



# Family and Scholar Handbook



## **Our Mission**

*Established in 1998, the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School, prepares culturally diverse pre-school and elementary school scholars in the District of Columbia to be leaders, scholars and responsible citizens who are committed to social justice. We teach children to think, speak, read, write and learn in two languages: English and French or English and Spanish. With a dual focus on academic excellence and community service, the Stokes School accomplishes its mission by creating an environment of achievement, respect and non-violence.*

## **Our Three School Rules:**

**I will take care of myself.**

**I will take care of others.**

**I will take care of my community.**

*One of the school's greatest strengths is our family's engagement in the education of their children. We hope this handbook will serve as a guide for families as partners in our learning community.*

This handbook was last updated August 2020. This handbook addresses policies and procedures governing normal, in-person school operating procedures. Please see the Distance Learning Handbook and FAQ for further information regarding distance learning for school year 2020-2021



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## **ABOUT ELSIE WHITLOW STOKES COMMUNITY FREEDOM PCS**

### **Our History**

The Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School was founded in 1998 and named for Elsie Whitlow Stokes, an elementary school teacher in Arkansas, whose instructional practice was based on three core beliefs:

- Every scholar can achieve academically and become a responsible citizen.
- Every scholar must receive a solid foundation in reading, mathematics, social studies, science and the arts.
- Community service activities prepare scholars to become caring neighbors and good citizens.

Using her three principles, the 36-year teaching veteran helped to lay the foundation for the successful educational development of over 1000 scholars. Stokes School, founded by Mrs. Stokes' daughter, Linda Moore, is a tribute to her life and legacy as an educator.

### **Our Goals**

- Help scholars achieve the highest levels of academic excellence.
- Teach scholars how to speak, read, write, think and learn in two languages: 1) English and French or 2) English and Spanish.
- Actively involve scholars in community service learning while preparing them for responsible citizenship in a multicultural society.
- Increase scholars' knowledge of and respect for their own and other cultures.

We achieve these goals not simply by teaching in the classroom, but also by creating an environment of acceptance, respect and nonviolence among scholars and all members of our school community.

### **Our Parents**

Stokes School must communicate with parents concerning:

- Their scholar's eligibility for special programs
- Their scholar's educational progress
- Parents' opportunities for involvement
- Parents' right to know the professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals serving their scholar
- The progress and status of their scholar's school
- Parents/guardians' right to inspect and review their scholar's education records maintained by the school
- Parents/guardians' right to request corrections to records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading

*Generally, Stokes School must have prior written permission from the parent/guardian in order to release any "personally identifiable" information from a scholar's education record to a third party. (See p. 40 of this handbook or [www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org) for full FERPA policy)*

## ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Stokes School is a D.C. public charter school, and as such accepts applications from all Pre-K and elementary age scholars living in the District of Columbia. For a complete explanation of admissions and enrollment processes, please consult the school's website at [www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org).

Stokes School participates in the My School DC common application and common lottery process. Please refer to [www.myschooldc.org](http://www.myschooldc.org) for detailed information. **Parents of returning scholars must complete an *Intent to Enroll* form each year directly with Stokes School.** Open houses and tours are held for prospective parents and scholars throughout the year.

Parents/guardians are **required** to provide the following information upon registration:

- Proof of residency required by DC government
- Transfer papers, report cards, and school records
- Physician-signed [dental](#) and [health](#) certificates
- Proof of immunization

*Registration is **NOT** complete (and, therefore, admission is **not** guaranteed) until all items have been submitted. Due dates will be announced on the Stokes School website and newsletters.*

### Approximate Schedule of Events

Actual dates and explanations can be found on our website at [www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org).

December: application for next school year is available via [www.MySchoolDC.org](http://www.MySchoolDC.org)

January/February: returning scholars submit their *Intent to Enroll* forms

March: application deadline on [www.MySchoolDC.org](http://www.MySchoolDC.org)

April: lottery takes place and notifications are sent

May: registration is due by the last day of school



## SCHOOL SCHEDULE

In 2020-21, the school year will begin August 31, 2020 (*Pre-K will begin on August 31, 2020*) and will end on June 24, 2021. Make-up days may be added if school is closed due to weather or other situations beyond our control. (See school calendar at [www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org) for more details.)

Our scholars start each day in morning line-up, where we share announcements, celebrate birthdays, recite our school rules and sing our school song. Therefore, we ask that your scholar arrive by 8:05 am to participate in this important morning tradition.

### School Schedule by Grade

**Pre-K:** 9:00 AM arrival, 3:00 PM Dismissal

**Kindergarten and First Grade:** 8:05 AM (Morning Line-Up), 3:30 PM Dismissal

**ALL GRADES are dismissed at 1:00 PM every Friday.**

### Attendance and Truancy

Parents/guardians are required to notify the school on all days when scholars will be absent. Notification can be made by email, written note, or by calling the school at 202-975-2100 by 8:00am. Emails should be sent to [EastEndAttendance@EWStokes.org](mailto:EastEndAttendance@EWStokes.org). Some absences will be excused if you communicate with the school. These include:

- Illness of the scholar (A doctor's notice is required if a scholar is absent for three consecutive days.)
- An emergency that requires the presence of the scholar at home
- Death in the immediate family
- Observance of religious holidays
- Other absences approved by the Director of Student Services or Director of Teaching and Learning. Requests must be received for approval 2-weeks prior to the requested date.

If you do not notify the school about your scholar's absence within 5 days upon your scholar's return to school, or if the absence is for a reason not listed above, the absence will be considered "unexcused." Each time a scholar has one (1) unexcused absence, the school will attempt to contact the parent or guardian by 4:00pm of the same day. The law requires that the school contact The DC Child and Family Services Agency after the accrual of ten (10) unexcused absences. After twenty (20) consecutive days of unexcused absences, the scholar will be removed from the school roster and parents/guardians will be required to complete the re-enrollment process. Not only can unexcused absences result in failing grades but there is also growing evidence of the long-lasting effects of childhood truancy on future success.

### Arrival and Tardiness

For Kindergarten through Second Grade scholars, school begins with morning line-up at 8:05 AM. A scholar who arrives in their class after 8:15 AM is considered tardy. Scholars must sign in at receptionist's desk and pick up a tardy pass to take to class. Habitual tardiness disrupts class learning, puts your scholar at an educational disadvantage, can be considered educational neglect, and may be referred to DC Child and Family Services.

### Dismissal and Early Dismissal

Please note the dismissal times of each grade and please be on time to pick up your scholar. Pre-K, Kindergarten through Second Grade scholars get picked up from their classrooms. Scholars who are not picked up within 15 minutes of their dismissal time will be automatically enrolled in the Aftercare Program and parents will be charged the daily Aftercare rate.

Whenever it is necessary for a scholar to leave during school hours, parents/guardians MUST notify his/her teacher in writing. When picking up a scholar before his/her regular dismissal time, the parent/guardian must report to the receptionist's desk to sign the scholar out and the receptionist will notify the classroom teacher. Appointments away from school should only be scheduled during the school day when absolutely necessary.

***Scholars will only be released from school to an adult who is authorized by the parent / guardian.***

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

Entrance to the school is possible at either of two doors, the East Capitol Street Door under the Stokes School awning from 7:30am until 6:00pm (unless otherwise noted) or at the Blaine Street parking lot entrance to the gym from 7:30am until 9:00am only. The Blaine Street parking lot entrance will be closed at all other times and will not be available for either entry or exit.

Parking in the Blaine Street parking lot is limited to school staff and parking or standing is prohibited on East Capitol Street NE from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Unmetered street parking is available on Blaine, 55<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Streets NE. Please obey traffic patterns, abide by all road signs, use common sense and respect our neighbors. Please do not park, even for 'just a minute,' in front of driveways, in front of fire hydrants, or in any way that blocks traffic. Please use sidewalks—not our neighbors' yards—and refrain from littering. Any car illegally parked on school grounds is subject to be towed at owner's expense.

### **East Capitol Street**

Between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm, please do not stop on East Capitol Street NE. Parents are encouraged to park on nearby streets and walk their scholar(s) to the East Capitol Street Entrance for both pick up and drop off or walk their scholar(s) to the Blaine Street parking lot entrance for drop-off between the hours of 7:30am and 9:00am.

### **Blaine Street**

The gate to the Blaine Street parking lot is opened from 7:30am-9:00am for drop-off. For safety reasons, we ask that parents drive East from 55<sup>th</sup> Street on Blaine Street NE, turn right into the gate, right at the bottom of the hill, right into and around the north parking loop, left towards the school building and drop their scholar off onto the sidewalk on the school side of the driveway between the hoop house and the Stokes School rear door. Please, do not park in the parking lot or the driveway; school staff will escort your child into the building. When exiting the gate, please turn right to continue East on Blaine Street NE towards 57<sup>th</sup> Street NE.

### **Before School**

Starting at 7:30am, scholars may be dropped off at school for our before school program. Scholars are offered breakfast and a variety of activities promoting a healthy and happy start to their day. There is no cost to parents/guardians for before care.

### **After School Program**

Our *All About Kids and Families* after school program begins at **3:00 PM** and ends at **6:00 PM**. Scholars are served supper and participate in academic support, enrichment and recreational opportunities.

We offer extracurricular after school activities to all of our scholars. As we grow, these will include music lessons (such as steel drums, violin, choir and more), and clubs (such as robotics or martial arts). Please stop by the front desk for this year's activity list.

Fees for the after school program and extracurricular activities are charged on a sliding scale dependent on family income, and are due bi-weekly. Clarence Bell-Alston directs and Jasmine Campbell coordinates our All About Kids and Families after school program. Mr. Alston can be reached at [StokesAAKF@hotmail.com](mailto:StokesAAKF@hotmail.com) and Ms. Jasmine can be reached at [JasmineC@EWStokes.org](mailto:JasmineC@EWStokes.org).

### Emergency Procedures

Stokes School has created an emergency plan in conjunction with the DC Emergency and Safety Alliance that provides vital information about our school to the DC Metropolitan Police and Fire Departments in case of an emergency. It is essential that parents provide the school with current phone numbers and contact information so the school can reach you in case of an emergency. Please notify the school's front office when you have a change of address or telephone number. You may provide updates by calling 202-975-2100 or emailing [NancyC@EWStokes.org](mailto:NancyC@EWStokes.org).

If Stokes School is closed/delayed due to inclement weather, the school will contact parents using Send Word Now via phone call, text message, or email. If Stokes School has a 2-hour delayed opening, the doors will not open until 10:05. All scholars are expected to be in class by 10:15. **IF THERE IS A DELAYED OPENING, BEFORE CARE WILL NOT BE PROVIDED.**

You can also call the school for updates at 202-975-2100 or consult the school's website, [www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org), or our Facebook page.



## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Stokes School complies with the DC Healthy School Act. As a result, we have healthy and nutritious school meals prepared on-site, a flourishing school garden, health education classes, and daily PE classes for scholars.

### Food Services

Food fuels the brain and affects behavior and academics. Our school-wide wellness initiative was implemented to support developing healthy habits that last a lifetime. Our food service and policies reflect our emphasis on leading healthy lifestyles. Stokes School serves breakfast, lunch, and supper (for scholars who participate in the Afterschool Program).

Scholars may bring their own lunches or eat school lunch depending on their daily preference. Special meal options are available for scholars with dietary restrictions. Fresh fruit and vegetables are available throughout the day for scholar consumption. No pork or nut products are used in school meals or snacks. The menu is published monthly on the school website, and is posted in classrooms and common areas around the building. If you choose to send lunch with your scholar, please note that **due to some of our scholars having severe food allergies, Stokes School has a strict NO NUTS policy.** We encourage parents and guardians to join us for lunch, as scholars learn manners and conversation skills.

Refrigeration is not available for scholars who bring lunch from home; therefore, please keep in mind that the lunch should be packed so that it remains fresh and safe to eat. Microwaves are also not available for scholar use. To the best of our ability, the school also maintains a “no sharing lunch” policy.

### Fees for School Meals

Breakfast and supper are available at no cost to families. The cost of school lunch is \$3.00 per day. Each family completes a school lunch application prior to the start of school which determines the cost for their family. Parents and guardians are billed for lunch on a monthly basis and are expected to pay all bills that are incurred.

### Snacks

All classes have a designated snack time. Please check with your scholar’s teacher to determine how and when snacks are managed in the classroom.

We ask that you send snacks that are healthy and sustaining such as fruit, vegetables, granola bars (without nuts), hummus, cheese, crackers, veggie chips, etc. **Stokes school prohibits snacks such as donuts, cookies, potato chips, chocolate, candy, or sodas.** If any of these prohibited items are sent to school, scholars will be asked to return those items to their backpacks, as they will not be allowed to eat them in school. Healthy snacks are offered to all scholars free of charge.

### Birthday Celebrations

We want all children to feel special on their birthdays and we celebrate throughout the day of his/her birthday. We start the day by singing happy birthday in all three languages during morning line-up.

In accordance with our wellness policy and in an effort to limit class disruption, once each month classes may hold a celebration for all scholars who have birthdays during that month.

**Parents must make arrangements with classroom teachers for birthday celebrations at least one week in advance.**

Parents are encouraged to bring healthy snacks, natural fruit juices or water, and limit sweet to **one small, nut-free baked good** per scholar.

Please, send no chips, candy, soda or sugared drinks, goody bags or piñatas.

Parents may also provide an activity, like games or reading a story. Talk to your teachers for ideas and approval.

To honor your scholar's birthday, you may consider donating a book to the library with your scholar's name listed on the donation plaque inside the book.

### Health Issues

A medical record is kept on your scholar and is updated yearly. The records are confidential and are kept in a secured filing cabinet. Stokes School complies with D.C. laws that require physical, dental and immunizations records to be updated yearly. You are required to have your physician complete the forms provided and return them to the school by the first day of school. Documentation of immunizations must be presented upon entry to school. Beginning in the 2020-21 school year, all schools will be required to enforce this [District immunization law](#) by requiring immunization certification as part of school attendance, including notifying and potentially removing non-compliant students from in-person instruction after a 20-school day period until they obtain the necessary immunizations (DC Official Code § 38-505).

Parents/guardians should make every attempt to give medication to scholars before or after school. The school is unable to dispense any medication, including over the counter medications, to scholars without an authorization for administration of medication form completed and signed by a doctor and parent/guardian. Disciplinary action may be taken in the event that a scholar brings controlled substances to school. If your scholar needs medication during school hours, please see the school nurse for the proper paperwork and procedures. This includes children who have received permission from their physician to carry an asthma inhaler. Parent/guardian must provide this paperwork along with the medicine to the school nurse.

A scholar diagnosed with Pediculosis (infestation by live head lice) may remain in school that day; however, parents or guardians should commence treatment at the conclusion of the school day. The child may return to school upon submitting to the school nurse a parent's or guardian's note attesting to the fact that the scholar is undergoing treatment. A scholar with nits (lice eggs) shall not be excluded from school; however, the school nurse, principal, or designee shall send a note to the parents or guardians advising them to monitor the child for re-infestation.

Ringworm is also a common problem among school-age children. If you find that your scholar has ringworm, please notify the school so that preventive measures can be taken. Scholars with ringworm may not attend school until they are successfully treated with medication and no longer at risk for infecting others.

For your scholar's welfare and for the protection of others, it is important to keep your scholar home if he or she has:

- Been exposed to COVID – 19;
- A fever over 100 degrees during the past 24 hours;

- A cold in the active stages;
- A sore throat and/or swollen neck glands;
- An undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions;
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours; and/or
- Head lice or ring worm that has not been treated with medication.

### **Field Trip Medication Administration Policy**

Scholars that are under the care of a medical provider and have a prescribed medication order shall be eligible to have their medication administered while on their field trips only when absolutely necessary.

The scholar's parent/caregiver may administer medication on the field trip.

If the parent/caregiver cannot participate in the field trip, the Campus Director will designate a school staff member who has completed the "Administration of Medication" (AOM) training and has a current certificate on file.

The principal will communicate to the school nurse the names of scholars with special needs who are attending a field trip three days in advance of the field trip.

On the day of the field trip the school nurse will make available to the school trained medication aide a single dose of the affected scholar's daily prescribed medication and/or the scholar's "as needed" medication for administration while participating on the school field trip.

The school nurse will place medication in a clear zip lock bag labeled with the scholar's name, along with a copy of the signed Authorization for Medication Administration Form and a Medication Administration Record (MAR) specifically labeled for use while on school sponsored field trips.

The school nurse and the trained medication aide will verify the contents of the box/bag and it will then be signed out by both the school trained medication aide and the school nurse utilizing the Medication Sign-out sheet.

Immediately upon arriving back to school grounds, the school nurse and the school trained medication aide will verify the contents of the box/bag and sign them back in to the health office, utilizing the Medication Sign-Out sheet.

The school nurse will establish and maintain in the health office a medication notebook in which all school trained medication aides' document medication administration in accordance with their training.

Upon return to the school, if administration of medication was required while on the school sponsored field trip the school trained medication aide will record that the medication was administered on the "record of administration sheet" in the medication administration book, located in the health suite or Principal's office.

Document any unexpected occurrences and/or returned medication that was not administered in accordance with the established Administration of Medication policies and procedures.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW**

### **Dress Code**

We do not have school uniforms, but we require that scholars dress appropriately for the weather and learning activities. We discourage t-shirts with negative messages, halters, midriffs, short shorts, short skirts, and short dresses. Hats are discouraged except in cases of religious beliefs or medical conditions. Because of gang activity, bandanas are highly discouraged as well. We encourage scholars to wear sturdy shoes that are suitable for outdoor play and physical education. Scholars can be asked to change their clothes or sent home for clothing that is deemed inappropriate.

### **Toys, Cosmetics and Electronic Games**

Scholars are not allowed to bring toys, cosmetics, electronic games, radios, fireworks, CD players, iPods, or MP3 players unless these items are part of a classroom or school-sanctioned activity.

**Scholars are allowed to bring cell phones, however they must be turned off and placed in their backpack while they are in school.**

### **Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

Stokes School has the ability to enhance the education of its scholars through the use of computers. The school offers electronic network access for scholars, teachers, staff and parents within the school.

Stokes School does not condone the use of controversial or offensive materials found on the internet and takes precautions to limit scholar access to such content by providing adult supervision, using filtering software, and by teaching scholars to use computers responsibly. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. School employees, scholars and parents must be aware that access to the Internet will be withdrawn from users who do not respect the rights of others or who do not follow the rules and regulations established by Stokes School. Please see page 21 of our [Distance Learning Handbook](#) for policy on school issued devices.

### **Parent/Guardian Volunteer Opportunities**

Parents make all the difference at Stokes School, and we could not do what we do without you. There are numerous opportunities for parent involvement which are designed to help parents support their scholar's education and development.

Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Classroom 'Room Parent'
- Board membership
- Fundraising campaigns
- Scholar enrichment activities, service learning activities, classroom assistance and field trip chaperones
- Gardening
- Kitchen help
- Campus beautification days and handyman projects
- Advocacy and advisory committees
- School Tour Guides

Parents/guardians, grandparents or other family members interested in volunteering are encouraged to

contact Mr. Kenny, Dean of Students at 202.975.2100 or [Kennethd@EWStokes.org](mailto:Kennethd@EWStokes.org), for more information. Please note that for the safety of our children, school volunteers who work with children for more than 10 hours per week are required to undergo a background check.

### School Traditions

Stokes School has a number of school traditions with which families will become acquainted. Specific details about each tradition will be communicated through various modes including the school newsletter, website, and Facebook.

Throughout Year

School Spirit Day (every Friday—wear your Stokes School t-shirt!)

**August/September:** New Parent Orientation, First Day Celebration, Back to School Night, Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month Celebration

**October:** Fall Outing

**November:** Taste of Stokes, Trimester Showcases

**December:** PTA Pancake Breakfast, Winter Break

**February:** 100th Day Celebration, Friendship Ball, Black History Month Celebration

**March:** Reading Celebration, Trimester Showcases

**April:** Standardized testing

**May:** Standardized tests, Staff Appreciation Week, Volunteer Luncheon

**June:** Heritage Day Celebration, Stepping Up Day (Kindergarten)

### School and Classroom Listservs

The Elsie Whitlow Stokes School Listserv ([StokesSchoolEastEnd@googlegroups.com](mailto:StokesSchoolEastEnd@googlegroups.com)) and the various classroom listservs were created to serve as forums for the Stokes School – East End Community.

As part of your participation in the Stokes School listserv, we ask that you review the information below. If you have questions, contact the Stokes School – East End Family Engagement Associate at [Kennethd@EWStokes.org](mailto:Kennethd@EWStokes.org). Stokes School reserves the right to moderate, suspend or terminate membership on lists if necessary.

### **FUNCTION**

- The listserv is an additional communication vehicle; not a substitute for school communications. Participants should continue to utilize the weekly newsletter, school website, daily folders and in-person contact to gather/share information.
- The [StokesSchoolEastEnd@googlegroups.com](mailto:StokesSchoolEastEnd@googlegroups.com) is a moderated listserv, not to be confused with the Stokes School email – [StokesSchoolEastEnd@gmail.com](mailto:StokesSchoolEastEnd@gmail.com). All add/delete or change requests should be sent to [CarolineH@EWstokes.org](mailto:CarolineH@EWstokes.org).

- Because the listserv is internet & e-mail based, its primary function is speed and convenience. It is to be used to notify the community of school events, needs, requests, changes in schedules, cancellations, snow days, etc. Parents can also use it to share activities, education related news and other resources that are beneficial to the Stokes community.

## LISTSERV ETIQUETTE

- All messages should be signed by sender and must have a clear and concise subject line.
- Only send a message to the entire list when it contains information that pertains to the entire Stokes School – East End community. Classroom specific announcements should be sent out via class listservs (see Community Directory for class information). Messages such as "thanks for the information" or "me, too" should be sent to individuals—not to the entire list.
- Messages from and about Stokes School – East End, its policies, events, or calls to action, must be authorized by school administration and come from a member of the relevant administration. These messages are usually sent by Carolina Hudson or from [StokesSchoolEastEnd@gmail.com](mailto:StokesSchoolEastEnd@gmail.com). If you have a message to post that fits these criteria, contact the school to determine who to send it to so that they may review and post it.
- Do not send commercial or political endorsements or messages; advertisements for non-school related personal promotion; endorsement of student or parent candidates for office; spam mail or any other commercial and/or personal solicitations. Simple requests for car pools, child care recommendations, etc., are OK and DO NOT fall into this category.
- Do not challenge or attack others. The discussions on the lists are meant to stimulate conversation, not to create contention. Let others have their say, just as you may. All defamatory, abusive, profane, threatening, offensive, or illegal materials are strictly prohibited.
- Stokes School prides itself in being responsive to the needs of its scholars, their families, and the community at large. Contact relevant school admin, staff, and/or parent committees, directly with issues you may be experiencing at the school. This appropriate, respectful approach will allow for constructive resolve, rather than prematurely upsetting an entire listserv community by airing grievances prior to engaging the school staff.



## **ACADEMICS AND LEARNING**

### **Curriculum**

Stokes School became authorized to offer the Primary Years Program (PYP) in June 2020. Through the PYP framework, we help scholars develop the intellectual, personal, and social emotional skills to live, learn and work in a globalized world. We aim for our scholars to become responsible members of a global community by striving to be inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective.

Our curriculum is hands-on, student-centered, and allows scholars to engage in meaningful activities, collaborate with their peers and ask meaningful questions in order to solve real-life problems. Stokes School scholars learn how to develop independence and take responsibility for their learning. They learn how to establish personal values that help them understand the importance of cultural diversity and social justice.

On a weekly basis, teachers reflect on scholars' documentation, and engage in the planning process, defining the curriculum's central ideas, discussing how to encourage inquiry into those ideas and having important discussions on how to find ways to meet the needs and interests of all scholars. Our program outlines six-week units of study. Through these units, scholars acquire the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes that connect with the IB learner profile.

During the units of inquiry (UOI), scholars develop their thinking skills, communication skills, research skills, self-management skills and social skills. Each UOI is created around one of the 6 transdisciplinary themes (Who We Are, How We Express Ourselves, Where We Are in Time and Place, Sharing the Planet, How the World Works). Every year, the UOIs are revised as teachers find ways to promote scholars' agency in the process. As the units are connected to real-life issues, such as the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, scholars are asked to think about possible "Actions". PYP also includes "Celebrations of Learning", opportunities for scholars to demonstrate and reflect on their accomplishments and their growth in front of their families and other members of the school community.

In fifth grade, scholars complete a final "Exhibition". This represents the culmination of their path at Stokes School. This is the time for them to use their agency in order to develop the unit from the beginning to the end with the support of their teachers and their mentors.

### **PRE-K**

Through our program, scholars in the Pre-K classes participate in learning experiences that are appropriate for their age and abilities. Daily schedules include activities that support fine and gross motor skills, language development and social emotional growth. Stokes scholars experience a supportive and nurturing environment; they are encouraged to socialize, cooperate and learn how to solve problems. In

Pre-K, scholars receive instruction in the target language 90% of the time, and English 10% of the time, both in small group instruction.

## K-5<sup>th</sup> GRADE

Scholars develop inquiry skills by engaging in activities around six transdisciplinary themes. Themes allow scholars to develop understanding of different topics of their interest. They are encouraged to inquire and research, share ideas, solve problems and create solutions for issues in their immediate community and around the world. Scholars become critical thinkers and problem solvers that will impact their community in positive ways. Scholars in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade receive instruction in the target language 50% of the time and on English 50% of the time.

Teachers infuse the essential elements of the PYP and the UOI in the different areas of learning including math, reading and writing.

## Curriculum

- **Balanced Literacy - TC Reading and Writing Workshop**
  - Addresses each child's individual learning
  - Teaches strategies
  - Supports small group work
  - Supports learning community as a way to bring learners along
- **Zearn Math**

Scholars explore mathematical ideas to develop understanding and fluency. Scholars collaborate, investigate, and take part in problem base-learning.

The curriculum encourages:

- Student-centered learning
  - Active learning and collaboration
  - Student choice on what strategies to use to solve problems
  - Students explaining and justifying reasoning
- **Science and Social Studies**

**The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)** encourage scholars' inquiry in science through a system of cognitive, social, and physical practices. Scholars explore disciplinary core ideas that are grouped in four domains:

- Physical sciences
- Life sciences
- Earth and space sciences
- Engineering, technology, and applications of science.

Different concepts of each domain are explored during the six transdisciplinary themes units.

**The OSSE Social Studies Standards** allow scholars to explore and understand central ideas, events, people, and works that have shaped our world. In addition, under the standards, scholars acquire a firm grasp of reasoning and practice in inquiry and research. scholars learn how to frame and test hypotheses, distinguish logical from faulty reasoning, frame reasoned options and arguments, and grasp reflective thinking and evaluation.

- Specials (Art, Music, PE, Health, and Gardening)

At Stokes School, specials are an integral part of the development of our scholars. Specials teachers, (Art/Music/PE-Health/Gardening) reflect and plan learning experiences promoting the scholars' agency. With their specific standards and outcomes in mind, teachers integrate and reinforce the PYP Learner Profile and the Key Concepts.

### Assessments

Please see the Stokes School Assessment Policy on the Stokes School website (EWStokes.org) for more information about the philosophy and practice of assessment and reporting at the school.

Parent – Teacher Goal Setting Conferences are scheduled each trimester for families and teachers to discuss scholar academic and socio-emotional growth. Parents/guardians are asked to meet with their scholar's teacher at least three times throughout the year, but are encouraged to make appointments with their scholar's teacher more often than the scheduled dates for conferences. Each trimester, standards-based report cards are issued to document scholar learning.

As mandated for all DC Public and Charter Schools, our third through fifth graders take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) standardized assessment in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Pre-kindergarten through second grade scholars are also given formative and annual standardized assessments (please refer to Table 1 below). These, along with curricular aligned and teacher-generated assessments, give parents/guardians and teachers a variety of ways to monitor scholars' academic development. Classroom teachers are able to track scholars' mastery of specific skills and are available to discuss progress with parents/guardians.

Please see page 21 of our [Distance Learning Handbook](#) for updates to our Assessment Calendar.

**Table 1: Stokes School uses the standardized tests below to determine scholar proficiency in various subjects.**

| <b>Standardized Test</b>   | <b>Skill Area Tested</b>                     | <b>Grade Levels Tested</b> | <b>Time of Year Administered</b> |
|--|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers (PARCC)      | Reading & Math                               | 3rd—5th                    | Spring                           |
| Assessing Comprehension & Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) | English Proficiency                          | K-5th                      | Winter                           |
| STAMP  | Spanish or French Proficiency                | 2nd, 5 <sup>th</sup>       | Late Spring                      |
| Fountas & Pinell Benchmark Assessment System                               | English or Spanish Reading                   | K— 5th                     | Fall, Winter and Spring          |
| GB+ (Developmental Reading Assessment)                                     | French Reading                               | 1st-5th                    | Fall and Spring                  |
| Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)                                    | Reading & Math                               | K-5th                      | Fall, Winter and Spring          |
| Teaching Strategies (GOLD)   | Developmental assessment for early childhood | Pre-K                      | Throughout the year              |

### Student Support Services

Support services are available to students who are not making adequate progress at school. Students who consistently display difficulties progressing or achieving in expected areas of growth and/or learning should be referred to the Student Support Team (areas of expected growth include, but are not limited to: academic, social/emotional, behavioral, cognitive, language and motor skills). The Student Support Team (SST) is composed of the SST coordinator, a general educator, a special educator, the school social worker and a parent/guardian. The team may also include the Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Student Support, specials teachers, the school nurse, special service providers (e.g., speech-language pathologist and/or occupational therapist) as well as other school staff.

Prior to an initial SST meeting, student data is collected in the form of written observations, discipline forms, behavior data sheets, attendance records, class assignments and tests, standardized test results, parent feedback, school staff reports and other data. At the meeting, team members present and discuss scholars' data as well as intervention possibilities. With the aim of improving scholars' rate of learning and their ultimate school success, team members choose appropriate strategies and interventions to be implemented for a six-week time frame. After the six-week period, the SST reconvenes, evaluates the effectiveness of the plan, and develops next steps.

### Referring a Student for Support Services

Any adult in the Stokes School community (i.e., staff member or caregiver) may refer a student for support services. Completed referral forms should be provided to Angelica Carter ([AngelicaC@EWStokes.org](mailto:AngelicaC@EWStokes.org)), Student Support Team Coordinator, or to Kenneth Duff ([KennethD@EWStokes.org](mailto:KennethD@EWStokes.org)), Dean of Students.

Possible Interventions include:

- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- Classroom Behavior Interventions
- Teacher Consultation Sessions
- Evaluations:
  - Psychological
  - Physical Therapy
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Speech-Language
- Individualized Education Programs (IEP)
- Brief Individual Counseling Sessions
- Long-Term Individual Counseling Sessions
- Pair Counseling Sessions
- Brief Family Counseling Sessions
- Parent Skills Education Sessions
- Community Referrals
- In-Patient Hospitalization
- Alternative School Placement
- Residential Educational Treatment Center

**Response to Intervention (RTI)** is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and special service providers. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. RTI is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.

For RTI implementation to work well, the following essential components must be implemented with fidelity and in a rigorous manner:

***High-Quality, Scientifically Based Classroom Instruction***

All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the general education classroom.

***Ongoing Student Assessment***

Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in comparison with the peer group. These data are then used when determining which students need closer monitoring or intervention. Throughout the RTI process, student progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum. Decisions made regarding students' instructional needs are based on multiple data points taken in context over time.

***Tiered Instruction***

A multi-tiered approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs.

***Parent Involvement***

Schools implementing RTI provide parents information about their child's progress, the instruction and interventions used, the staff who are delivering the instruction, and the academic or behavioral goals for their child.

Though there is no single, thoroughly researched and widely practiced "model" of the RTI process, it is generally defined as a three-tier (or three-step) model of school supports that uses research-based academic and/or behavioral interventions.

**Tier 1: High-Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening, and Group Interventions**

Within Tier 1, all students receive high-quality, scientifically-based instruction provided by qualified personnel to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction. All students are screened on a periodic basis to establish an academic and behavioral baseline and to identify struggling learners who need additional support. The length of time for this step can vary, but it generally should not exceed 6 weeks. During that time, student progress is closely monitored using a validated screening system such as a curriculum-based measurement. At the end of this period, students showing significant progress are generally returned to the regular classroom program. Students not showing adequate progress are moved to Tier 2.



## **Tier 2: Targeted Interventions**

Students not making adequate progress in the regular classroom in Tier 1 are provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs on the basis of levels of performance and rates of progress. Intensity varies across group size, frequency and duration of intervention, and level of training of the professionals providing instruction or intervention. These services and interventions are provided in small-group settings in addition to instruction in the general curriculum. In the early grades (kindergarten through 3rd grade), interventions are usually in the areas of reading and math. A longer period of time may be required for this tier, but it should generally not exceed a grading period. Students who continue to show too little progress at this level of intervention are then considered for more intensive interventions as part of Tier 3.

## **Tier 3: Intensive Interventions and Comprehensive Evaluation**

At this level, students receive individualized, intensive interventions that target the students' skill deficits. Students who do not achieve the desired level of progress in response to these targeted interventions are then referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). The data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are included and used to make the eligibility decision.

**It should be noted that at any point in an RTI process, IDEA 2004 allows parents to request a formal evaluation to determine eligibility for special education. An RTI process cannot be used to deny or delay a formal evaluation for special education.**

In addition to variations in the tiers used to deliver RTI services, schools use different approaches in implementation, such as problem-solving, functional assessment, standard protocol, and hybrid approaches. Although there are many formats for how a school might implement RTI to best serve the needs of its students, in every case RTI can be a school-wide framework for efficiently allocating resources to improve student outcomes.

\*Taken from the RTI Action Network, A Program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities

**A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)** is a process that identifies specific target behavior, the purpose of the behavior, and what factors maintain the behavior that is interfering with a scholar's educational progress. An FBA can be conducted for scholars with behavioral or emotional problems that are interfering with their educational progress or the progress of classmates. Any scholar who is exhibiting challenging behaviors that are not responding to typical school interventions may benefit from having a functional assessment. Conducting an FBA before a behavior escalates into a disciplinary action allows both the teachers and parents to focus on positive outcomes and can help build a positive relationship between the teacher, student, and family.

**A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** takes the observations made in a Functional Behavioral Assessment and turns them into a concrete plan of action for managing a student's behavior. A BIP may include ways to change the environment to keep behavior from starting in the first place, provide positive reinforcement to promote good behavior, employ planned ignoring to avoid reinforcing bad behavior, and provide supports needed so that the student will not be driven to act out due to frustration or fatigue.

### Resolving Problems at School

If either you or your scholar encounter a specific problem or concern at school, the following steps should be taken:

1. Contact your scholar's teacher
2. If not resolved, contact Marta del Pilar Lynch, Director of Teaching and Learning, [PilarL@EWStokes.org](mailto:PilarL@EWStokes.org).
3. If not resolved, you may write a letter to `Abdu'l-Karim Ewing-Boyd, Campus Director or email him at [KarimE@EWStokes.org](mailto:KarimE@EWStokes.org).
4. If not resolved, you may write a letter to Erika Bryant, Executive Director or email her at [ErikaB@EWStokes.org](mailto:ErikaB@EWStokes.org).
5. If not resolved, you may write a letter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, or email [BoardChair@EWStokes.org](mailto:BoardChair@EWStokes.org).

### Communicating with Your Scholar's Teacher

**We encourage regular communication between parents and teachers. There are several ways for you to reach teachers:**

Via email - every teacher at Stokes School has an email address that they check regularly. Please check the staff page on the school's website ([www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org)) for teachers' email addresses

Communication Folder/Planner - You can write a note to your scholar's teacher and place it in your scholar's communication folder/planner

Face to Face - You can speak to your scholar's teacher before class begins or after class ends

Appointment - You can set up an appointment with your scholar's teacher

**Only emergency telephone calls** be transferred to the classroom during instructional time.

### Visiting the Classroom

Every person visiting their scholar's classroom during instructional time must:

- Make an appointment in advance
- Sign-in at the front desk
- Get a visitor's pass
- Be respectful and mindful of teaching and learning time

## Comprehensive Behavior Intervention Plan

The goal of the Discipline Policy is to preserve the dignity of the scholar and the integrity of the classroom. Positive discipline ensures a safe learning environment where scholars feel valued and are encouraged to behave in a respectful manner. At Stokes School, our approach to discipline is holistic. A scholar's individual life circumstances are taken into account during the behavior intervention process as much as possible. We invite parents/guardians to partner with us in our efforts to promote positive behaviors.

### Promoting A Positive School Climate

Our aim at Stokes School is to promote mutual respect, academic excellence, an appreciation of diversity, and exemplary behavior for all our scholars. Our school rules exist to create and preserve an environment in which scholars are free to learn and develop. Everyone within our school community agrees to adhere to the following three rules and core values.

#### The Three School Rules

I will take care of myself.  
I will take care of others.  
I will take care of my community.

#### Core Values

Excellence  
Respect  
Diversity

#### Rituals that Promote and Expand Positive Community

Each morning we gather as a school community for morning line-up. We sing together, recognize birthdays, and celebrate individual and school-wide achievements. In addition, examples of how scholars and staff have practiced the three school rules are shared.

Periodic school activities bring us together to mark specific yearly events (e.g., Month of La Francophonie, Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month, Black History Month, Friendship Ball, Family Holiday Celebration, Heritage Day, Cherry Blossom Festival, etc.).

On a daily basis, teachers are expected to implement the Responsive Classroom's morning meeting to promote a peaceful classroom environment and develop scholar's social skills.

#### Opportunities and Programs for Strengthening Emotional Competencies

Stokes School provides a variety of programs and activities designed to help scholars strengthen social and emotional competencies:

**Our teachers are trained in the Responsive Classroom Approach, which consists of practical strategies for bringing together social and academic learning throughout the school day:**

- Our teachers are trained to use positive approaches to support appropriate or desirable behaviors
- Scholars are engaged in service-learning projects
- Cross-curricular and after-school activities focus on fun, learning, social and emotional skill building;
- Our physical education program promotes collaboration
- The School Social Worker is available to meet with parents to share strategies, and techniques to help strengthen their children's emotional competencies.

#### Encouraging Appropriate Behavior

School's approach to discipline is derived from the Responsive Classroom. The Responsive Classroom is an evidence-based approach to teaching that focuses on engaging academics, positive community, effective management, and developmental awareness. In accordance with the Responsive Classroom, during the first six weeks of school, teachers in each classroom create a set of rules with scholar input, establish daily

routines, assist scholars in getting along with each other, and help them learn to take responsibility for the maintenance of the classroom. All of these activities set the stage for a harmonious learning environment. **For each rule, consequences for misbehavior are identified so that scholars are aware of them in advance.** It is during these first several weeks of instruction that the foundation for a positive school climate is built.

Stokes School's goal is to respect and affirm all scholars. Showing respect for their personhood as well as affirming scholar compliance and achievement positively affects their sense of self-esteem and subsequent academic performance. These goals are made clear to all school staff at the beginning of the year and staff are held accountable for upholding them. To that end, all new staff members participate in professional development activities where they are introduced to our philosophies, provided with positive strategies to encourage appropriate behavior, and undergo periodic observations. We follow the general tenets of the Responsive Classroom.

### **The Responsive Classroom Strategies**

Morning Meeting: A twenty- to thirty-minute daily routine used to begin the school day. All classroom members gather in a circle to greet one another, to listen and respond to each other's news, to practice academic and social skills and to look forward to the events in the day ahead. Morning meeting serves as a transition from home to school, helps children to feel welcome and known, sets the tone for the day, creates a climate of trust, increases students' confidence and investment in learning, provides a meaningful context for teaching and practicing academic skills, encourages cooperation and inclusion and improves children's communication skills.

Hopes and Dreams: Students and teachers articulate their hopes and dreams for the school year during the first week of school. Teachers provide positive guidelines and a vision of a classroom in which care, respect and responsibility matter. Children's individual hopes and dreams are incorporated into this vision and classroom rules grow directly from children's hopes and dreams.

Articulation of hopes and dreams accomplishes the following:

- Sets a tone of collaboration and mutual respect
- Builds community and helps children get to know each other
- Invites children to have a say about what they learn in school
- Enables children to understand and feel invested in the classroom rules

Modeling: When a very specific scholar behavior is required, teachers model the behavior for the students, demonstrating appropriate actions and language. Students then model, observe, discuss and practice the behavior.

Role-Playing: A technique used to help children "see" and think about social situations and appropriate ways of behaving within these situations. Done with whole class, small groups and individually. Role-playing helps children to think about the application of classroom rules, to see a situation from various perspectives and to solve problems.

Logical Consequences: A way of responding to misbehavior that is respectful of children and helps them take responsibility for their actions. The consequences of a child's misbehavior flows logically from what the child did. [Example: cleaning up graffiti on the bathroom wall is a "logical consequence" for the child who drew the graffiti; being suspended from school is not "logically" related. Logical consequences can help children develop inner control by looking closely at their own behavior and learning from their mistakes.

**Stokes School takes a restorative approach to discipline. Restorative conversations address the following questions:**

- What happened?
- Who has been affected?
- How can we repair the harm done?
- What have we learned that will help us make better choices next time?

### **Discipline Procedures**

**Tier I Infractions include:**

Inappropriate/disrespectful language (non-direct)  
Disruptive behavior  
Property misuse/damage  
Defiance/non-compliance  
Leaving the classroom without permission  
Refusal to participate/refusal to work  
Possession of prohibited electronic devices

**Student should only be sent to the Dean of Students after their third Tier I infraction.**

**1<sup>st</sup> infraction:** Classroom staff administers intervention.

**2<sup>nd</sup> infraction:** Complete the Stokes Student Discipline Form (SSDF); staff administers intervention(s).

**3<sup>rd</sup> infraction:** Complete the SSDF and take the student to the Dean of Students.

**Tier I Interventions include:**

Planned ignoring  
Reteach & practice expected behavior  
Non-verbal cue  
Written Reflection  
Proximity  
Change seat  
Humor  
Verbal reminder  
5 Minute Time-out  
Buddy classroom  
Student conference  
Loss of privilege  
Over-correction  
Restorative plan

**Tier II Infractions include:**

Repeated Tier I Behaviors  
Mild physical aggression  
Inappropriate/disrespectful language (directed)  
Lying/cheating  
Minor property damage/destruction (less than \$100)  
Physical contact/horseplay

Writing/marking on desk  
Inappropriate use of technology  
Verbal Aggression  
Harassment/bullying/threatening

**Teacher/Staff MUST administer at least three documented interventions and complete the Stokes Student Discipline Form before the student is escorted to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will contact the parent/guardian.**

**Tier II Interventions**

When a Tier I Intervention is not possible and/or not effective, select an option from below:

Planned discussion  
Written Assignment  
Parent Contact  
Student & Parent Conference  
Behavior contract  
½ day In-School suspension

**Tier III Infractions:**

Severe harassment/bullying/threatening  
Fighting/physical aggression  
Leaving school grounds without permission  
Severe disruption  
Severe, repetitive defiance/non-compliance  
Sexually suggestive/explicit behavior  
Theft  
Major property damage/destruction (more than \$100)  
Arson  
Possession/use of a weapon  
Bomb threat  
Possession/use/distribution of alcohol, tobacco, and/or other drugs

**Teacher/staff MUST complete the Stokes Student Discipline form; Student is escorted to the Dean of Students who contacts the parent and holds a conference.**

**Tier III Interventions**

When a Tier I or Tier II Intervention is not possible and or not effective, select an option from below:

Student Support Team Intervention  
Behavior contract  
In-school suspension  
Out of school suspension  
Contact law enforcement  
Community referral  
Expulsion

**Suspension**

Stokes School complies with the Student Fair Access to School Act of 2017. In very rare instances, an in-school or out of school suspension may be necessary. If suspension is warranted, parents will be contacted and the student will be provided with classwork to be completed during the duration of the suspension. The number of days for suspension is based upon the severity of the infraction, the age of the student,



and previous infractions. The parent or guardian will receive written notice and the suspension will become effective immediately, unless otherwise stated by the administrator on duty. Students are required to complete their academic assignments during their suspension.

Upon returning to class, a re-entry restorative conference will be held. Parents, teachers, the student, and the Dean of Students will be invited to participate in this process.

Stokes School complies with federal guidelines when disciplining scholars with special needs. In the event that 10 days of suspension has been reached, a "Manifestation Determination Meeting" will be conducted no later than 10 days after disciplinary action.

### **Expulsion**

When a scholar is expelled, she/he is not allowed to be present in the school environment. If a scholar repeatedly engages in undesirable behaviors that necessitate suspension, she/he may be expelled from Stokes School. Additionally, a scholar who brings in or is in possession of weapons, illegal drugs or alcohol while at school, will be expelled. A serious breach of discipline may result in immediate suspension or expulsion without warning.

### **Appeal Process**

Parents/guardians can appeal any discipline decision. However, the appeal must be made first to the Campus Director, 'Abdu'l-Karim Ewing-Boyd ([KarimE@EWStokes.org](mailto:KarimE@EWStokes.org)), in writing. If not satisfied, parents can appeal to the Executive Director, Erika Bryant ([ErikaB@EWStokes.org](mailto:ErikaB@EWStokes.org)), in writing. If not satisfied at that time, parents can appeal to the school's Board of Trustees, in the form of a letter or by emailing [BoardChair@EWStokes.org](mailto:BoardChair@EWStokes.org). The Board of Trustees may invite the parent/guardians and scholar to appeal in person at a regularly scheduled, or special meeting of the Board. The decision of the Stokes School Board of Trustees is final.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

| Title  | Name                        | 202) 975 – 2100 extension<br>(unless otherwise noted): | email address  |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Founder                                      | Linda Moore                 | 110 (East End)   | <a href="mailto:LindaM@EWStokes.org">LindaM@EWStokes.org</a>       |
|  |                             | (202) 265 – 7237 x 104<br>(Brookland)                  |  |
| Executive Director                           | Erika Bryant                | 110 (East End)   | <a href="mailto:ErikaB@EWStokes.org">ErikaB@EWStokes.org</a>       |
|  |                             | (202) 265 – 7237 x 103<br>(Brookland)                  |  |
| Campus Director                              | `Abdu'l-Karim<br>Ewing-Boyd | 101  | <a href="mailto:KarimE@EWStokes.org">KarimE@EWStokes.org</a>       |
| Director of Operations                       | Fresia Cortés               | 110  | <a href="mailto:FresiaC@EWStokes.org">FresiaC@EWStokes.org</a>     |
| Director of Teaching and<br>Learning         | Marta de Pilar<br>Lynch     | 101  | <a href="mailto:PilarL@EWStokes.org">PilarL@EWStokes.org</a>       |
| Dean of Students                             | Kenneth Duff                | 109  | <a href="mailto:KennethD@EWStokes.org">KennethD@EWStokes.org</a>   |
| Social Worker                                | Desiree McClure             | 109  | <a href="mailto:DesireeM@EWStokes.org">DesireeM@EWStokes.org</a>   |
| Director of Data/Planning/<br>Accountability | Julia Senerchia             | (202) 265 – 7237 x 102<br>(Brookland)                  | <a href="mailto:JuliaS@EWStokes.org">JuliaS@EWStokes.org</a>       |
| Office Manager                               | Nancy Cruz                  | 110  | <a href="mailto:NancyC@EWStokes.org">NancyC@EWStokes.org</a>       |
| Director of Special Education<br>Services    | Everett Richardson          | (202) 265 – 7237 x 180<br>(Brookland)                  | <a href="mailto:EverettR@EWStokes.org">EverettR@EWStokes.org</a>   |
| Student Support Team<br>Coordinator          | Angelica Carter             | 109  | <a href="mailto:AngelicaC@EWStokes.org">AngelicaC@EWStokes.org</a> |
| Director of Finance                          | Bill Moczydlowski           | (202) 265 – 7237 x 124<br>(Brookland)                  | <a href="mailto:BillM@EWStokes.org">BillM@EWStokes.org</a>         |
| Afterschool Coordinator                      | Jasmine Campbell            | 108  | <a href="mailto:JasmineC@EWStokes.org">JasmineC@EWStokes.org</a>   |
| Afterschool Director                         | Clarence Bell Alston        | (202) 265 – 7237<br>(Brookland)                        | <a href="mailto:StokesAAKF@hotmail.com">StokesAAKF@hotmail.com</a> |
| Family Engagement Associate                  | Kenneth Duff                | 115  | <a href="mailto:Kennethd@EWStokes.org">Kennethd@EWStokes.org</a>   |

## **TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR SCHOLAR LEARN A SECOND LANGUAGE**

Use your primary language. It is VERY important that scholars become fluent speakers, listeners, readers and writers in their primary language. Your scholar's competence in your first language will directly affect second language learning.

Be a role model for your scholar. It is very encouraging for your scholar to see you using your native language during various activities including: talking to others, reading newspapers, attending cultural events, etc.

Help and encourage your scholar to join activities after school and to have social contact with friends where they are practicing English, French, and Spanish in real situations.

Making mistakes is all part of learning a new language. Do not correct every mistake, as this is discouraging to your scholar. Remember when your scholar was a baby and you were so happy and encouraging when they started to speak in your native language, no matter what mistakes they made.

Be patient with your scholar's language learning. It is a learning process that will take some years.

Encourage your scholar to read every evening, or read to them. This helps scholars learn new vocabulary.

Encourage your scholar to write a journal in English, French, or Spanish. This is especially good during holidays.

Make sure that your scholar has a translation dictionary. Encourage them to use it at home and to label things around the house.

Have bilingual materials at home (books, posters, music, videos, etc.) as a part of everyday life. Some materials are available in the school library.

Give your scholar lots of praise! Learning a new language can be very frustrating.

# Pre-Kindergarten Handbook



## Pre-Kindergarten Goal

Our goal is to create an environment where scholars are encouraged to explore, play, create, and wonder. Teachers promote inquiry, initiative, respect, and love through positive modeling, recognition of the unique value of each scholar, and the steady assessment of all areas of scholar development.

## Guiding Principles

Stokes School's Pre-K guiding principles are informed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our vision of education resides within the statements below.

### *Creating a Caring Environment*

Children are intense explorers. Puzzles and paint and people are out there to be solved, expressed, and discovered. We seek to provide inviting, highly-interactive, and purposeful spaces in which scholars may best demonstrate their intelligence. The classroom space should not only function, it should inspire.

Time is also an essential element of our play and explorations. Scholars are given sufficient time to develop play schemes and follow questions to an answer.

Perhaps the most important element in a scholar's daily environment is a teacher. We all teach and learn through the relationships we build with each other.

### ***Teaching to Enhance Development***

It is our job as teachers to understand your scholar and scholar development. By observing, documenting, and measuring your scholar's actions, we are better able to suggest more enticing challenges and minimize frustration and boredom. We seek to address the whole scholar. All developmental areas are important. Language, social-emotional skills, big and small motor skills, and cognitive tasks all feed each other and, eventually, academic subjects.

### ***Planning Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals***

Through our program, scholars in the Pre-K classes participate in learning experiences that are appropriate for their age and abilities. Daily schedules include activities that support fine and gross motor skills, language development and social emotional growth. Stokes scholars experience a supportive and nurturing environment; they are encouraged to socialize, cooperate and learn how to solve problems. In Pre-K, scholars receive instruction in the target language 90% of the time, and English 10% of the time, both in small group instruction.

### ***Assessing Children's Development and Learning***

Teachers must know where scholars are to best help them grow. We are continually recording our observations of each scholar and comparing this information to standard developmental expectations. Over time, we develop a big picture of each scholar's strengths and challenges. This picture informs us on how to structure activities for each scholar and the class.

### ***Establishing Reciprocal Relationships with Families***

You are the most important teacher for your scholar. We strive to connect with you and your values as a way to best promote the growth of your scholar, as well as build our classroom and school community. The tapestry of cultures, languages, experiences, talents, and interests inherent in our school community provides challenges and opportunities. Working together toward a common goal will maximize learning for everyone.

### ***Language Model***

Pre-K scholars will experience 90% of their day in the target language and 10% in English. The home classrooms are the domain of the target language where the speech and written words are entirely in French or Spanish. The Pre-K Coordinator supplies instruction in English during Small Group time and Centers. Additionally, all teachers guide language acquisition through morning meetings, lunch, and transition times.

### ***Program Background***

EWS started in 1998 in a church basement in Mount Pleasant. We moved to our current site in 2008 and expanded to Pre-K at that time as a way to better prepare young learners for the expectations of kindergarten and the significant language component of our school. Our early childhood immersion program builds vocabulary and the sound of the language in each scholar. These essential elements of language acquisition flourish when started at a young age.

### Daily Schedule

A typical schedule is below. Music and art are offered on a rotating basis. Talk to your scholar's teacher for their specific schedule.

|             |                              |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 9:00-9:20   | Arrival / Morning Meeting    |
| 9:20-9:40   | Music/Art                    |
| 9:40-10:20  | Recess                       |
| 10:20-10:40 | Snack                        |
| 10:40-11:10 | Whole Group/AM centers/Story |
| 11:10-11:40 | Small Groups                 |
| 11:40-11:50 | Hand washing/Lunch Prep      |
| 11:50-12:30 | Lunch                        |
| 12:30-1:30  | Quiet rest/nap               |
| 1:30-2:45   | Centers                      |
| 2:45-3:00   | Closing Meeting              |
| 3:00        | Dismissal                    |

### Food and Snacks

We are a nut-free campus. You may feel inconvenienced by this rule, but keep in mind this can have life threatening implications for some children. Our policy also prohibits soda and candy. If you choose not to send a snack with your scholar, fresh fruit and vegetables are provided.

Breakfast is provided to all scholars during before care. We request that you or a caretaker bring your scholar to the dining room to help him or her get settled.

The after school program provides a substantial snack/supper at 3:30pm. Your scholar must be enrolled in after care to eat this meal. A weekly meal calendar is available on the Stokes School website.

### Rest Time

Almost all of our children benefit from a chance to recharge their batteries after a busy morning. We cannot mandate sleep, but we encourage scholars to rest and relax their bodies.

Each scholar should bring a labeled crib sheet for our mats and a labeled blanket.



Other rest time items such as a special “lovey” or a pillow are encouraged if they are calming or help your scholar sleep or relax. Sheets and blankets should come to school clean on Monday and will be sent home each Friday.

### Field Trips

Periodically, one or more of our Pre-K classrooms will leave the school campus in search of educational opportunities in our neighborhood and beyond. We will solicit parent volunteers for these outings and will do our best to give all parents sufficient notice to arrange their schedule if they wish to participate.

Field trips range from walks around our school block to grade-level trips to a distant destination. Each field trip has purpose, for example looking for signs of spring or classifying buildings in our neighborhood. Field trips also allow us to teach safe and respectful behavior in our greater community.

### Items from Home

Generally, items from home should be left at home. A **backpack** and a school **folder** are the only mandatory items. Toys and dolls quickly become a distraction to the toy’s owner and peers. We have a large quantity of games, puzzles, dolls, and toys at school. Each class holds a sharing time in the daily calendar for items from home to be displayed to the class in a structured group format. A calendar will be issued so you will know which day is your scholar’s turn for sharing.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Day of School

The first day of school is often the first day *ever* that a scholar leaves their parents on a regular basis. It can feel traumatic for children and parents. Having witnessed and facilitated many difficult morning separations, we have a few suggestions:

- DO – Keep a routine. Do the drop-off the same way each morning, gradually
- stepping back your involvement so that your scholar freely enters the classroom or before care.
- DO – Let teachers help. We can work with you to establish a plan that will ease this transition to school.
- DON’T – Go away then come back “just to check.” If your upset scholar sees you, we often have to start over and it can be that much more difficult to resettle. Often the best advice is “just leave,” as difficult as it is for parents.
- DON’T – Bribe (“I’ll give you a cookie later,”) lie (“I’ll be right back,”) or disappear. Each of these tactics may work in the short-term, but undermines the building of trust which we need to teach.

We promise to be sensitive to each family’s routines and patterns and we know that we can successfully work together to ensure each scholar can come to school happily and on-time.

### Expectations/Discipline

It is frequently asked how we view discipline. Our primary response lies in our teachers’ relationships with each scholar, the structure of our classrooms, and the educational opportunities we provide. Keeping our expectations of children reasonable and developmentally appropriate is a key to avoiding most misbehavior. As we have stated above, children are active explorers and primary agents in their own

learning. Given a rich learning environment, enough space, and enough time, we are confident that disruptions and conflicts will be kept to a minimum. But when problems do arise, we strive to address each situation in context of the scholar's age and abilities. Every incident of misbehavior is an opportunity for growth.

One of our expectations for our scholars is a measured degree of independence. Having 19 three and four year-olds in one room can be daunting if each requires significant attention every time coats are worn to go outside. As a general rule, what children can do for themselves, we let them. Carrying their own backpack is a great start to instilling responsibility. The morning routine (putting backpacks and lunch boxes away) is another time for each scholar to show how much they can do alone.

### Toileting

Children **must be out of diapers** by the time they start our program. We realize that potty training does not always follow adult schedules and will work with each family to help provide a plan to prevent accidents. Two changes of clothes are especially important at the beginning of the school year.

Our expectation is that toilet training must include a scholar independently undressing and dressing, wiping and flushing. Teachers are always on hand to assist with emergencies, but this is among the most important independent tasks for our young scholars.

Please also make sure that your scholar can navigate their clothes so that they can quickly use the bathroom. Button-fly jeans can quickly frustrate a three year-old and lead to accidents. Shoes with laces are rarely manageable for Pre-K scholars. Scholars should have a change of clothes appropriate for the weather. This should be placed in a labeled plastic bag in their cubby on the first day of school and changed as needed.

### What to Wear

Scholars need comfortable, active clothing every day. Putting on and taking off jackets and other outerwear is a challenge for three and four-year-olds. We strive to make our scholars as skilled as possible with zippers, buttons, snaps, jackets, and backpacks. These skills serve to make each scholar more independent and speed transition time. Please label all of your scholar's gear.

### Parent-Teacher-School Communication

Consistent and reliable communication with families is essential. Three and four year-olds develop very quickly and can be sensitive creatures. It is important that you know key details of your scholar's day and that teachers are aware of any changes at home that will affect your scholar's behavior in school.

We have many methods for communicating. Teachers create a weekly newsletter full of information about our classroom plans, letters of the day, upcoming important dates, teacher requests, and photographs from the past week's activities. Included on this weekly newsletter will be daily notes from teachers about scholar progress and challenges. We also use a parent-led listserv. Often weekly newsletters and other announcements are sent through e-mail to families who opt in to the listserv group.

In addition to the classroom communications, we hold parent-teacher conferences at least every trimester. Stokes School provides a weekly newsletter, a website ([www.ewstokes.org](http://www.ewstokes.org)), and holds numerous parenting workshops and volunteer opportunities.

If you need to contact the classroom about a scholar absence, call the main school number, 202-265-7237, and inform the receptionist. More specific messages may be delivered to the teachers directly. The Pre-K Spanish A extension is **114**; French A is **134**. Spanish B is **120**. French B is **133**. Please be aware that if you are calling into the classroom between 9 and 3, there is a high likelihood that teachers will be heavily involved with scholar activities and may not be able to discuss anything at length. Leaving messages on classroom voicemail is not a reliable means of communication. Teachers are responsive to e-mail. Teacher e-mail addresses are shared with classes at the beginning of each school year and available in the Leadership and Staff section of the website.

### Visitor Guidelines

Parent visitors are always welcome. Family involvement in our program strengthens our mutual understanding and goal achievement. Ask your scholar's teacher for a time that will work for everybody. We strongly encourage parents or any visitor to be involved, not just to observe. You may help facilitate small groups or a center activity. Some ideas for classroom involvement are to ask scholars questions, wonder aloud about ideas to expand play, follow their lead, and gently moderate disputes. Teachers appreciate any assistance for transition times such as lunch and the beginning and end of the day.

## **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ("The Age Act"), applicants for admission and employment, scholars, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School are hereby notified that the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

Scholars, parents and/or guardians having inquiries concerning the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School's compliance with Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act as they apply to scholars or who wish to file a complaint regarding such compliance should contact: Everett Richardson, Director of Special Education Services, [EverettR@EWStokes.org](mailto:EverettR@EWStokes.org), (202) 265-7237 x180, who has been designated by the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School to coordinate its efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act as they relate to scholars.

For inquiries or to file a complaint regarding the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School's compliance with ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act as they relate to **employees or third parties**, contact: Erika Bryant, Executive Director, [ErikaB@EWStokes.org](mailto:ErikaB@EWStokes.org), (202)265-7237 x103, who has been designated by the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School to coordinate its efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Section 504, ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and the Age Act as they relate to employees or third parties.

### **Notice of Procedural Safeguards and Grievance Procedures for Parents and Scholars**

Parents, guardians, and scholars who want to learn more about their rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act can obtain a copy of their procedural safeguards from the Section 504 Coordinator: Everett Richardson, Director of Special Education Services, [EverettR@EWStokes.org](mailto:EverettR@EWStokes.org), (202) 265-7237 x180, 3700 Oakview Terrace, NE, Washington, DC 20017. A copy of procedural safeguards can also be requested from `Abdu'l-Karim Ewing-Boyd, Campus Director, [KarimE@EWStokes.org](mailto:KarimE@EWStokes.org), (202) 975 – 2100 x 101

Anyone who believes that Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School has violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ("The Age Act") may submit a complaint pursuant to Elsie Whitlow Stokes Public Charter School's Grievance Procedures. A copy of the grievance procedures can be obtained by request through `Abdu'l-Karim Ewing-Boyd, Campus Director, [KarimE@EWStokes.org](mailto:KarimE@EWStokes.org), (202) 975 – 2100 x 101 or Erika Bryant, Executive Director, [ErikaB@EWStokes.org](mailto:ErikaB@EWStokes.org), (202)265-7237 x 103.

## **Section 504 Grievance Procedure**

If any person believes that the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School has violated the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI, Title IX, and/or the Age Act by discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, he/she may submit a complaint to the designated individuals below.

Complaints involving scholars who attend the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School may be submitted to:

`Abdu'l-Karim Ewing-Boyd, Campus Director, (202) 975 – 2100 x 101

[KarimE@EWStokes.org](mailto:KarimE@EWStokes.org)

5600 East Capitol Street NE, Washington, DC 20019

Complaints involving employees or third parties of the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School may be submitted to:

Erika Bryant, Executive Director, 202-265-7237 x 103,

[ErikaB@EWStokes.org](mailto:ErikaB@EWStokes.org)

3700 Oakview Terrace, NE, Washington, DC 20017.

The grievance procedures outlined below establish how complaints will be investigated and resolved. These grievance procedures are intended to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. These grievance procedures may be used by employees, scholars, parents, or third parties. These grievance procedures do not bar individuals from filing claims in other forums to the extent permitted by state or federal law.

Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School encourages individuals to discuss their concerns with appropriate school officials before resorting to a formal complaint. However, individuals are not required to do so before filing a formal complaint.

Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School prohibits retaliation against individuals who file a complaint or participate in a complaint investigation.

A formal complaint may be filed by following the steps outlined below:

### **Step 1**

Within 90 days of the alleged discrimination or harassment, written notice of the complaint must be filed with the individual designated above. If the complaint is being made against the designated individual above, the complaint can be submitted directly to the Executive Director or Chair of the Board of Trustees who will designate an appropriate individual to investigate the complaint. Complainants may use the complaint form attached to the grievance procedure. The written notice must include the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of the occurrence, the desired result, and must be signed and dated by the person making the complaint.

Upon receipt of the written notice of the complaint, the designated individual to whom the complaint was submitted will immediately initiate an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation of the complaint.

Each investigation will include, as necessary, interviewing witnesses, obtaining documents, and allowing parties to present evidence. All information related to the investigation will remain confidential.

Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the written notice of the complaint, the individual investigating the complaint will respond in writing to the complainant. The response will summarize the course and outcome of the investigation, and identify an appropriate resolution. If, as a result of the investigation, it is determined that discrimination or harassment have occurred, appropriate corrective and remedial action will be taken.

### **Step 2**

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision from Step 1, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Executive Director within ten (10) business days after receipt of the response. If the complaint is being made against the Executive Director, the appeal can be submitted to the Chair of the Board of Trustees who will designate an appropriate individual to address the appeal. The Executive Director, or designee, will review all relevant information and meet with the parties involved, as necessary. Within twenty-one (21) business days of receiving the statement of appeal, the Executive Director, or designee, will respond in writing to the complainant summarizing the outcome of the appeal and any corrective or remedial action to be taken.

### **Step 3**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision from Step 2 he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the school Board of Trustees within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the Executive Director's response. A statement of appeal to the Board may be submitted to the Executive Director who will provide the statement to the Board. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board shall review all relevant information and meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within fifteen (15) business days of this meeting.

The complainant may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights at any time. The regional office for the District of Columbia is located at 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington DC. 20202 and can be reached at (202) 453-6020 (ph.), (202) 453-6021.

COMPLAINT FORM (Sample)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person on Whose Behalf Complaint is Being Brought:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Bringing Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT:

II.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If others are affected by the possible violation, please give their names and / or positions:

\_\_\_\_\_

Your suggestions on resolving the complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

III. Please describe any corrective action you wish to see taken with regard to the possible violation. You may also provide other information relevant to this complaint.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Receiving Complaint

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - ° School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - ° Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - ° Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - ° Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - ° Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - ° Accrediting organizations;
  - ° To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - ° Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - ° State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school. For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice)

**Elsie Whitlow Stokes**  
**Community Freedom Public Charter School**  
5600 East Capitol Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20019  
phone: 202-975-2100  
web site: [www.EWStokes.org](http://www.EWStokes.org)