grading quarters. Honor roll is posted on the bulletin boards in the main hallway of each school building.

Summa Cum Laude Highest Honor 3.9-4.0

Magna Cum Laude High Honor 3.5-3.8

Cum Laude With Honor 3.0-3.4

6th-8th Grade Academic Rubric

(A) Exceeds Proficiency (93%-100%)

The student understands all concepts taught and applies them independently. He/she produces work that is unique and demonstrates in-depth thought. Errors are infrequent and minor.

(B) Proficient (85%-92%)

The student understands most concepts and applies them with minimal assistance. He/she produces organized work demonstrating a high degree of thought. Errors are minor.

(C) Developing Proficiency (75%-84%)

The student understands many concepts and applies them with frequent assistance. He/she produces organized thoughtful work. Errors are evident.

(D) Not Proficient (70%-74%)

The student consistently needs help understanding concepts. He/she produces work that is poorly organized and does not demonstrate independent thought. Errors are frequent and major.

(F) Unsatisfactory (0%-69%)

Student consistently does not do assigned work or turn in assignments. Student does not apply concepts. Student does not participate, even when called upon.

Grade Promotion/Retention – Middle School

Grade placement and promotion in the 6th through 8th grades will be based upon grades earned. The school will create transition classes, under State Department of Education provisions, for students who have not quite mastered the competencies to enter the next grade level. Transition classes will be considered a half-step promotion and students will be allowed to attend classes during the summer to gain the skills necessary to successfully complete the next highest grade level. These students will not be counted as retained; they will be counted with the next highest grade level. These students will maintain enrollment in the transition class until the required competencies are mastered. When the necessary skills are acquired, the students will be moved to the next grade level. If students do not gain the required skills in transitional classes, they will be retained in the grade level in which they have been counted during the previous school year.

Grade Promotion/Retention – High School

Grade Promotion: Grade Placement and promotion in the 9th through 12th grades will be based upon the accumulation of Carnegie units. The principal and staff will ensure that students are enrolled in the required courses to fulfill graduation requirements.

For students to be enrolled in 10th grade, at least 6 units must have been earned. To progress from the 10th grade to the 11th grade, students must earn at least 12 units. To progress from the 11th to the 12th grade 17 units must be earned. Students must pass English each year in order to progress to the next grade level. A student must be present for a minimum of 150 hours per unit in order to earn a passing grade and 75 hours to earn a passing grade for a half unit.

Retention: Students who earn less than passing grade in a given subject will not earn credit for that subject. Students who fail to earn the required number of units to progress to the next grade level will be retained in the current grade.

Credit Recovery

Students who earn a grade of at least 50% will be allowed to enter the credit recovery program during the school year. Credit recovery course teachers will be endorsed and certified in the subject needed.

Homework

All students at the DuBois School of Arts and Technology receive homework. It is the expectations that homework be completed at home, by the students, to prepare for the next school day. It is helpful if your child has a quiet place that is conducive for study. It is also helpful if parents offer to assist their child with homework and check to ensure it is finished. Expect homework each night, Monday through Thursday. Middle and ninth graders can expect approximately 60-90 minutes per night.

Supplies Needed for School

Students are expected to have pencil, pen, paper, and notebooks at school every day. It is the responsibility of the student to bring these materials to class. DuBois School of Arts and Technology students are expected to learn to take care of the materials that learners use at DuBois. Each student needs a backpack for materials. Students are expected to wear gym shoes to gym class.

Portfolios of Student work

Student portfolios will be filled with wonderful work products by your child. They will give you and your child an opportunity to see how much he/she is growing. These portfolios will be the heart of the student-led conference and will help your child move toward becoming The Ideal Graduate.

Individual Learning Plan

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be developed by your child in cooperation with you and the child's teacher. This plan will describe what your student is striving toward, specific goals for getting there, and a variety of methods for learning. The ILP'S will be reviewed after each quarter by the student, teacher, and parent(s)/guardian(s). The ILP will be a source of pride for the child and for the parents, as well as the portfolio of work your child will gather.

Student-led Conferences for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Students will lead four conferences for you to demonstrate their success in meeting their learning for each quarter. This will allow your student to share his/her pride in excellent work and to plan goals for the next quarter. The teacher helps you and your child understand the curriculum goals for learning throughout the school year. Parents are expected to attend all conferences. We are happy to come to your home if you are unable to come to school.

Retention and Advancement

The DuBois School of Arts and Technology believes in addressing learning problems with additional learning support and behavioral guidance; DuBois does not believe retention is usually a good solution to learning problems. Parents and teachers concerned about student progress need to take their concerns to the school principal, who will review the case with the Director of Special Education and other pertinent staff. The initial discussion should not be happening in the spring. Students who have been retained by another school in the previous years are interviewed along with their parent/guardian and placed in the appropriate grade as determined by the interview and possible testing.

Promotion/Graduation “Ideal Graduate” Portfolio

If your student is an eighth grader, she or he will prepare an “Ideal Graduate Portfolio” that will be presented to the school community in late May or early June before graduating. Every graduate will take the opportunity to “show off” his/her accomplishments by presenting a completed portfolio and PowerPoint presentation. No student will be allowed to participate in graduation without completing the Ideal Graduate demonstration of learning. Families will be present for the presentation to encourage, support, and learn. Your student will be striving to achieve “developing proficient,” or “advanced” on the portfolio and presentation based on a rubric designed by the faculty and students.

How do you get help for a struggling learner?

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a new change. It requires a number of interventions be provided and documented for a child before he/she is referred for an evaluation. If you have concerns regarding your child’s learning, here are the steps we recommend you begin taking:

1. Talk to your child’s teacher. Chances are your child’s teacher has the same concerns as you do. Ask for ways you can help at home.
2. Devise a plan for monitoring your child’s progress with their teacher. This plan should incorporate some specific, achievable goals such as: learn 10-15 new sight words in 4 weeks.
3. After 4 weeks time, meet with your child’s teacher again. If there has been little to no progress made, your child will be recommended for the SAIL process. SAIL stands for Support and Assistance for Instructors and Learners.
4. The SAIL meeting occurs after the teacher has tried intervention in the classroom. This is a team problem-solving meeting. Your child’s teacher will present information about your child and the concerns he or she has. The team

will brainstorm ways to support your child by creating an action plan. After 4 weeks, the team meets again. If there is progress, the team will continue with the interventions. If there is still no progress being made with specially designed instruction, a referral (from teacher or parent) for a special education evaluation may be recommended.

5. Once the referral is received, an educator from the special education department will review all the data and send home some information. This information will contain your rights and responsibilities, as well as a consent form for testing. This form **must** be signed, dated, and returned before any testing can be done. The special education department will then have 60 days to test and gather information on your child. An evaluation meeting will be set up to review the findings and determine whether your child has a disability or not. An evaluation meeting does not necessarily mean your child will qualify for services. This can be a lengthy and confusing process at times. We encourage you to call or stop by with any questions you may have. It is our job to help you through this process. We are happy to do so and to help your child learn more effectively.

Special Education

What do we believe about best teaching of students with special needs?

At the DuBois School of Arts and Technology each exceptional education student is valued as and expected to be a contributing member of our circle of learning.

The circle is a sacred symbol of life... Individual parts within the circle connect with every other; and what happens to one, or what one part does, affects all within the circle. (Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve)

Full Inclusion Model

We strive to make this circle of learning happen through offering a **full inclusion model** of service delivery. Whenever possible, children are taught in a small group setting. We do not have a resource room model of teaching available. Small groups consist of 4-6 students and can happen in a variety of settings. During this time, special education educators work with their students specifically on the goals from their IEPs. The work is interactive and provides the students the chance to work on skills no longer being taught in the whole group setting. This model is based upon IDEA P.L. 94-142, which states: to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that the education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Special education teachers and classroom teachers work together to meet each student's individual goals. Through planning, materials are gathered and supplements are provided to assist each student in reaching their learning potential. Books are provided on topics related to their expeditions at their specific reading level, math concepts are pre-taught, technology supports are offered, and more. IDEA defines this type of teaching as specially designed instruction:

adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under [Part B], the content, methodology, or delivery instruction (i) [t]o address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and (ii) [t]o ensure access to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children. 34 C.F.R. § 300.26(b)(3)(1999)

Students with disabilities are empowered at ALL everyday to become responsible, independent learners through these practices. We are honored to be a part of your special learner's journey at DuBois.

You can ask us for help with medication.

Medication

Any parent/guardian whose child takes **medication during the regular school day is required to complete a form** in the school office. It is submitted to the school nurse. The Academy must have this permission form in order to give a student medication. All medications must come in their **original, labeled prescription bottle**.

You can encourage the development of good health habits.

Sleep

It is very important that your child receives a good night's rest every night in order to be physically strong and mentally clear. Doctors recommend the following amount of sleep:

12-18 Years Old: 8 - 9 hours per day (Many middle schoolers need even more.)

Parents will be notified if a child is sleeping or sleepy in class.

Breakfast and Lunch

Everyone needs a good breakfast in order to be physically strong, mentally clear, and ready for the challenges and fun of the busy school day. The DuBois School of Arts and Technology offers breakfast at 7:30A.M. every school day. If your child does not eat at school, please make sure he or she eats a healthy breakfast at home. DuBois serves lunch to children daily. The lunch and recess times are between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. Children are given a nutritious meal. All students are required to take all items offered in the meals offered at the Academy. Our meal program is state, federal, and school subsidized.

Eye Glasses

If your child needs prescription eyeglasses, they must be worn at all times that the eye doctor has designated. If you desire, your child's classroom teacher can keep glasses in the classroom so they are always ready for use. Children who need glasses and have not been able to get them are eligible for help. Please call the office for more information.

Immunizations

Children need all types of shots as they grow and develop. Please make sure that these are being provided to your child by your family physician. Then, please bring copies in to school so we can keep them with your child's cumulative file.

AGE/GRADE NUMBER OF DOSES

Pre-K (2 through 4 years) 4 DTP,DTaP, or DT; 3 Polio; 1 MMR; 3 Hep B; 1 Var

Grades K2 through 8 4 DTP, DTaP, or DT; 4 Polio; 2 MMR; 3 Hep B; 1 Var

Grades 9 through 12 4 DTP, DTaP, or Td; 4 Polio; 2 MMR; 3 Hep B

All immunizations should be completed by the first date of attendance. The law requires that students be fully vaccinated against the diseases specified in the chart above. A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. A school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

Safety Drills

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of your child during regular school hours. Periodic fire and tornado drills are held to make certain students learn proper safety procedures and adhere to all safety guidelines.

Visitors in the Building

Parents, guardians, family members and other guests are welcome to visit our school. Appointments with teachers are made ahead of time so that teachers are available to give parents and guardians their undivided attention. All visitors, including parents and guardians, register in the school office and secure a visitor's pass before proceeding beyond the office.

The DuBois School of Arts and Technology abides by all city, state, and federal laws, regulations, and codes, as related to the health and safety of its students, families, faculty, staff, and administration.

Need Discipline Plan Summary

Board of Directors 2013-2014

Our committed Board of Directors and highly qualified, talented faculty and staff want to get to know your child and your family. We know this will help all of us to learn and grow – especially your child. Please contact any of us to learn more about the DuBois School of Arts and Technology or to share concerns about your child or life at school.

Ms. Tanya Dawson
Board Member and Secretary/Treasurer

Ms. Veronica Finnie
Board Member

Ms. Sara Hall
Board Member

Ms. Regina G. Haley
Board Member

Mr. Keith McGee
Board Member

Dr. Willie W. Herenton
DuBois Founder and Superintendent

Mr. Ernest D. Strickland
Board Member

Mr. Brent Taylor
Board Member