



# **Educate Youth**

## **Empowerment Through Education**

Having Opportunities for Positive Education, H.O.P.E.

After School and Summer Program

Student Handbook



Empowering Ypsilanti Students since 2011

Written October 2022, Revised August 2024



# **Educate Youth**

## **Empowerment Through Education**

### Contents

Introduction to the Manual

Program Overview

Vision, Mission, & Values

Participant Responsibilities & Expectations

COVID-19 Safety

Appearance Policy

Attendance Policy

Stipend Information

Student Expectations

Tutoring Opportunities

Programs & Opportunities

Transportation

Public Display of Affection

Technology Usage/ Cell Phones

Drug Usage and Laws

Extreme Behavior Policy

Contact Information

## **Introduction to the Manual**

This manual serves as a handbook for students who attend any Educate Youth program. The following information will help you understand the expectations and policies held in place at the Clubhouse and all outings and functions. These policies were inspired and written by the students with the help of the staff and executive director. These policies are reviewed and updated as needed.

## **Program Overview**

Educate Youth is a nonprofit that was created in 2017 as an expansion of the “Dedicated to Make a Change,” program which began in 2010. All of the programs continue to be developed by students for their peers. Educate Youth has one full time director/educator, several paid staff and college interns during the school year and a varying number of volunteers. The work in this program is intense, personal and trauma informed, and is completed through a combination of mentorship, dialogue, and engagement activities. Michigan's high school graduation rate is 83%. The graduation rate drops below 50% for a male student with brown or black skin.. When graduation rates are low, students face a greater risk of unemployment, incarceration, and prison recidivism. Educate Youth provides the needed resources for students and the community to promote positive outcomes.

## **Vision, Mission, & Values**

### *Vision:*

Empower Ypsilanti Students

### *Mission:*

Educate Youth guides and encourages Ypsilanti students to earn their high school diploma with a two-year post high school plan and a goal of becoming future leaders who will strengthen and drive change in their community

### *Values:*

**Justice:** Instilling integrity in students to improve their community.

**Transformation:** Shaping student leaders through empowerment, essential skill development, and education.

**Solidarity:** Students are unified and supported by peer mentors and each other.

**Empowerment:** Students are encouraged to fulfill their individual possibilities.

**Viable:** Students are prepared for a life beyond high school.

**Relevant:** All programs are created by students, for students.

**Equity:** All students are provided with necessary resources to achieve equitable outcomes within Washtenaw County.

## **Responsibilities & Expectations**

At Educate Youth, the expectation is to be productive, respectful and responsible. This looks like...

### **Productive**

- Be present
- No phones or headphones during circle or other activities
- No side conversations or games during circle or other activities
- Attend daily and inform Educate Youth if you will be absent

### **Respectful**

- One voice at a time
- Treat others with kindness and dignity
- Respect boundaries
- Respect personal space
- Listen to all staff and volunteers
- Keep your hands to yourself
- Use your manners

### **Responsible**

- Be inclusive, supportive and open-minded
- No put-downs or name calling
- Time and place
- Help and watch out for others
- Backpacks may not be worn inside of the Clubhouse

Additionally, students involved in the juvenile justice system must attend court and probation dates. If transportation is needed please let the executive director know and they will provide transportation. If a date is missed or skipped and results in a warrant for arrest, the executive director will not lie.

**Michigan prohibits issuance of a handgun purchase license to any person under age 18. If the handgun is to be purchased from a federally licensed dealer, the applicant must be age 21 or older. A concealed carry permit may not be issued to a person under 21 years of age.**

## **COVID-19 and Illness Protocol**

These policies are updated as according to the CDC and the Health Department

- When ill, stay home and remember to let the executive director know.
- If someone in your household or where you are staying becomes ill with COVID, let the executive director know.
- There are masks and Home COVID testing kits on site.

## **Appearance Policy**

Your appearance represents you. The Golden Rule: dress where you want to be in five years, not where you are today. Below are the guidelines:

- Hair needs to be styled demonstrating the policy of looking your best because you are the best.
- Cover up. Skin should not be showing, this includes:
  - Crop tops
  - Short shorts, skirts and dresses
  - Low cut tops
  - Not wearing a shirt
  - Excessively ripped jeans
- Clothes need to be worn properly.
  - No sagging pants
  - Tights or sheer leggings should not be worn as pants
- Take care of your hair, teeth, face, and body. Supplies are in the small bathroom to help assist you with this.
- Graphic t-shirts/hoodies need to be appropriate
  - No hate speech
  - No sexual innuendos
  - No references to violence

If needed, Educate Youth has clean clothes and a washing machine and dryer at the Clubhouse for use. Staff will be there to help students use the washer and dryer.

## **Attendance Policy for the H.O.P.E. Academic and Summer Programs**

- You are expected to attend daily. If you are unable to, you must contact the executive director. This is very important, as staffing and meals are planned each day for the number of students we are expecting.
- After two (2) consecutive unnotified absences students are at risk of losing a spot and after three (3) consecutive unnotified absences a student's spot may be given to another student on the waitlist.
- Sign in and out of the Clubhouse each day in the front room.



## **Stipend Information**

- Students receive \$140 each month, given in biweekly cash payments of \$70, if they fulfill their part of the learning contract.
- A stipend, unlike a wage, works on a daily "all-or-nothing" basis.
- Failure to meet daily or academic requirements does not result in a reduced stipend, but a forfeit of stipend.
- Pay begins when paperwork is received and academic portal information is shared with the executive director.
- Students need to be present when stipends are given out at 6:30.
- On the occasion that Educate Youth is closed on stipend day, the executive director will contact each student to learn how to get the money to them.

## **Student Expectations Regarding the Stipend**

- Grades remain at a C or above
- Daily attendance face to face
- Give Educate Youth your academic portal information
- Complete the required paperwork, with the required signatures
- Positive and non-combative attitude
- No zeros on assignments
- During work time, work is happening
- Excessive phone usage is prohibited.

\*\*\*Failure to meet student expectations regarding the stipend will forfeit the stipend for the day.

## **Mentor and Opportunities**

What is a mentor? Students are eligible to become mentors at Educate Youth, moving from a stipend participant to an hourly paid employee. With this increase in pay, there also comes an increase in responsibilities for student mentors. The hours worked each day are the hours of the afterschool program. Generally, 4-6:30pm or 2.5 hours each day. Mentors are expected to attend monthly staff meetings.

How does one become a mentor? Students who are interested in becoming a student mentor must fill out the job application and go through the interview process. If hired, mentors will have a 30 day review with an accompanying self assessment evaluation to fill out. At this time, a pay increase is possible. Mentors will also be a part of Educate Youth staff meetings, which will be communicated in advance.

If the mentor does not maintain the expectations they will be supported to get back on track. If there is not a change in the behavior, they may lose the mentor position. The hourly pay will return to a stipend pay.

What are the responsibilities? (Responsibilities are subject to change, if needed)

- Role model positive behavior
- Uphold the Student Handbook
- Treat people with respect
- Attendance at the H.O.P.E. program/Summer program
- If you are unable to attend, please communicate with staff
- Attendance to school and classes

- Pass all classes
- Complete all assignments
- Attend monthly staff meetings
- Lead opening circle once a week
- Participant in L.O.V.E. Is The Answer programs

## **Programs & Opportunities**

**\*\*These programs are not all offered each academic year\*\***

SAT Preparation- Practice SAT tests and preparation for students to feel confident when taking the SAT.

Ethics Bowl- Teaching students to think critically about problems that face our community,

Music Lessons- To provide an instrument and private lessons. Once lessons are completed, students may keep the instrument. Each student will have the opportunity to choose an instrument and to learn how to play this instrument.

Art - Curtis Wallace from Be Creative Studio provides weekly lessons.

History, Poetry, and Leadership- Drs. Richard and June Thomas provide weekly discussions and activities.

Community Outreach Opportunities- Educate Youth offers a variety of opportunities and outings that allow students to socialize and have fun outside of the clubhouse.

Prevent and Prevail- is a comprehensive health curriculum and an open exchange of ideas about drug usage, the brain, sex, empowerment, wellness, and prevention of STDs and HIV.

Summer Programs- The Summer Program provides a variety of activities for students, often planned by the students themselves.

## Transportation

The **Educate Youth** program has always provided transportation for students. We believe the program works best when students are able to be present at the Clubhouse for schoolwork and other projects and without transportation they could not be present. Students need consistent transportation to pick them up and bring them home.

### These are the current transportation guidelines:

- Students will have a current signed Release of Liability on file at Educate Youth.
- Students will be picked up from home or school unless the Executive Director receives a text message, phone call or an email from a parent or guardian.
- Students will be taken to the address given on file unless the Executive Director receives a text message, phone call or email from a parent or guardian.
- Requests and/or change in transportation need to be phoned, texted or emailed to the Executive Director 24 hours in advance. (unless there is an emergency)
- Students receive a 20 minute pick up time range
- Students receive the text <**on my way**> when they are the next to be picked up
- When the student receives the text message <**here**> two things need to happen:
  - they are to text back <**OK.**>
  - They have 5 minutes at that point to be in the car. Remember, other students are waiting!
  - Failure to be in the car within 5 minutes after arrival, students will be left.
    - They will receive a text <**I'm leaving**>
  - After two (2) no-shows, transportation will not be provided for the remainder of the marking period.

## **PDA Policy**

A Public Display of Affection (abbreviated as “PDA”) is physically demonstrating affection for another person while in the view of others; for example, holding hands, putting your arm around someone, or kissing in public. There are written and unwritten rules for showing affection in public. Each person differs regarding how they like or dislike giving or receiving public displays of affection, but it often creates an awkward situation for people who witness it.

### **The bottom line is this:**

- Be aware of your surroundings and circumstances.
- There is a time and a place.
- BOTH people MUST consent to the affection.

PDA is not permitted in the clubhouse or during Educate Youth , outings and trips.

Examples of PDA actions are as follows:

- Hugging
- Kissing
- Cuddling
- Holding Hands

Upon the request of either staff or students, the students in question must cease from PDA.

## **Technology Usage/ Cell Phones**

- Cellular phones and/or computers may not be used to defame, harass, intimidate, and/or threaten any other person.
- Students are prohibited from using their cell phones and/or computers in any illegal, illicit or offensive manner.
- Cell phones may not be used as a calculator. Educate Youth has graphing and scientific calculators available for student use at the Clubhouse.

**Michigan's child pornography law (referred to as "child sexually abusive material") makes it unlawful to solicit, create, share, or possess images of a minor (younger than 18) engaged in a sexual act. ... An adult or minor can be prosecuted under the law.**

## **Drug Usage and Laws**

Illicit drugs, including tobacco, may not be used or distributed on the ground at Educate Youth (104 S Huron) This includes vaping and smoking of tobacco of any type.

**Medical marijuana is legal for use and possession by those over the age of 18.**

**The Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act (MRTMA) decriminalized recreational use and the possession of marijuana for people over the age of 21 effective December 6, 2018, however, marijuana isn't legal in every situation.**

**There are many restrictions, including age and location.**

**In December 2019, the United States adopted a law raising the federal minimum age of sale of all tobacco products to 21. The purchase of a tobacco product, vapor product, or alternative nicotine product by a minor under 18 years of age and the provision of a tobacco product, vapor product, or alternative nicotine product to a minor are prohibited by law.**



## **Extreme Behavior Policy**

In cases of extreme behavior, a phone call to parents/guardians will be made and conversation between the parent/guardian and executive director must occur before the student may return to Educate Youth programming. Educate Youth defines extreme behavior as:

- Physical altercations
- Substance use
  - Vaping (cannabis or tobacco)
  - Smoking (cannabis or tobacco)
  - Cannabis edibles
  - Alcohol
- Threats
  - Physical, emotional and/or sexual
  - Verbally, nonverbally and/or via text, social media,
- Gang references and signs
- Weapons
  - Possession
  - Offers to get weapons
- Extreme defiance
- Going to the Beer Cooler party store
- Breaking confidentiality by giving away personal information

## **Contact Information**

Educate Youth, 501(c)3

104 S. Huron St., Ypsilanti, Mi 48197

(734)-218 2953 [gail@educateyouthypsi.org](mailto:gail@educateyouthypsi.org)