



# CHARETTE HIGH SCHOOL

**School Handbook**

**School Year 2024-2025**

**337 Westminster St., Providence, RI 02903  
401-270-1183**

**Students and Parent/Guardian Signatures required upon review.**

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# Charette High School Handbook 2024-2025

## Welcome to Charette High School

337 Westminster St., Providence, RI 02903  
Phone: 401-270-1183

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### 1. Welcome and Introduction

#### 1.1. A Warm Welcome from Executive Director

Greetings to all students, parents, and guardians,

Welcome to Charette High School, where our commitment to excellence in education shines brightly. We are profoundly proud to welcome you to our unique institution, renowned for its innovative blend of urban planning and historic preservation within a nurturing academic environment. At Charette, we are dedicated to providing an educational experience that prepares our students not just for college and career success but for meaningful engagement in their communities.

As we embark on this academic journey together, we anticipate a year filled with discovery, growth, and achievement. Our dedicated faculty and staff are here to support every student's quest for knowledge, guiding them towards realizing their full potential. We look forward to celebrating the many accomplishments that await us this school year. *Sincerely, Dr. Kathy Vespia*

#### 1.2. Our Mission and Core Values

At the heart of Charette High School lies our mission: to empower students with a comprehensive education that encourages creativity, critical thinking, and civic engagement. We are a community that values:

- **Create Community:** Fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support where each member contributes to a dynamic and inclusive environment.
- **Honor Yourself and Others:** Promoting respect, integrity, and personal accountability in our actions and interactions.
- **Strive to Succeed:** Encouraging perseverance, excellence, and a growth mindset, equipping students with the skills to overcome challenges and achieve their goals.

These core values are the pillars of our school culture, guiding our community in nurturing a respectful and collaborative learning environment.

#### 1.3. Keeping Connected

Your partnership and communication are vital to our shared success. Should you have any questions, concerns, or ideas to share, please feel free to reach out to us:

- **Address:** 337 Westminster St., Providence, RI 02903
- **Phones:** 401-270-1183 and 401-601-4414 (cell -call or text)

We are here to support you and ensure that your experience at Charette High School is both rewarding and fulfilling. Together, we will make this school year exceptional.

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### 2. Academic Information and Policies

**Charette's Board Approved Policies can be found on our website and in a binder located in the Main Office.**

## **2.1. Our Educational Philosophy and Teaching Approach**

At Charette High School, we embrace a philosophy of education that prepares our students for the complexities of the world with a balanced approach that values both innovation and tradition. Our curriculum integrates the principles of urban planning and historic preservation with core academic disciplines, providing a unique and comprehensive learning experience.

We are committed to a blended learning model that combines digital technology with traditional classroom instruction to cater to diverse learning styles and promote independent thinking. Our educators are dedicated to fostering an environment where students are encouraged to inquire, analyze, and contribute creatively to their learning experiences.

## **2.2. Curriculum Overview and Graduation Requirements**

Our Program of Study is designed to meet the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) graduation requirements while offering a specialized focus on Urban Planning and Historic Preservation. We ensure a rigorous academic foundation complemented by opportunities for students to explore their interests and prepare for future endeavors.

To graduate from Charette High School, students must successfully complete coursework in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and elective areas, maintaining a standard of proficiency that reflects their dedication and capability. Our curriculum is structured to empower students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in higher education and their professional lives.

## **2.3. Understanding Our Grading System**

Our grading system is designed to provide transparent and meaningful feedback on student performance. It aligns with our commitment to excellence and accountability:

- A+ (97-100), A (94-96), A- (90-93)
- B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83)
- C+ (77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73)
- F (1-69)

We acknowledge and celebrate academic achievements through our Honor Roll, distinguishing students who consistently demonstrate exceptional performance.

## **2.4. Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic integrity is paramount at Charette High School. We uphold a strict policy against plagiarism and cheating, fostering an environment of honesty and respect. Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity, with clear guidelines in place to address violations. Our policy emphasizes the importance of originality and responsibility, ensuring that the academic achievements of our students are genuine and deserving of recognition.

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### **3. Student Life and Community Expectations**

#### **3.1. Fostering Our School Community**

At Charette High School, we believe in building a vibrant community where every member feels valued, supported, and connected. Our community ethos is centered on mutual respect, inclusivity, and collaboration, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive both academically and personally.

We encourage students to engage with one another, participate in school events, and contribute to a positive school culture that reflects our core values. By fostering strong relationships and a sense of belonging, we create an environment where students are motivated to achieve their best and support their peers in doing the same.

#### **3.2. Attendance and Punctuality: Foundations of Success**

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for student success and are expected of all Charette High School students. Being present and on time to class demonstrates commitment to learning and respect for the educational process, as well as preparation for future responsibilities. Our policies are designed to support students in maintaining good attendance habits, contributing to their overall success and well-being.

We understand that unexpected circumstances can arise; however, we ask that students and families prioritize attendance and communicate proactively with the school in case of absences or tardiness.

Any number of unexcused absences or tardies in a row, or chronic absenteeism, will be cause for administrative action. In cases of chronic absenteeism students will be referred to the multidisciplinary team for intervention. Interventions could include: parent conferences, referral to the multidisciplinary team, counseling referral, or filing of a truancy report.

#### **3.3. Adhering to Our Uniform Policy**

Charette High School's uniform policy is designed to promote a sense of unity and equality while minimizing distractions in the learning environment. We expect all students to wear their uniforms with pride and adhere to the guidelines, reflecting their respect for the school community.

The uniform consists of specific attire that is outlined in the student handbook, and we encourage families to ensure that students are dressed appropriately each school day. Our administration is available to assist with any questions or concerns regarding the uniform policy, and we appreciate the cooperation of students and families in upholding this standard.

#### **3.4. Navigating the School Day**

Our school day is structured to provide an optimal learning experience, with designated times for classes, breaks, and extracurricular activities. Students are expected to be mindful of their schedules, arriving at classes on time and prepared to engage in the day's activities.

We encourage students to take advantage of the various learning opportunities, resources, and support available throughout the school day, contributing to their academic growth and personal development. By actively participating in the school community and adhering to the daily schedule, students can make the most of their educational experience at Charette High School.

#### **3.5. Understanding Tardiness and Early Dismissal Procedures**

Punctuality is a key aspect of our school culture, and we expect students to arrive on time for school and classes. Tardiness can disrupt the learning process, not only for the late student but also for their classmates and teachers. Consequently, we have established procedures to address tardiness, emphasizing the importance of timeliness.

## **4. Health, Safety, and Welfare**

### **4.1. Proactive and Prepared: Emergency Procedures and Drills**

At Charette High School, student safety is our paramount concern. We have developed comprehensive emergency procedures and conduct regular drills to ensure that our students and staff are well-prepared for any situation that might arise. Whether it's a fire drill, lockdown, or evacuation, our protocols are designed to maximize safety and minimize confusion and anxiety.

We encourage students to take these drills seriously, as they are vital for building the knowledge and instincts necessary to respond effectively in real emergencies. Detailed information on specific procedures is available in our school safety manual, and we are committed to maintaining clear communication with students and parents about our safety protocols and expectations.

### **4.2. Weathering the Storm: School Closings and Delays**

In cases of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances that might compromise the safety or accessibility of our school, Charette High School may need to close or delay opening. Decisions regarding closures or delays are made with the utmost consideration for the well-being of our school community and communicated as promptly as possible through various channels, including local media, the school website, and direct notifications to families.

We urge students and parents to stay informed and heed any advisories issued, ensuring that safety remains the top priority in any situation that impacts our school operations.

### **4.3. Support on Standby: Accidental Injury and Nursing Services**

Despite our best efforts to prevent them, accidents can happen. Our school is equipped with a nursing staff ready to respond to any injuries or health concerns that arise during the school day. Whether it's a minor scrape or something more serious, our trained professionals are there to provide care and support.

We also emphasize the importance of students reporting any injuries, no matter how minor they may seem, to a teacher or staff member immediately. Prompt attention to health issues can prevent complications and ensure that every student receives the care they need.

Furthermore, we encourage families to communicate any health concerns or medical conditions that might affect their child's well-being at school. This collaboration between home and school is vital for maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all students.

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## **5. Technology and Learning Resources**

### **5.1. Empowering Education: Chromebook Use and Policies**

At Charette High School, we recognize the importance of integrating technology into our curriculum to enhance learning and prepare our students for the digital world. To support this initiative, each student is issued a Chromebook for academic use. These devices are powerful tools for research, collaboration, and creative expression when used responsibly.

We expect all students to adhere to our technology use policies, which are designed to ensure that Chromebooks are used effectively and appropriately. These guidelines include respecting copyright laws, avoiding inappropriate content, and maintaining the security and integrity of the devices. Failure to comply with these policies may result in disciplinary action and the revocation of Chromebook privileges.

Students and parents are encouraged to review the Chromebook use agreement carefully and to understand their responsibilities in caring for the device. By fostering a culture of digital citizenship, we aim to create a learning environment that leverages technology to enrich education while promoting responsibility and respect.

## **5.2. Staying Connected Responsibly: Cell Phone and Technology Use**

While we embrace the benefits of technology, we also understand the potential distractions it can pose. Therefore, Charette High School has established clear policies regarding cell phone and personal electronic device use during school hours.

Our goal is to minimize distractions and ensure a focused, respectful learning environment. To achieve this, we require students to use their devices responsibly and only at designated times and places. Cell phone use is prohibited during instructional time unless explicitly permitted by a teacher for educational purposes.

We believe that by setting these boundaries, students can enjoy the benefits of connectivity and access to information without compromising their engagement and learning. We appreciate the cooperation of our students and families in upholding these policies and encourage everyone to prioritize face-to-face interactions and in-person collaboration whenever possible.

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## **6. Extracurricular Activities and Athletics**

### **6.1. Enriching Experiences: Clubs and Leadership Opportunities**

At Charette High School, we believe in the importance of holistic education, where students are encouraged to explore their interests and talents beyond the classroom. Our diverse range of clubs and leadership opportunities allows students to engage in activities they are passionate about, develop new skills, and form meaningful connections with their peers.

From academic societies to creative arts groups and community service organizations, there is something for everyone. These extracurricular activities provide valuable experiences that foster personal growth, leadership, and teamwork. We encourage students to take the initiative to join or even start new clubs, contributing to the vibrancy of our school community.

### **6.2. Team Spirit: Athletics Participation and Policies**

Charette High School's athletics program is an integral part of our school culture, promoting physical health, sportsmanship, and school spirit. We offer a variety of sports teams that compete in local and regional leagues, providing students with the opportunity to challenge themselves, represent their school, and develop athletic prowess.

Student-athletes are expected to maintain a balance between their academic responsibilities and athletic commitments. Our policies ensure that students prioritize their education while benefiting from the discipline, collaboration, and resilience that come with team sports. Participation in athletics is contingent upon academic eligibility and adherence to our code of conduct, emphasizing the importance of integrity and respect in all aspects of competition.

### **6.3. Celebrating Creativity: Arts and Cultural Activities**

The arts play a vital role in the Charette High School community, offering students avenues to express themselves, explore their creativity, and appreciate diverse cultural perspectives. Our programs in visual arts, music, theater, and dance allow students to discover and develop their artistic talents, whether they are budding artists or seasoned performers.

Through performances, exhibitions, and community events, students share their work with peers, families, and the broader community, fostering an appreciation for the arts and enriching our school culture. We

support our students' artistic endeavors and encourage them to embrace the joy and fulfillment that comes from creative expression.

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## **7. Discipline and Behavioral Expectations**

### **7.1. Nurturing Respect and Responsibility: General Conduct and Behavior**

At Charette High School, we prioritize creating an educational environment where respect, integrity, and accountability are at the forefront of our community ethos. We expect all students to exhibit behaviors that reflect these values, ensuring a positive and productive atmosphere conducive to learning and personal growth.

Students at Charette are encouraged to act with consideration and respect towards their peers, educators, and the school environment. Adherence to school policies and a commitment to positive engagement in all school-related activities are fundamental. By embodying these principles, students contribute to a nurturing environment where everyone can thrive and feel valued.

### **7.2. Building a Safe and Inclusive Community: Bullying and Harassment**

Charette High School is dedicated to fostering a safe and inclusive community, where every student is protected from bullying and harassment. We maintain a zero-tolerance stance against any form of abusive behavior, whether physical, verbal, or digital, ensuring a supportive setting for our students' educational journeys.

Students and staff are encouraged to report any instances of bullying or harassment, confident that their concerns will be met with swift and decisive action. Our proactive approach includes educational initiatives to promote understanding, empathy, and respect, while our intervention strategies aim to address and rectify issues, offering support to those affected and holding perpetrators accountable.

### **7.3. Transparent and Constructive Discipline: Disciplinary Measures and Procedures**

Our disciplinary approach at Charette High School emphasizes transparency, fairness, and the potential for personal development. Recognizing that students are still learning and growing, we approach disciplinary matters with the intent to educate and rehabilitate rather than solely to punish. Charette uses a Restorative Justice practice model focused on social and emotional learning, conflict resolution and building healthy relationships.

Depending on the nature and severity of the infraction, disciplinary responses may range from mediation and counseling to more formal consequences like suspension or expulsion. Throughout the disciplinary process, we engage with students and parents to provide clear explanations and support, ensuring that students understand the ramifications of their actions and have the opportunity to reflect, learn, and improve.

By maintaining consistent and constructive disciplinary practices, we aim to cultivate an environment of mutual respect and accountability, where students are empowered to make positive choices and learn from their experiences.

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## **8. Parental Involvement and Communication**

### **8.1. Strengthening Partnerships: Parent Access to Academic and Disciplinary Records**

At Charette High School, we believe in the power of partnership between parents and educators in supporting student success. To foster transparency and collaboration, we provide parents with secure access to their children's academic and disciplinary records. This access empowers parents to stay informed about their child's progress, achievements, and any areas requiring attention.

We encourage regular reviews of these records and welcome any questions or discussions they might prompt. By staying informed and engaged, parents can play an active role in their child's education, providing support and encouragement that reinforces the learning and growth happening at school.

### **8.2. Open Lines of Communication: Parent-Teacher Interaction**

Effective communication is the cornerstone of our collaborative community at Charette High School. We facilitate open and ongoing dialogue between parents and teachers, ensuring that families are well-informed about school activities, student progress, and any pertinent issues or events.

Parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers with any concerns or inquiries regarding their child's education. We offer various channels for communication, including parent-teacher conferences, email, text messaging, phone calls, and school-hosted events, all aimed at fostering strong, positive relationships between families and faculty.

### **8.3. Active Engagement: Volunteering and Parent Organizations**

Parental involvement extends beyond the classroom and into the broader school community at Charette High School. We invite parents to take an active role in our school through volunteering and participation in parent organizations, such as School Improvement Team.

These opportunities not only strengthen our school community but also provide parents with insights into their child's educational environment and the chance to contribute directly to the enrichment of our programs and activities. Whether assisting with events, supporting fundraising efforts, or participating in decision-making processes, parent volunteers are invaluable assets to our school.

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## **9. Policies on Inclusion and Non-Discrimination**

### **9.1. Commitment to Equity: Non-Discrimination Policy**

At Charette High School, we uphold the principles of equity and respect for all individuals, firmly opposing any form of discrimination. Our non-discrimination policy is integral to our mission, ensuring that every student, staff member, and family is treated with fairness and dignity, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, or any other characteristic.

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where diversity is valued and celebrated, and where all members of our community can thrive without fear of prejudice or bias. This commitment extends to all areas of our school, including admissions, hiring practices, classroom activities, and extracurricular programs.

### **9.2. Accessibility and Accommodation: Ensuring Equal Opportunities**

Charette High School is dedicated to providing an accessible and supportive learning environment for all students, including those with disabilities. We adhere to legal and ethical standards for accommodation

and accessibility, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed and participate fully in our school community.

Our policies on accessibility and accommodation reflect our belief in the potential of every student. We work collaboratively with families, specialists, and educators to identify and implement effective accommodations, whether in the classroom, during assessments, or in extracurricular activities.

By fostering an environment where individual needs are recognized and supported, we empower all students to achieve their personal best and contribute meaningfully to our school community.

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## **10. Appendices and Additional Resources**

### **10.1. Essential Information: School Calendar and Important Dates**

Charette High School's commitment to clear communication and organizational efficiency is reflected in our provision of essential scheduling information. Our school calendar, readily available to students, parents, and staff, outlines the academic year's key dates, including the start and end of term, holidays, parent-teacher conferences, and special events.

This calendar serves as a vital planning tool, ensuring that all members of our school community are informed and can coordinate their schedules accordingly. We encourage families to review these dates regularly and to reach out with any questions or concerns regarding scheduling or school events.

### **10.2. Staying Connected: Contact Directory**

To facilitate easy communication within our school community, Charette High School provides a comprehensive contact directory. This resource includes contact information for all faculty and staff members, as well as key administrative departments and services within the school.

Whether you need to discuss academic progress with a teacher, inquire about extracurricular activities, or seek assistance from our support staff, the contact directory ensures that you can quickly and easily reach the appropriate individual or department.

### **10.3. Expanding Knowledge: Community and Online Resources**

In our pursuit of comprehensive education and community engagement, Charette High School offers access to a wide array of community and online resources. These resources complement our academic programs and support our students' and families' diverse needs, providing valuable information, services, and opportunities for further learning and involvement.

We encourage students and families to explore these resources, which include educational materials, local community services, extracurricular opportunities, and support networks. By leveraging these tools, our school community can enhance learning experiences, foster personal growth, and strengthen connections with the broader community.

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