



Voices

College-Bound Language Academies

FMSD

Family Handbook

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Mission: Voices College-Bound Language Academies will prepare all students for the challenges of higher education through the context of an academically rigorous dual-language program. In addition, we will ensure students demonstrate high academic achievement and apply critical thinking skills while making sense of their role within their own culture and the greater society.

Voices College-Bound Language Academies reserves the right to amend, delete or otherwise modify these policies at any time.

I. Welcome to Voices College-Bound Language Academies

Welcome Statement!

On behalf of the School Principal, faculty, staff, families, students, and Board of Directors, we would like to WELCOME you and your child to a community of learners in pursuit of an excellent education for all children. This is a school based on the belief that ALL children can achieve at high levels and we look forward to working and learning and teaching with you. We deeply value the commitment you have made to send your child to a school of choice and to be a part of the Voices Community.

Handbook Use and Purpose

This handbook is designed to help family members and students get acquainted with VOICES. It explains some of our philosophies, beliefs, structures, procedures, and policies. Although this Handbook is not intended to be an official policy manual, we hope that it will serve as a useful reference to you while your child is enrolled at VOICES. You may request copies of official policies at the office or view on-line at our website.

As part of their responsibility, students and parents are expected to know and abide by the school rules and procedures found in this handbook, the code of conduct and other information provided by the school and classroom teachers. All school rules apply not only during the time classes are in session, but also while students:

- Are going to or returning home from school
- Before and after school while on school campus
- At any school-sponsored function or activity
- While riding on the bus

Vision and History of VOICES

The vision of VOICES was born out of the belief that every child has the right to an excellent education. Starting with a core group of educators committed to educational equity, we dedicated two years to planning the design and implementation of the school. Voices was approved by the Franklin McKinley School District in March 2006. We opened our doors to 110 children in September of 2007. Voices was re-renewed for another five years of operation in 2011. In 2015, Voices is opening two new campuses in Morgan Hill and Mount Pleasant! We anticipate our success will only flourish as we grow! Some of our accomplishments include:

- In 2014, Voices Academies was recognized as a Title I Awardee for closing the achievement gap.
- In the 2013 report *Broken Promises* by Innovate Public Schools, Voices Academies was ranked #3 in the Top 10 elementary schools (compared to ALL district and charter school in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties) for academic results of Hispanic students.
- In 2012, Voices Academies teachers were awarded the EPIC Award recognizing them for driving the highest student achievement gains out of 179 charter schools in 24 states.
- Parent surveys have consistently revealed high levels of satisfaction and support of the school, its programs and staff.

- In 2012, Voices Academies was designated as a California Distinguished School
- In 2011, Voices Academies was awarded the uncommon maximum accreditation of six years from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
- FMSD Board recognition in 2010-2011 in the following categories:
 - API Growth
 - Exceptional API Growth
 - Met AYP Criteria in ELA and Math
 - Met AYP Criteria in Math
 - API "800" Club
- Exceptional API Growth in Targeted Subgroups
- Voices Academies was commended and highlighted by the Santa Clara County office of Education Charter School Summit in 2009-2010

Voices Franklin-McKinley Values

These are the values that drive our actions and beliefs at this school. We envision a school where students, teachers, and parents understand and live through these values.

I. Values

Scholarship

Student achievement must never be compromised. At Voices, students, parents, and teachers push relentlessly towards the highest achievement possible because we recognize that the achievement gap is real and we accept a responsibility to close it. We understand that academics come first, and we hold our students to the highest standard. Students, parents and teachers are meticulously and honestly informed about the students' data, levels, and progress. Students are consistently reflecting on their areas of strength and areas of growth so that they can envision an actionable path towards achievement. Parents understand and clearly articulate what achievement means for their child. Parents access and understand student data and academic levels to hold their child and school accountable for the progress. This laser-focus on student achievement creates an urgency to produce. This urgency is different from pressure. Students, parents, and teachers are excited about the prospect and challenge of academic growth, not weighed down by it. At Voices we believe that our expectations for our students can never be too high. Students will always push and exceed our expectations, thus this bar for achievement must continue to be raised.

Student Character Traits Aligned to Scholarship

Conscientiousness: Conscientiousness is a tendency to be hardworking, responsible, and organized. A conscientious student is one who consistently works hard on every task, no matter how big or small the task. At Voices, we work just as hard on our final assessment as we do on our nightly homework assignment. To our students, there is no picking and choosing of which tasks are important. Every action is important and requires focus, precision, and hard work, and we take it personally to show our best work. Conscientious Voices students are also very responsible and organized. Homework is consistently and thoroughly completed, desks are organized, and our students hold themselves accountable. Conscientious Voices students "sweat the small stuff" because we understand that hard work, responsibility, and organization are keys to academic success.

Self-control: A student who shows self-control knows when it is time for fun and when it is time for business and can move easily between the two spaces. At Voices, we create students who understand that self-control is a key ingredient in making good choices and decisions. Our students show self-control often by asking themselves, “Is now the best time for this action?” and “Is this an action that will make me a better person and the people around me better people? A Voices student with self-control is a master decision maker.

Sí Se Puede Attitude

“Good things come to those who hustle.” ~ Anais Nin

This is the optimistic belief that anything can be achieved with determination and hard work. Challenges, set-backs, and failures are seen as moments of growth and learning. At Voices we see hard as good, challenges as opportunities, and falls as moments to stand up stronger and smarter than before. In classrooms, students often whisper “yes!” when given a more difficult task, and teachers are filled with joy as they watch their students struggle with a challenge. Students are praised not for their intelligence but rather for their work ethic, open-mindedness to change, and ability to overcome challenges. As Carol Dweck states in her book Mindset, The New Psychology of Success, we believe that “people are, to a large extent, in charge of their own intelligence. Being smart- and staying smart-is not just a gift, not just a product of their genetic good fortune. It is very much a product of what they put into it.” We understand that a genuine Sí Se Puede Attitude will act as a weapon and shield for the challenges of succeeding in higher education. At Voices we stay positive, we look to grow, and we never say “I can’t”; we say “bring it”.

Student Character Traits Aligned to Sí Se Puede Attitude

Gratitude: A student who shows gratitude always tries to see the positive side of every situation. At Voices our students strive to show understanding, patience, and appreciation because they take time to recognize the good in everything and everyone. Grateful Voices students understand that gratitude goes beyond saying please and thank you. We understand that gratitude has two main components that make us thankful. First, gratitude is an affirmation of goodness. We affirm that there are good things in the world, gifts and benefits we’ve received. Secondly, we recognize that the sources of this goodness are outside of ourselves. We acknowledge that other people gave us many gifts, big and small, to help us achieve the goodness in our lives. Voices students understand that in order to truly embody a Sí Se Puede Attitude we must not only bring a positive determination to all that we do, but we must also be grateful for what we have and what have been given. Determination and hard work without gratitude can be dangerous as we only focus on the future without any appreciation for the present or the past.

Risk-taking: A student who takes risks is someone who attempts to push themselves outside of their comfort zone. At Voices we understand that risks are scary, but it is in the space of taking risks where we grow the most! These are quiet students who push themselves to participate. These are

talkative students who push themselves to listen. These are best friends who push themselves to make other friends and include others. These are students who always try their best even if things don't turn out as planned. With risk we find challenge and growth, and we always says "Hard is good!".

Perseverance: A student who perseveres is a student who never gives up when facing an obstacle, challenge, or difficult tasks. At Voices, when things get more difficult, we push harder. We show grit and determination and never say "I can't"; instead we say "Bring it!" A Voices student who perseveres focuses on improvement. We don't bring ourselves down when we struggle, instead we see ourselves as always ready to get better. We know that life will not be easy and mindset and attitude are two important shields that can support us along the way.

In Lak'ech

"Until all of us have made it, none of us have made it." ~ Rosemary Brown

In Lak'ech

By Luís Valdez and Domingo Martinez Paredes

Tú eres mi otro yo.
You are my other me.
Si te hago daño a ti,
If I do harm to you,
Me hago daño a mi mismo.
I do harm to myself.
Si te amo y respeto,
If I love and respect you,
Me amo y respeto yo.
I love and respect myself.

At Voices our belief in community holds us together. By supporting others we know and believe that we are ultimately supporting ourselves. Students support each other academically, linguistically, and socially. Older students serve as role models and mentors for the younger students, and the adults on campus understand that every action they make on campus serves as a teaching moment for the youth around them. Students feel joy and pride from the successes of their peers. They believe in the power of showing care, gratitude, and love towards others. Teachers feel the same intense responsibility and care for students of all classrooms, not just their own. Parents understand that a successful class event, field trip, or fundraiser benefits every student at the school. Students, teachers, and parents understand that the success of Voices mission depends on the efforts of all classrooms, and thus, all constituents are always looking beyond their four walls. At Voices there is an understanding that individual success can be more easily attained through communal effort.

In Middle School, the idea of In Lak'ech is expanded to encompass more of an understanding of critical engagement. As students prepare to enter high school while simultaneously becoming leaders of the Voices community it is important that students begin to have conversations framed around identity, injustice, and power. Voices Middle School will provide students with, in the words of Antonia Darder, with "the opportunity to explore their own world as they seek also to understand how the dominant culture affects their lives and how they view themselves as human beings." It is important that students begin to grapple with the relationship between identify, power, and how it all relates back to education in order for them to truly engage critically in society and ultimately achieve their full potential.

No student is an outsider in our community. The idea of “*Tu eres mi otro yo*” lives and breathes within every student, teacher, and classroom at our school.

Student Character Traits Aligned to In Lak’ech

Empathy: A student who shows empathy is one who attempts to see from different perspectives. Empathetic Voices students live by the mantra, “*tu eres mi otro yo*”, showing an understanding that actions done to others are ultimately actions done to themselves. Empathetic Voices students are always on the look-out to include other students, never leaving others behind or left out. These students value their community in that they are always trying to better understand those around them; approaching every interaction with an open mind. Empathetic Voices students are bystanders who stand up against bullying and activists who speak out against injustices. At Voices, our students support and encourage others when they fail because they know that “until all of us have made it, none of us have made it.”

Caring: A caring student supports their peers unconditionally. At Voices, our students strive to bring an open and warm heart to the classroom every day. While we work very hard at Voices, our students understand that respecting and caring for others and ourselves is a priority. Caring Voices students seek to treat others the way others wish to be treated. They use “I” messages and genuinely listen when dealing with conflict.

Activism

“The greatest humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves.” ~ Paulo Freire

Activism is a part of what we do at Voices. At Voices Academy, we believe every lesson, every decision, and every person must be radical. According to the Oxford Dictionary, “radical” is defined as “advocating or based on thorough or complete political or social change. Characterized by departure from tradition; innovative or progressive.” At Voices Academy, we aim to disrupt the status quo in education, and in so doing, embrace a radical approach. As Jeff Duncan-Andrade asserts, “Schools are not failing. They are doing exactly what they are intended to do.” Through brutally honest and explicit conversations, adult team members at Voices are aware of the hegemonic and oppressive forces that our students are working against and that we are working to disrupt:

- **US schools de-value and silence the native language of the majority of our students.** Through dual-language instruction we take deliberate actions to counter this silencing by raising the status of the Spanish language. Many of our students come in with linguistic strengths. We must build on these strengths rather than ignore them.
- **US schools historically have underserved students of color through pervasive low-expectations.** At Voices, we believe that high expectations are the foundation of what we do. We raise the bar as high as we can and provide students with the steps, guidance, confidence, and resilience to reach it.
- **US schools often encourage compliance and silence.** While silence obviously has its place in the school day, we believe school should be filled with conversation, student voice, student choice, and joy. We hope to hear chants, songs, debates, discussions, and *circulos comunitarios* throughout the day. Not only are we developing academic language and solidifying learning, but we are also creating spaces for genuine student voice.
- **US schools tend to de-professionalize and devalue the teacher profession.** At Voices we believe our teachers are second to only our students. We believe the teaching profession is the most important profession in the world. Voices teachers are, by definition, activists. As a team we often engage in open conversations about injustice, oppression, race, class, power, and how these issues affect our students. We strive to build a culture of never-ending learners through relevant coaching and professional development. The traditional teacher development model encourages 1-2 feedback evaluations per year. At Voices, the leadership team aims to visit every single class on a weekly basis as effective coaching is key to student success.

Student Activists: It is critical that our students not only achieve at high levels academically, but they also develop skills and critical lenses with which they can effectively and nimbly navigate the various spaces they will encounter throughout our society. A Voices activist is one who not only understands the importance of rigorous academics, but also the incredible value of questioning and curiosity. A Voices activist is one who is on a constant mission to uncover additional narratives in history, politics, media, conversations, and even their own mindsets.

Teacher Activists: Our teachers engage in brutally honest and developmentally appropriate conversations about the realities of our society. Through engaging lessons that tie in social justice, activists throughout history, and relevant statistics, our teachers emphasize the “power of the book” and the power of learning. Moreover, we know that teaching does not only live in the classroom. Our teachers work to build a stronger community by hosting family events, parent workshops, community service events, and by simply being present in the lives of our students outside of school.

Family Activists: Our families work together with the school to advocate for our students and the work of the school. They meet with school board members, politicians, and other key members of the community to communicate our Voices mission and vision. Our families work hard to model our values for our students. They model life-long learning by participating in our various adult education groups on campus and getting involved with our school activities.

Activist Leadership: Activism must live in all parts of the organization. Through coaching, surveys, focus groups, and transparent accountability, the Voices leadership team is committed to constantly identifying areas of strength and growth in our school and working together with teachers and operations staff to develop steps to maintaining the strengths and improving the weaknesses. A leadership team that truly embraces activism must be transparent, open to listen, and ready to fight for what is best for students.

Student Character Traits Aligned to Activism

Curiosity: A curious Voices student is one who never wants to stop learning. They seek information and learning like it is the most valuable treasure in the world. A curious Voices student is one who goes above and beyond with their school-work and asks lots of questions in class. Lastly, a curious Voices student is one who brings a critical lens to all they do. They seek to understand additional narratives that are not often heard. They try to find the relevance in their lessons. They try to connect lessons to their own lives. They ask, "Is there another way to view this situation?" and they often question their own beliefs and mindsets about things. They know there is always more to learn and different ways to see things.

Advocacy: A Voices advocate is one who uses their education and their learning to advocate for their community. A Voices advocate continuously seeks to be informed because they know knowledge is power. A Voice advocate is able to effectively, strategically, and appropriately advocate for issues they believe in. They understand that any advocate for proposes for change in their community must be organized, informed, and patient. They must always come ready with proposed solutions. Lastly a Voices advocate is one who seeks to do community service.

Charter Schools

Charter schools are nonsectarian public schools of choice that operate with freedom from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. The "charter" establishing each such school is a performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. The length of time for which charters are granted in California is typically 5 years. At the end of the term, the entity granting the charter may renew the school's contract. Charter schools are accountable to their sponsors to produce positive academic results and adhere to the charter contract. The basic concept of charter schools is that they exercise increased autonomy in return for this accountability. They are accountable for both academic results and fiscal practices to several groups: the sponsor that grants them, the parents who choose them and the public that funds them.

II. School Information and Procedures

School Hours

Voices College-Bound Language Academies is in session from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. everyday unless otherwise noted. Minimum day schedules are from 8:00-12:30. Students are expected to leave campus immediately upon dismissal unless specifically permitted to stay by a staff member for a school program, school activity or for disciplinary reasons.

School Office

The school office is open from 7:45 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. on regular school days and until 1:00 P.M. on minimum days. Our office telephone number is **361-1960**. Our fax number is 361-1979.

Class Placement

At the beginning of each school year, students are assigned classes. These assignments remain tentative until enrollment stabilizes a process that often takes many weeks. The school will not consider specific requests for placements due to class size constraints and the need to balance classes.

Arrival

It is encouraged that students arrive between 7:50 and 7:55 a.m. if they are not participating in our breakfast program. Students can not arrive at school any earlier because there will be **no supervision unless they are eating breakfast at 7:30**. During fair weather there is outdoor lineup for all grades in front of their classroom. During bad weather such as moderate to heavy rain or extremely cold days (below 50 degrees), the doors will be open at 7:50 and early arrivals to school must go directly to their class or the office. Please make sure that your child enters the school safely and that he or she is supervised as he/she is crossing streets, etc. Remind your child to remain in supervised areas (the enclosed playground). Do not allow children to cross the street alone or between cars. **The**

white zone is for loading or unloading only. If you need to stay in your car for more than a few seconds, you should find a safe place to park.

Dismissal

The regular instructional day ends at 4:00 P.M.. Students must be picked up promptly at 4:00. At dismissal time, Kindergarten students must be picked up by an adult authorized by the parent to pick up the child. If the kindergarten child is walking home without the direct supervision of an adult, the school must be authorized by the parent to release the child to go home in this way. All other students are released independently unless prior arrangements have been made.

Please pick-up your child on time or to arrange for an alternate person to pick them up in case of weather, traffic, personal or work-related event, or other emergency. Any student that is not picked up by 4:10 PM:

- Will wait in the office where a parent/guardian must physically come inside to retrieve and sign-out their student.
- If a child accumulates 2 late pick ups the parent will receive a warning letter from the school. The letter will remind parent/guardians of their responsibility for picking up their child in a timely manner.
- If a child accumulates 3 late pick ups, the parent/ guardian will be required to attend an administrative team meeting and complete a contract aimed at supporting the improvement of the pick up performance.
- If after the initial administrative meeting, the parent/guardian does not pick up their child by 5:10, the School will call the Police Department or Child Protective Services/Department of Social Services to come pick up the child.

First Days of School

Often the first day of school can be stressful for both students and parents. We want to encourage the independence of each child, but at the same time want to value the needs of your child. We encourage you to do everything possible to help your child feel comfortable and safe in his or her new school environment. At the same time, we need you to recognize that the best thing for your child is for you to leave the school and allow the classroom teacher and other students to participate in the inclusion process. On the first days of school, you will be expected to leave your child in the care of the teacher and the school. While some students may cry, teachers are accustomed to dealing with students in this situation and will settle, comfort, and distract your child. **Only with the Principal's approval will parents be allowed to stay at school during the first days or weeks of school.**

Emergency Release from School

In case of an emergency, your child will only be released into the custody of those people who you have previously identified on the emergency card. Proof of identification will be required. **Those NOT identified on the emergency card can only pick up a child if the parent or guardian has sent a hand written and signed note with contact phone number, to the school notifying the school of this person's identity.** The school reserves the right to call the parents of the child to confirm anyone who comes to pick up their child.

Leaving School During the Day

It is encouraged that you make appointments and schedule family business outside of school hours, **but if you must, please schedule appointments late in the afternoon.** If you will pick up your child for an appointment during the school day, please notify the office. Please do not pick up your child early for any other reason as they lose instructional time and it disrupts the class. **Unexcused early pick-ups of 30 minutes or more will be considered in determining whether the child is truant.**

Meal Program

We provide a daily breakfast and lunch. You are required to fill out a school lunch application at the beginning of each school year. You will be notified if your child is qualified for free, reduced or full price lunch. You may make payments in the Voices' office with cash or check, or online with a credit card. You will be asked to send your child with a bag lunch if you are in arrears, otherwise your child will receive an alternate meal.

At your option, your child may choose to bring his/her own lunch. We ask that if you choose this option that you to send your child to school each day with a nutritious lunch. Students will not be allowed to trade or share food.

Per School Policy- No parents or siblings will be allowed in the cafeteria. Please drop off your child's meal at the office.

Visiting the School

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. In order to ensure safety, it is important that you sign in when you visit the school and wear a badge of identification. All school visitors, including parents, must sign in at the Voices office and wear a badge.

We ask that when you visit the school, you respect the instructional time of teachers and students. **Please do not disturb lessons or students and teachers who are working. If you have a matter to attend to with a teacher, please schedule a mutually agreeable time to discuss the matter.**

Books/School Materials

VOICES students are responsible for the proper use and care of all school equipment and property, including books and other instructional materials. Students who destroy school property in any manner will be responsible for replacing the property. Any willful destruction of school property compromises the safety and security of the school community and violates the essence of the Guiding Principles. Parents must replace damaged or lost books or other school property. Awards and certificates may be withheld until balances are paid in full.

Lost and Found

Found items belong to someone else and should not be taken by the person who found the item. Any items found at the school site should be taken to the lost and found in the main office. Check for lost items in the main office. The lost and found will be cleaned out regularly. Items not claimed will be donated or discarded. All items brought to school by students including jackets, lunch bags, etc., should be clearly labeled with the child's name. The school is not responsible or liable for any lost or stolen items.

Non-School Property

Personal property not related to the school's programs should not be brought to school. Toys, balls, iPods, or other electronic games, cell phones, etc. will be confiscated and returned to the child's parent at the end of the school day or another appropriate time if they are brought to school. Item may be held until the end of the school year if a student repeatedly brings an unauthorized item to school.

Field Trips

All field trips are regarded as enrichment activities and therefore a privilege - not a right. Students that have not earned the right to attend a field trip are required to attend school and shall engage in appropriate academic/educational activities.

Any trip requires a separate permission slip. Permission received by telephone is not permitted. If a student does not have written permission, he/she will remain in a supervised area/classroom at VOICES and participate in an alternative educational activity until the class returns from the trip. Students are expected to travel to and from the field trip with the staff responsible for the trip. Students will not be permitted to leave the field trip group during the trip.

Safety of all children is a primary concern at Voices. For field trips, children must be able to behave safely and follow teacher's instructions. Children must demonstrate a consistent ability to follow adult direction before they can participate in outdoor activities. If there is a concern about a child's safe behavior on fieldtrips, a teacher may require the student to have a parent chaperone or ask that the student not participate in the activity.

Classroom Computers/Internet Access

Computers, printers, and internet may be available to students. Internet access allows for expanded and global educational opportunities for students. However, access to the Internet via Voices equipment and resource networks is intended to serve and pursue educational goals and purposes. Student use of the Internet is therefore limited to only those activities that further or enhance the delivery of education. Students have a duty to use Voices equipment and resource networks only in a manner specified in Voices' Internet Policy. In addition, students may not:

1. Post on newsgroups or other message posting systems any communication containing profanity, racially disparaging remarks, or lewd and/or obscene language.
2. Use speech that is not appropriate for an educational setting. Examples of speech that is not appropriate for an educational setting includes, but is not limited to, inflammatory language, profanity, personal attacks, harassment, threats to do personal harm or other criminal activity, and language that is intended to be racially derogatory.
3. Make threats against others.
4. Reveal personal information about others.
5. Use email to send chain letters or "spam" email to a list of people or to an individual.
6. Place illegal information on the Internet, nor will student use the Internet in any way that violates federal, state, or local law.
7. Engage in communications that are not polite and respectful of others.
8. Give out to any other Internet user or post on the Internet Voices or her name, address, or telephone number unless expressly authorized by Voices in writing.
9. Use the Internet to perform any illegal act or to help others perform illegal acts.
10. Use the Internet to access obscene materials or images or access any Internet site which requires the student to state that he or she is eighteen years of age or older as a condition of accessing the site.
11. Use the Internet to buy or sell, or attempt to buy or sell, any service or product unless authorized by Voices in writing.
12. Make any statement or post any communication on the Internet about another person that he or she knows or suspects to be untrue

Student acknowledges that computer equipment, Internet access networks, and email accounts are owned by Voices and provided to students for educational purposes. Voices reserves the right to access stored computer records to assure compliance with Voices' Internet Policy. Student is aware that communication over Voices owned networks is not private and acknowledges that email and records of Internet activities will be accessed under, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

1. Routine system maintenance.
2. General inspection or monitoring, with or without notice to student, if there is suspicion of widespread inappropriate use.
3. Specific review of individual files or monitoring of individual activity, with or without notice to student, if there is suspicion that Student is engaging in inappropriate use.

A violation of Voices' Internet Policy can result in a loss of all Internet access and email privileges. If a student violates Voices' Internet Policy, or in any other way uses Voices equipment in a manner that is not consistent with educational use, the student will be promptly notified that he or she has violated the Policy. The student will be given the opportunity to explain why Voices should deem the activity in question a use consistent with the educational purposes stated in Voices' Internet Policy. If Voices deems that the use is inconsistent with the educational purposes stated in Voices' Internet Policy, Voices may terminate the student's Internet and email privileges. However, because one of the educational purposes in providing Internet access is to teach students to use the internet appropriately, Voices reserves the right to fashion penalties to specific concerns or specific violations, and student acknowledges that he or she may receive penalties less than full termination of Internet or email privileges. Such penalties may include, but are not limited to, restricted access to Internet or supervised access to Internet and email. Student also acknowledges Voices will contact the proper legal authorities if Voices concludes or suspects that the student's Internet activity is a violation of any law or otherwise constitutes an illegal activity.

A signed Internet Use Agreement must be on file before a child may explore the internet.

Family Involvement

Parents have the opportunity and are encouraged to volunteer in a variety of ways. Any regular volunteer that works with children must have a TB test and fingerprint check. The following are some examples of possible parent involvement opportunities:

- Classroom, office, cafeteria, yard supervision, tutoring
- Committees

- VPAC
- Board Member
- Parent Workshops: Parent workshops are provided at Voices depending on the families needs. Some topics may include reading, writing, immigration, parenting, nutrition, housing, and domestic violence, academic standards, and the road to college.

Student Records and Directory Information

Parents and eligible students have the right to review the student's education records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). An education record is any written or computerized document, file, entry, or record containing information directly relating to a student that is compiled and maintained by the School. In order to do so, parents and eligible students shall submit a request to review education records in writing to the Principal. Within ten school days, Voices shall comply with the request. If circumstances effectively prevent the parent from exercising the right to inspect and review the education records, the School will provide the parent with a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for inspection and review of the requested records.

Request for Amendment to Education Records

If upon review, a parent or eligible student discovers any information or notation that is factually inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's right of privacy, he or she may request, in writing, that the School amend the record. The request must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the discovery of the inaccurate or misleading information or a violation of the student's right of privacy. Voices will respond within ten (10) days of the receipt of the request to amend. The School's response will be in writing and if the request for amendment is denied, the School will set forth the reason for the denial and inform the parent or eligible student of his or her right to a hearing challenging the content of the education record.

Disclosure of Education Records and Directory Information

Voices must have a signed and dated written permission from the parent or before releasing any information from a student's education record except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Voices forwards education records to other agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

Parents and eligible students have the right to request that Voices not release student names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Directory Information

FERPA also requires that Voices, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Voices may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised Voices to the

contrary in accordance with Voices procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Voices to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).

If you do not want Voices to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Voices in writing by **September 11**. Voices has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Photograph
- Date of birth
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

III. Family, School, and Student Policies

The goals of the Family, School, and Student Policies at Voices are to ensure the safety of the school environment and to optimize each child's learning. Therefore, Voices has developed policies that have very clear consequences for children and families. They lay out the expectations of children who attend Voices and the consequences for what occurs when these policies are violated. In general, behavior is considered appropriate when students are diligent in study, neat and clean, careful with school property, respectful towards their teachers, and courteous to other students, staff and volunteers.

Dress Code Policy

We believe that students should focus their energy and attention upon their academic development and not on style or the clothes of their peers. In addition, dress code is important to school pride and safety because it fosters a sense of belonging and students in uniform are easily recognized to all school staff. The Voices dress code is simple:

SHOES : All grades	Rubber bottom, flat soled shoes with covered toes
BOTTOM: All grades	Khaki or tan (cotton twill) Pants, Shorts, skirt, or jumper with Belt (grades 2nd+)
Kindergarten and 1 st grade	VOICES Shirt:

	Gold Polo-style shirt with VOICES logo
2 nd and 3 rd Grade	VOICES Shirt: Purple Polo-Style Shirt with VOICES logo
4th and 5th Grade	VOICES Shirt: Maroon Polo-Style Shirt with VOICES logo
6th and 7th Grade	VOICES Shirt: Grey Polo-Style Shirt with VOICES logo
8th Grade	VOICES Shirt: Gold, Purple, Maroon or Grey Polo-Style Shirt with VOICES logo

Students may also wear school earned university shirts or Student of the Month shirts as part of their uniform.

- All other clothing items (jackets, sweaters, etc) are not to have any words or decorations other than school logo
- The uniform must be worn throughout the school day.
- Students are to enter and leave the school in uniform.
- Changing clothes at school, unless for a school sponsored activity, is not allowed.
- No hats (except for sun protection), sweats, or jeans.
- A student's hairstyle, clothing, jewelry and makeup should not distract from the educational environment.
- Label all children clothing, books bags and lunch boxes with your child's name and class using a permanent marker. This will help the school to return any lost items.

Uniforms must be kept neat and clean at all times and must fit appropriately. Specific requirements are listed below:

- Pants must be appropriate size
- Belt must be worn if pants have belt loops (2nd-8th grade)
- Skirts and shorts must not be shorter than four inches above the knee.
- Pants must be worn at the waist.
- Shirts must fit appropriately--neither too small nor too big.
- In the event of cold weather, students may wear a jacket, sweatshirt, cardigan, or sweater over their collared shirt.
- **Shirts must be tucked in.**

Out of Uniform Notices

Parents will receive an "Out of Uniform" notice if a child does not adhere to the uniform policy. The notice should be returned to the school with the parent's signature the next school day. On the second "Out of Uniform" notice in one school year, a School representative will initiate a telephone conference with the parent. The goal of the conference will be to problem-solve the family's issue of complying with the uniform policy.

Homework Policy

Research suggests that study skills are important indicators of success in school and enable us to continue learning beyond our classroom experience. At Voices, we believe that homework is an essential opportunity for students to practice skills they have been taught during school. The more confident and comfortable students are with their skills, the more than can contribute and progress with their learning. At Voices, homework assignments are meaningful and developmentally appropriate. Parents are responsible for monitoring and assisting with homework assignments of their child. Students will be assigned homework by the child's teacher at least four days per week and will be differentiated to meet individual student's needs. These expectations are designed to set our students up for success.

Each child should attempt to complete homework independently, but may need assistance. If you child needs assistance, **please do not do his or her homework for him/her**. As a parent, guide your child in doing the best that he or she can, allowing them to do their own work. Please teach your child to be responsible for asking for help at school if an assignment is not clear, so that lack of understanding does not keep him/her from attempting to do their homework once at home. Contact your child's teacher with questions about homework.

Help your child establish a suitable time and quiet, well-lit place for home study to help them “get into the habit” of studying each day. Also help your child organize school materials by creating a set place at home for Homework and Tuesday Folders. Homework will be sent home in a plastic envelope. Replacement envelopes can be purchased for \$2.00.

In order to maintain academic progress over long breaks, students are expected to read, write, and do mathematics daily during vacations. Children will receive explicit homework expectations and consequences for not completing homework satisfactorily.

Kindergarten through Fifth Grade

Homework in the early years is set according to the age and ability of the student. Teachers assign homework to reinforce the important skills and habits that students are learning at school. We believe that homework serves two primary purposes in the early grades. Homework can:

- Build responsibility in children
- Provide opportunities for extra, repeated practice of skills

Please speak with your child’s teacher if your child is experiencing any difficulties with the homework assignments.

Middle School Homework

There is a great deal of subject matter and skills to cover in middle school. Therefore, teachers will assign homework daily, unless otherwise noted. Homework is extremely important and there are clearly defined consequences for students who do not accomplish the assigned tasks each night. Students will have academic planners that outline what their homework is each night. We expect students to share with their parents what they are learning.

Consequences

When homework is not completed, consequences will be enforced as outlined below in Consequences for Violations of Policies. Incomplete homework is excused only with appropriate documentation from a parent or a caregiver, indicating that illness or other circumstances prevented the student from completing his/her homework. **If a child is struggling to complete homework because of the difficulty of the work, please contact your child’s teacher to schedule a conference.**

Attendance Policy

At Voices, we view every day as an essential learning opportunity. Research suggests that students who attend school regularly achieve at significantly higher levels and are more likely to be eligible to attend college than are students who are absent excessively. The importance of regular attendance cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, **we expect excellent attendance of all of our students.** Missing school regularly or parts of the day, not only is detrimental to a child’s learning, but also can create poor learning habits. In addition, a child’s poor attendance is detrimental to the school. For everyday a child does not attend, Voices loses vital state funds that help to run the educational program at school. The state considers a child absent when he/she is not in school regardless of the reason surrounding the absence.

Avoid these common (but unacceptable) excuses:

“We decided to extend our vacation- a few days of school won’t matter.”

“I need him/her to stay at home and baby-sit a younger brother/sister.”

“It is too hot/cold/rainy to send him/her to school.”

“He/she had an appointment so I decided to keep him/her home all day.”

“She/he might be getting sick.”

However, we also believe that if a child is sick and cannot operate at school or has a communicable illness, that it is probably best for the child to stay at home to rest and recover. Students are required to make up any and all work missed during their absence. Students/parents are responsible for contacting teachers for making up work missed during any absence, regardless of the reason. In order to participate in any extra-curricular, after school, or evening

activity, students must be present at school the entire day, and may not leave school before the regular dismissal time without prior approval of an administrator.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are absences where a student is too ill to report to school or has a medical, legal, dental appointment, observance of religious holiday, or a death in the immediate family. All absences require appropriate documentation, i.e. note from home, a note from a doctor or medical facility, court documents, etc. If appropriate documentation is not provided, the absence will be considered unexcused (see below). The school office should be informed promptly if your child has a communicable disease so that we can notify other parents, if necessary. A parent or guardian must notify the school the **same day** of absence by telephone, letter, fax, e-mail, or in person. Please do your best to inform of us of an absence by 8:00 a.m. If the school is not notified and the student does not report to school the next day with a note, the absence will be considered unexcused (see below).

Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of school days to date or 14 or more absences in the school year (excused and /or unexcused). If your child misses more than 10% of school days, medical verification will be required for all absences. Medical verification can be a note from a medical professional or bring the child to school to be assessed. A note from doctor must be received within three days of the student's return to school after the illness. A doctor's note is only acceptable for the day the student is seen by the doctor and the days he/she indicates until your child can return to school. If you bring your child to be assessed at school, he/she must come every day unless you are notified otherwise. If this process is not followed your child's absences will be unexcused.

Unexcused Absences

Law requires regular school attendance. It also requires us to verify all absences. If a student is absent for an extended period of time (over three days) or does not show up for the first day of school or does not return after a vacation break, and the family has not contacted the school and we cannot locate the family, the student will be dropped from school. Consequences for any unexcused absences/tardies are detailed below:

Tardy Policy

School begins at 8:00 a.m. each day. All students are expected to arrive at school on time. Like absences, tardiness disrupts learning and negatively impacts student achievement. A student is considered tardy if he or she is late to class (8:01 a.m.). **A student must report to the office if he or she is late for school to receive a pass.**

Tardiness is only excused if a student is sick, has a medical, dental, or legal appointment or there has been a death in the family or other emergency. All excused tardies require appropriate documentation.

Truancy

If your child has missed three or more days or missed any thirty minute period of the day (including tardies and early dismissals which are deemed unexcused), you will receive a letter from the school. Then you will have an appointment to meet with the staff to discuss your child's attendance issues. If the unexcused absences continue, there will be a legally binding meeting with you, your child, and appropriate school staff. If all these interventions are unsuccessful we will be forced to refer you to the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office for prosecution. The penalty can be as little as \$100 per parent, per child and participation in a parenting class or as much as a \$2000 fine and up to one year in jail. Another penalty is loss of any governments benefits paid to you.

Independent Study (IS)

The purpose of this policy is to govern the use of Independent Study for students who may be absent for an extended period of time.

Independent Study requires approval from the Principal in writing. In an extenuating circumstance (i.e. serious illness or injury) the Principal may approve additional IS days following conference with the parents and teacher.

Independent Study is conducted solely for the educational benefit of the students attending the School as a means to encourage daily engagement in school work even during times of extended absence. No student is required to request or participate in an independent study program during an extended absence. Parents are to give advance

notice when possible of a request for independent study. In an extenuating circumstance (i.e. a serious illness, injury or family emergency), with Principal approval, a certificated staff member/teacher will work with the parent to implement an independent study program in an expedited manner with less than one (1) school day notice.

The Board of Directors has adopted the following statements in accordance with Education Code Section 51747:

- (a) The assignment must be completed and returned to the teacher through a face to face meeting, facsimile, mail, or other credible method of meeting and reviewed upon completion of the Independent Study Program for all grades, unless extended by the Principal in consultation with the teacher.
- (b) An evaluation will be made by a committee made up of the student's teacher and the Principal as to whether it is in the student's best interest to participate in the independent study program during an absence upon the student missing 3 assignments. A written record of the findings of this evaluation shall be placed in the student's permanent record and shall be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation. If the student transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.
- (c) A written independent study master agreement for each student shall be maintained on file. Each agreement shall be signed and dated and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement. The agreement shall contain all the items listed below:
 - The manner, time, frequency and place for submitting a student's assignments and for reporting his or her progress.
 - The objectives and methods of study for the student's work, and the methods utilized to evaluate that work.
 - The specific resources, including materials that will be made available to the student.
 - A statement of the policies adopted herein regarding the maximum length of time allotted between the assignment and the completion of a student's assigned work, and the number of missed assignments prior to an evaluation of whether or not the student should be allowed to continue in independent study.
 - The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the agreement.
 - The inclusion of a statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate.
 - Each written agreement shall be signed, prior to the commencement of independent study, by the student, the student's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated teacher/staff member who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and all other persons who have direct responsibility for providing instructional assistance to the student.
- (d) Attendance Accounting:

The School recognizes that families may not evenly distribute student's work assignments over weekdays. However, due to strict State law requirements for charter school attendance, the School expects each student to be engaged in an educational activity required of them in the assignment on each weekday that the School is in session, and asks that this "daily engagement" be documented on a daily basis in the student log by the parent/guardian. This should not be read to prohibit schoolwork on weekends and

should not be read to dictate the manner in which a family distributes the assignments over the independent study period.

The School asks that a parent/guardian refrain from documenting any “daily engagement” on a day where a student did not engage in any educational activity required of them by the assignment. Work done on weekends or other days when school is not in session cannot be used to “make-up” weekdays where no “daily engagement” occurred.

Student Progress

The governing Board expects students to progress academically and reach benchmark goals through each grade level within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction will accommodate individual students and include strategies for addressing academic deficiencies when needed. Students shall demonstrate mastery of the State adopted grade level standards and Voices Benchmarks. As early as possible in the school year, the principal shall identify students who should be retained and who are at risk of being retained. Using multiple measures of assessment, students shall be identified on the basis of Voices performance levels in reading/language arts and mathematics.

When a student is recommend for retention or is identified as being at risk for retention, The Principal shall (1) provide opportunities for supplemental instruction to assist the student in overcoming his/her academic deficiencies and (2) provide a process and timeline for parent notification. Supplemental opportunities may include, but are not limited to intervention classes, after-school programs, summer school, and intersession programs. When high academic achievement is evident, the Principal may recommend a student for acceleration into a higher-grade level. The Principal, the teacher and the parent will take a student’s social and emotional growth into consideration in making the determination to accelerate a student. Students who do not progress adequately may be retained at the discretion of the teacher and principal based on a student’s grades, standardized test scores, attendance, homework completion record, and other measures with input from the classroom teachers, parents, and administration. Students who apply for admission to Voices will initially be placed at the grade level they have reached elsewhere pending observation and evaluation of their academic, social and emotional performance by their teachers and principal.

Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying

Voices believes all students have the right to a safe and civil learning environment. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors which interfere with students’ ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, the School prohibits any acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying related to school activity or school attendance. This is inclusive of instances that occur on any area of the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities, regardless of location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means.

As used herein, “discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying” describe the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication, or cyberbullying, that is based on the actual or perceived characteristics of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. In addition, bullying encompasses any conduct described in the definitions set forth here.

To the extent possible, Voices will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond, and address any reports of such behaviors in a timely manner. Voices staff who witness acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying will take immediate steps to intervene, so long as it is safe to do so.

Definitions

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that constitutes sexual harassment, hate violence or creates an intimidating or hostile educational

environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
- Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
- Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
- Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the School.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Electronic act is the transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager.

Reasonable pupil is defined as a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.

Reporting

All staff is expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, or bullying, to intervene as soon as it is safe to do so, call for assistance, and report such incidents.

All other members of the school community, including students, parents/guardians, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation to the Principal or designee. While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to use the report form available in the Main Office. However, oral reports shall also be considered. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on anonymous information.

Students are expected to report all incidents of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, bullying, teasing, or other verbal or physical abuse. Any student who feels she/he is a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, principal, or staff person so that she/he can get assistance in resolving the issue.

Voices acknowledges and respects every individual's rights to privacy. To that end, consistent with legal requirements, all reports shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible.

Voices prohibits any form of retaliation against any reporter in the reporting process, including but not limited to a reporter's filing of a complaint or the reporting of violations. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of the reporter.

Investigation

Upon receipt of a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying from a student, staff member, parent, volunteer, visitor or affiliate of the School, the Principal or designee will promptly initiate an investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Principal or designee will notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation. However, in no case may the Principal or designee reveal confidential student information related to other students, including the type and extent of discipline issued against such students.

Complaints shall be investigated and resolved within thirty (30) school days, unless circumstances reasonably require additional time.

All records related to any investigation of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying will remain in a secure location in the Main Office of the Charter School.

In those instances when the complaint filed also requires investigation under the Uniform Complaint Procedures, such investigation will be undertaken concurrently.

Appeal

Should the Complainant find the Principal or designee resolution unsatisfactory, he/she may within five (5) school days of the date of resolution, file an appeal with the Designated Appeals Committee. In such cases, at least three (3) certificated School employees who are unfamiliar with the case and who have been previously designated and trained for this purpose shall be assembled to conduct a confidential review of the Complainant's appeal and render a final disposition.

Consequences

Students who engage in discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

For students, employees, parents/guardians, school and district advisory committee members, appropriate private school officials, and other interested parties

Consequences for Violation of Policies:

Office Referrals

If a student violates any policy not covered under the school's suspension or expulsion policy, or Uniform Complaint Procedure (i.e. uniform, absence, tardiness, homework, etc) they may be referred to the office at the discretion of the teacher or adult working with the child. Depending upon the specific circumstances surrounding the student's behavior, a student may remain in the office for a "time out" period, and an appropriate consequence will be devised. Depending on the violation, a student's parent or guardian might be called to immediately pick up the child and the student will remain in the office until he/she is picked up. Detentions may be directed to be served during lunch, after school, or on Saturdays. Students are expected to serve detention or perform community service as assigned. Failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school. When possible, students and parents will be given at least one day's notice of detention or community service.

Any one or combination of the following consequences may be administered at the administrators discretion based on the frequency and severity of student behaviors (*This is not an exhaustive list*)


- Time out
- Loss of privilege (recess, enrichment, field trip, etc)
- Recess restrictions- Teachers and administrators may restrict a student's recess time when she/he believes that this action is the most effective way to bring about improved behavior or habits, subject to the following conditions:
 1. The student shall be given adequate time to use the restroom and get a drink or eat their snack.
 2. The student shall remain under an employee's supervision during the period.
- Parent-Administrator conference
- Behavior contract
- Buddy room
- Community Service- contribute to or assist members of the school community
- Restorative justice: Righting wrongs or paying back
- Cocooning- limited autonomy and gradual earning back of privileges
- Classroom/School Formal Observation Time- The student's parent or guardian may be required to come to school and to sit with the student in his or her classroom(s) and through school activities. The observation must be for at least one hour and perhaps more, depending on the violation. If the parent is not cooperative and does not attend the formal observation, the student may be suspended and then considered for

expulsion. Occasionally students display satisfactory behavior only when in the company of parents. In such instances, an administrator or teacher may video tape a child to later share with a parent and hold the student accountable for behavior.

- Home visit
- SST referral
- Parenting classes/support
- County nurse referral
- Other social services/mental health/counseling referrals
- Suspension/Expulsion (Attachment A)

Character Counts! and Character Violation Tickets

Every Staff member at Voices can pass out Character Counts! And Office Referral Forms. The Character Counts! Ticket is given when a student is “caught being good” or for exemplifying one of the Six Pillars of Character. This ticket can then be entered in a raffle for a small prize. If your child brings one of these tickets home praise them for remember to be a good citizen. The Office Referral is given out if a student is found to have violated one of the Values or has been sent to the office for any other reason (sick, injury, behavior, etc.) We asked for these to be signed and returned so you can be aware of anytime your student has been sent to the office. If your child brings home this ticket, please have a discussion about making better decisions.

		<u>Office Referral</u>
Student: _____		
Teacher: _____		Date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship Violation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sí Se Puede Violation	
<input type="checkbox"/> In Lak'ech Violation	<input type="checkbox"/> Activism Violation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Sickness	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		
Brief description of Injury, Sickness, and for Behavior (explain reason and attach think it through sheet):		

Parent Signature: _____		Date: _____
Office Use Only		
<input type="checkbox"/> Defiant Behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive Behavior	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unresponsive Behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> Violent/Aggressive Behavior	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		



Boleto de Buen Carácter		
Hoy su hijo/a enseñó buen carácter en:		
<u>Escolaridad:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ser Diligente	<input type="checkbox"/> Tener control de sí mismo
<u>Actitud Sí Se Puede:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ser agradecido	<input type="checkbox"/> Tener perseverancia <input type="checkbox"/> Tomar riesgos
<u>In Lak'ech:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tener empatía	<input type="checkbox"/> Ser cariñoso
Nombre de estudiante: _____		
Personal Escolar: _____		
Explicación: _____		



Good Character Ticket		
Today your child show actions that exemplified the following school values:		
<u>Scholarship:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Conscientiousness	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Control
<u>Sí Se Puede Attitude:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude	<input type="checkbox"/> Perseverance <input type="checkbox"/> Risk-taking
<u>In Lak'ech:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Empathy</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Caring</u>
Nombre de estudiante: _____		
Personal Escolar: _____		
Explicación: _____		

IV. Suspension and Expulsion

See Attachment A

V. Student Health and Safety

Visiting Campus

In accordance with California law, all visitors (including parents and volunteers) must check in with the office and obtain a visitor's badge before entering the campus. Parents must come to the office and sign their student out before taking him/her off campus for any reason. Items that need to be delivered to students by a parent during school hours must be done through the office. Parents may not go directly to the classroom or onto the playground without checking in to the office. Parents may not bring visitors (such as friends/relatives) to school or have them visit the campus without prior, special permission granted by the school administration.

Food and Nutrition

Children are growing and developing bones, teeth, muscles. They require nutritious food in order to grow and flourish. Eating habits are established early in childhood. It is important that these are GOOD HABITS! Parents and older siblings are significant models for young children as they learn and imitate the individuals in their immediate environment. In order for your child to learn as best as he or she can each day, your child requires a nutritious, well-balanced diet. Please make every effort to feed your child a nutritious breakfast each day before

school if they do not eat breakfast with us. Our school does not provide a morning snacks and our school day is longer than others. Your child will get hungry.

If you do not purchase school meals, please send your child to school each day with:

- A healthy, adequate lunch
- A healthy, non-perishable drink.

<i>Suggested Snacks</i>	A bag of baby carrots or other raw vegetable sticks Cheese and crackers A piece of fruit (orange, apple) Dried fruit and nuts Yogurt
<i>Suggested Lunch Items</i>	Leftovers from dinner Sandwich Piece of fruit Bag of pretzels Granola Bar Soup in a thermos
<i>Suggested Drink</i>	Water bottle <i>Real</i> Fruit Juice

DO NOT SEND:

Junk food, fast food or items that is high in fat or sugar. Items such as these may be confiscated by school staff if found (a replacement beverage or snack will be provided to the student). Examples include:

- Carbonated Soda or punch
- Candy
- Gum
- McDonald's (or other fast food)
- Twinkies
- Cheetos/Hot Cheetos

SEND YOUR CHILD WITH ONLY A HEALTHY LUNCH AND A SNACK.

Class parties

We kindly request that parents support our health policy by only providing nutritious snacks for celebrations. All events must be approved in advance by the principal and/or the classroom teacher.

Hygiene

As a part of coming to school "Ready to Learn," your child needs to come to school clean. Good hygiene for children includes brushing their teeth at least twice a day, bathing on a regular basis, and brushing or grooming their hair each day. With older students, body odor can become an issue. Children will be active each day. Please do not hesitate to send antiperspirant or deodorant to school with your middle schooler, if necessary. Children can become the target of teasing and avoidance by other students if they come to school unclean. Please help your child develop good hygiene habits.

Sleep

It is very important for your child to get the appropriate amount of sleep. As active, growing individuals, children require anywhere from 8 to 12 hours of sleep nightly. A routine is often helpful in making sure your child gets enough sleep. Please set a regular bedtime for your child and enforce it. Help your child get the best amount of sleep each night.

Illness

If your child becomes ill, please call and inform the office. For your own child's protection and the protection of others please do not send your sick child to school. If your child complains of feeling sick at school, depending on the severity, you may be contacted to pick him or her up from school.

When students come to school they should feel well enough to participate in their classroom program. If your child has any of the following symptoms he/she should not be at school. For health and safety purposes, students who exhibit any of the following symptoms should not remain in school, but please come to school to pick up work for the day:

- **Fever** (99.6 or higher) Your child must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school. (Normal body temperature is 98.6)
- **Productive cough with yellow or green nasal discharge** (not associated with allergies). Please remember that green or yellow nasal discharge is not normal and indicates infection and your child should not be in school.
- **Red, swollen, crusty, draining or oozing eyes**
- **Severe sore throat**
- **Diarrhea, nausea or vomiting**
- **Head lice**
- **Contraction of a childhood disease such as chicken pox, measles or mumps**
- **Untreated infectious illness such as upper-respiratory infection, pink eye, strep throat, or bronchitis**
- **Any undiagnosed rashes**
- **Any open sores or open wounds**
- **Earache**

All 1st grade students must submit:

A record of a full developmental physical prior to entry to first grade. No matter where the physical is done, there are specific forms that must be completed and returned. This is different than the shot record that was required for Kindergarten entry. This is a full developmental physical performed by a physician or nurse practitioner within eighteen months of your student's entry into first grade. This is done to ensure that all California children receive early diagnosis and treatment of disabling conditions.

Head Lice

To prevent the spread of head lice infestations, School employees shall report all suspected cases of head lice to the administrative team as soon as possible. If nits or lice are found, the student shall be excluded from attendance and parents/guardians informed about recommended treatment procedures and sources of further information.

The Principal, or designee, shall send home the notification required by law for excluded students. If there are two or more students affected in any learning center, an exposure notice with information about head lice shall be sent home to all parents/guardians of those students.

Staff shall maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice and excluded from attendance.

Excluded students may return to school when reexamination by the nurse, or designee, shows that all nits and lice have been removed.

Vision, Hearing and Scoliosis Screening

The School shall screen for vision, hearing and scoliosis as required by Education Code Section 49450, *et seq.*, per appropriate grade levels.

Medications at School

The School staff is responsible for overseeing the administration of medication to students attending the School during regular school hours. It is imperative that practices followed in the administration of medication be carefully delineated to ensure the safety of our students and the legal protection of our employees. Any pupil who

is required to take, during the regular school day, medication prescribed for him or her by a physician or surgeon may be assisted by designated school personnel or may carry and self-administer prescription auto-injectable epinephrine if the School receives the appropriate written statements.

In order for a pupil to carry and self-administer prescription auto-injectable epinephrine, the School shall obtain both a written statement from the physician or surgeon detailing the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken, and confirming that the pupil is able to self-administer auto-injectable epinephrine, and a written statement from the parent, foster parent, or guardian of the pupil consenting to the self-administration, providing a release for the designated school personnel to consult with the health care provider of the pupil regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and releasing the School and school personnel from civil liability if the self-administering pupil suffers an adverse reaction as a result of self-administering medication.

In order for a pupil to be assisted by designated school personnel, the School shall obtain both a written statement from the physician detailing the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken and a written statement from the parent, foster parent, or guardian of the pupil indicating the desire that the School assist the pupil in the matters set forth in the statement of the physician.

Guidelines:

- The primary responsibility for the administration of medication rests with the parent/guardian, student and medical professional.
- Medication shall be administered only during school hours if determined by a physician to be necessary.
- Designated staff shall keep records of medication administered at the School.
- All medication will be kept in a secure and appropriate storage location and administered per physician's instructions by appropriately designated staff.
- Designated staff shall return all surplus medication to the parent/guardian upon completion of the regimen or prior to extended holidays.
- Designated staff shall establish emergency procedures for specific medical conditions that require an immediate response (i.e. allergies, asthma, and diabetes).
- The written statements specified in this policy shall be provided at least annually and more frequently if the medication, dosage, frequency of administration, or reason for administration changes.
- A pupil may be subject to disciplinary action if that pupil uses auto-injectable epinephrine in a manner other than as prescribed.

Treatment and School Related Injuries

It is the policy of the school to treat minor injuries (scrapes, cuts, bruises, etc.) in the following manner:

1. An injury will be inspected by a teacher or other staff member and kept under his/her observation.
2. If needed, the child may be sent or brought to the office. The injury will be treated with basic first aid. Parents will be notified of minor injuries at the discretion of the school administrator.
3. Any action taken by staff is recorded on the daily health log.

When confronted with a more serious illness or injury:

1. If required, transport the student to the nearest hospital or will call 911.
2. The school staff will contact parents (an attempt to contact parents will be made for all head injuries);
3. No child is sent home until a parent is contacted and agreement is reached as to appropriate actions.
4. Any action taken by staff is recorded on the daily health log.

The School and its officers and employees shall not be held liable for the reasonable treatment of a child without the consent of a parent or guardian when the child is ill or injured during regular school hours or at a school-related activity, requires reasonable medical treatment, and the parent or guardian cannot be reached, unless the parent or guardian has previously filed with the School a written objection to any medical treatment other than first aid.

Returning to School after an Illness or Prolonged Absence

A student returning to school following a serious or prolonged illness, injury, surgery, or other hospitalization, must have written permission by a health care provider to attend school, including any recommendations regarding physical activity and exertion. A student returning to school with sutures, casts, crutches, or a wheelchair must have a physician's written permission to attend school and must comply with any safety procedures required by the school administration. An excuse from physical activity may be granted if a student is unable to participate in regular or modified curriculum for a temporary period of time due to illness or injury. A parent's written request for an excuse will be accepted for up to one day; thereafter, a written request is needed from the student's health provider.

Immunizations

Applicability

This policy applies to all applicants to the School and School administrators in charge of admissions.

Immunizations

The School will adhere to all law related to legally required immunizations for entering students pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075.

California law requires that an immunization record be presented to the school staff before a child can be enrolled in school. The School requires written verification from a doctor or immunization clinic of the following immunizations:

- a) Diphtheria.
- b) Measles.
- c) Mumps, except for children who have reached the age of seven years.
- d) Pertussis (whooping cough), except for children who have reached the age of seven years. Beginning July 1, 2011, all rising and enrolled students in grades 7-12 must be immunized with a pertussis vaccine booster called Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap). Beginning July 1, 2012, this requirement will only apply to rising 7th graders.
- e) Poliomyelitis.
- f) Rubella.
- g) Tetanus.
- h) Hepatitis B.
- i) Varicella (chickenpox), (persons already admitted into California public or private schools at the Kindergarten level or above before July 1, 2001, shall be exempt from the Varicella immunization requirement for school entry).

The School's verification of immunizations will be completed with written medical records from the child's doctor or immunization clinic.

Exceptions are allowed under the following conditions:

- a) The parent provides a signed doctor's statement verifying that the child is to be exempted from immunizations for medical reasons. This statement must contain a statement identifying the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition.
- b) A parent may request exemption of their child from immunization for personal beliefs.
- c) Pupils who fail to complete the series of required immunizations within the specified time allowed under the law will be denied enrollment until the series has been completed.

Any child leaving the United States for a short vacation to or long stay in any country considered by the Center of Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") to have increased risk of TB exposure (such as Mexico, the Philippines, India or Southeast Asia) MUST contact the County Tuberculosis Clinic for a TB Screening upon return.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

Parent want to see their child excel, and it can be very frustrating if a child falls behind in reading, math, writing, and other subjects, or if the child has difficulties getting along with others or making appropriate choices. Response to Intervention (RtI) is a process that provides intervention and educational support to all students at increasing level of intensity based on their individual needs. The goal is to prevent problems and intervene early so that students can be successful. The RtI has three tiers that build upon one other. Each tier provides more intensive levels of support:

- **Tier I includes high quality instruction.** The school provides all students with access to high quality curriculum, instruction, and behavior support in the general education classroom.
- **Tier II includes additional targeted, supplemental instruction/interventions.** The school provides intervention to small groups of students who need more support than they are receiving through Tier I.
- **Tier III includes intensive interventions.** The school develops and implements interventions to meet the individual needs of students.

Student Success Team (SST)

Any student requiring additional support may be referred for an SST (Tier II support) by the teacher. The teacher first gathers evidence about the student and makes adaptations and modifications for the child in class. If further information or modifications are required, the teacher submits a SST referral to the principal. After observations by the principal, the SST team, usually made up of the student's teachers, parents, and the principal or designee, convene. The team brainstorms strategies for supporting the student both at home and at school and decides upon a date for the second SST team meeting, by which time all strategies or action items are to be implemented or completed. At the second SST team meeting, the team decides whether the student has made satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress. If the progress is satisfactory, the SST team continues to meet regularly until the student does not need further support. If the progress is unsatisfactory, the student may be referred to the special education staff for further assessment.

Counseling and Crisis Intervention Procedures

Voices takes the emotional and physical safety of all its students seriously. We have an on-sight counseling program that supports the social and emotional needs of our students through a variety of methods including prevention programs, classroom intervention, individual and group work and parent education. Students are typically identified and referred through the SST process; although if a parent feels his or her child may need services they may inquire with the parent liaison.

As a part of the services addressing the emotional wellbeing of our students, there are several circumstances that may require a Crisis Intervention. Voices has a Crisis Team that will respond to the needs of a student in crisis, such as self-injury and Suicide (including both written and verbal statements indicating the intent to self-harm). A student in crisis will be assessed by a member of the Crisis team and the Parent/Guardian will be notified. The parent/Guardian will be expected to sign a Parent Notification form when they pick up the student and will be expected to follow protocols before reentry into school. Failure to seek follow-up care for a minor child who may be a danger to his or herself may result in a mandated Child Protective Service report.

Integrated Service Delivery (Special Education)

Students who are experiencing difficulties in learning may be eligible for special education resource support. Upon parental permission, diagnostic tests are given to assess eligibility. A student must officially be screened into the program. This screening starts with a “child study” where concerns for a student’s progress are discussed by a Student Success Team including the parents, teacher, resource specialist, etc. Very often, the action plan developed by the Student success Team is enough to provide needed support for the child. However, if after further review more intervention is necessary, special education testing may be warranted. An assessment will be done and an individualized program designed for a student as appropriate is designed for students that qualify. Qualifications are established by the federal government.

Please contact your child’s teacher immediately if you feel your child is experiencing difficulties in learning. Any parent/guardian, teacher, appropriate professionals or School administrator may request a screening for any child for attendance or discipline problems, learning problems or emotional concerns.

504 Plans

Under Section 504, individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities, including learning, are entitled to receive regular or special education and/or related aids and services designed to meet their individual needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. Students may be disabled and entitled to services under Section 504 even though they are not eligible for services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”).

A Section 504 Team will be convened to determine the student’s need for regular or special education and/or related aids and services. Any parent/guardian, teacher, appropriate professionals or School administrator may request a meeting. If the student, due to disability, is found to require regular or special education and/or related aids and services under Section 504, the Section 504 Team shall develop a 504 plan for the provision of such services to the student. Please contact your child’s teacher immediately if you feel your child is experiencing difficulties due to a physical or mental impairment.

Suspected Abuse

All school personnel are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and/or neglect. Mandated reporters are required to report suspected child maltreatment immediately when they have “reasonable cause to believe that a child who is 17 years of age or younger and known to them in a professional or official capacity has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed – physically, sexually, or through neglect – and that a caregiver either committed the harm or should have taken steps to prevent the child from harm.” No one in the workplace, even a supervisor, is permitted to suppress, change or edit a report of abuse. A mandated reporter who willfully fails to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is subject to license suspension or revocation, and commits a misdemeanor.

VI. Communication at VOICES

The Importance of Home/School Communication

We strongly believe that effective communication between the family and the school will enhance the education of each child. In the Family/School Compact, both parents and school administrators pledge to openly communicate and dialogue about the issues, challenges, and successes of their child and the school. Please be sure to stay abreast of school activities and events.

Tuesday Envelopes

Every Tuesday, we will send a packet of information home with each child. We call this “Tuesday Envelopes.” Please **ask** your child for their envelope each Tuesday. Inside, will be important information from the classroom teacher, such as field trip slips, calendars of events, meeting notices, notes about classroom happenings, and other important news and clarifications. Return the envelope the next day (Wednesday) with your child. Replacement envelopes may be purchased at the office for \$2.00. Most information is also updated on our website weekly.

Tips for Effective Communication

With Teachers

Contact your child's teacher by:

- Calling the school and leaving a message for the teacher. He or she will return your call.
- Making an appointment to see your child's teacher(s).
- Writing a note.
- Email the teacher

With Administrators

Contact School Administration by:

- Calling the school, leave a message if necessary.
- Making an appointment.

Report Cards and Parent-Teacher Conferences

One excellent way to communicate with your child's teacher is during conferences. You may make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher whenever you feel it is necessary to conference informally with them.

To ensure that you and your child get the most out of your meetings, please be on time and follow the following tips:

- Have questions prepared.
- Take notes during the conference.
- Share any important, relevant information (changes in the child's life, for example).
- Don't compare one child to any other child.

Guiding Principles, Personal Rights and Conflict Resolution

The goal of any disciplinary actions at Voices is to ensure the school is a safe and nurturing community so that all students have the opportunity to learn. Our policies ensure student and adult safety at all times.

In addition to the rules and consequences, Voices utilizes a set of beliefs and values – what we call our Guiding Principles – to help us define how we (students, teachers, family members, community members) interact and work with one another. Action that does not exemplify the Guiding Principles is harmful to student goals and community cohesion.

There are three Guiding Principles which taken together represent the expected behaviors of a Voices community member. Each principle is defined by a set of ideals. Community members are expected to strive for the ideals of each principle in their daily interactions and students are held accountable to the Guiding Principles throughout their entire VOICES experience. The three principles are listed below.

Personal Responsibility

Teachers, parents and students will be held up to the highest expectations of personal responsibility. The saying "No Excuses" will influence our practice. Although times may be trying and outside influences seem overwhelming, we will look within ourselves to take responsibility for our actions. For instance, teachers will not make excuses for low achievement, students will not make excuses for lack of effort, and parents will not make excuses for truancy. Only then can we move forward and make positive change. Likewise, all stake holders will understand that they have a personal responsibility to help others and to share their expertise and talents with others.

Absolute Determination

We each will look within ourselves to overcome obstacles. Taking into account that many Voices' students and families may face adversity, they will discover that through perseverance these challenges can be overcome.

Students will understand that nothing is beyond their reach. They all have potential; they only need apply the effort to make their dreams reality.

Community

Voices College-Bound Language Academies is a community. Together parents, teachers and students will accomplish great feats. The notion that despite our differences and diversity, we are all moving towards the same vision of high student achievement will unite us. For instance, to achieve the school's mission teachers will work collaboratively, parents and teachers will work as partners and students will support each other.

Violations of Guiding Principles

Since VOICES is a learning community, it is the school's priority to view any violation of a Guiding Principle as both a conflict to be resolved and as learning experience for the person who has violated the principle. The appropriate action for a violation to the Guiding Principles will be determined during conflict resolution.

Personal Rights

All students will be held accountable to respect our five Personal Rights:

- Right to feel safe
- Right to learn
- Right to celebrate one's accomplishments
- Right to be heard
- Right to be yourself

If a member of the VOICES community witnesses a behavior that he/she believes to be in violation of the Guiding Principles or Personal Rights, the involved parties should use the Voices Conflict Resolution Guidelines to resolve the matter. If the dialogue fails to resolve the matter, the following steps may be taken:

- The student's teacher or school administrator will be notified and may mediate a conversation between parties.
- A parent may be notified and asked to attend a conference with all involved parties.

Informal and Formal Community Complaint Resolution Procedures

It is the intent of Voices College-Bound Language Academies to integrate conflict resolution skills into the curriculum and parent education activities. In accordance therewith, community members that have complaints against other students are encouraged to first address the issue with the person directly using the learned conflict resolution skills.

Informal: Conflict Resolution

When a school community member (student, teacher, parent, volunteer, tutor, etc.) has a concern or complaint, the School encourages the use of the Conflict Resolution Guidelines outlined below. Using these guidelines is a way to resolve conflict peacefully, in a way that can be mutually agreeable to the parties involved. If, however, a student does not feel comfortable with this approach or the complaint involves sexual harassment or discrimination, the student may notify a teacher or other school staff member. The teacher or staff member will notify the Principal of the complaint if it cannot be resolved at that level. In some instances, it may be possible for school community members to engage in this process at the time the conflict arises. In other situations, an agreed upon time for resolving the conflict will need to be scheduled. Some conflicts will be able to be resolved without a mediator, and in others, a mediator may be necessary. When conflicts are unsuccessfully resolved using the Conflict Resolution Guidelines, the conflict should be referred to the nearest adult with authority at the school, or in the case of an adult conflict, to the Principal. We aim for the Conflict Resolution Guidelines to be used to resolve the following conflicts (not an exhaustive list):

Student to Student

Student to Staff/Teacher/Director/Tutor/Volunteer

Student to Family Member

Family Member to Staff/Teacher/Director/Tutor/Volunteer

Staff Member to Staff Member

Family Member to Family Member

After a conflict happens, members of the community should use the following guidelines to resolve the conflict. Students will be taught the guidelines and encouraged to practice them as conflicts arise at school.

Steps to Take Before Resolving the Conflict

Before resolving a conflict, we ask students or others involved to do the following steps:

1. Take time to self reflect
2. Decide if you need a mediator (Principal, teacher, another student, etc)
3. Make a request to talk
4. Communicate respectfully:
 - Share feelings and needs using “I” Statements
 - Listen with Compassion and Empathy
 - Make a request

Formal Complaint and Resolution Procedures:

Most complaints can be resolved through the Conflict Resolution Procedure or by informal discussions between the complainant and the employee or the Principal. If it cannot, the School will use the following procedure:

- A. Any complaint shall be put in writing using the “Complaint Form” (available in the school office or by contacting the Principal) and addressed to the Principal. A written complaint shall include:
 1. The full name of each person involved
 2. A brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it
 3. A specific description of any prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the person and the failure to resolve the matter
- B. The Principal shall investigate the complaint as necessary and shall promptly mail a written notice to the Complainant of the date, time, and place of a meeting between the Complainant and the Principal, which shall occur no later than twenty (20) school days following the receipt of complaint.
- C. If no resolution can be agreed upon between the Principal and the Complainant, the Principal shall submit the complaint to the Board of Directors.
- D. The Board may seek additional investigation by the Principal as it deems necessary.
- E. The Board of Directors shall make recommendations and address the recommendations at the next Regular Board meeting.
- F. The Board of Directors will make the final determination regarding the dispute and shall notify the Complainant of the Board’s determination within ten school days of the determination.

This procedure, which we believe is important for both you and the School, cannot guarantee that every problem will be resolved to your satisfaction. However, the School values your observations and you should feel free to raise issues of concern, in good faith, without the fear of retaliation.

Policy for Complaints Against Employees

The School requires all employees to observe the highest standard of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the School, employees must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with school policies noted in the Employment Guidelines and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the complainant will be provided information concerning the applicable policy and procedures to be followed. If there is no applicable policy or procedures, the Principal (or designee) shall encourage the parties involved to seek an informal resolution of the issues. If this is not possible due to the nature of the complaint or if informal resolution has been unsuccessfully attempted, the Principal (or designee) shall undertake a responsible inquiry into the complaint to ensure it is reasonably and swiftly addressed. When appropriate, a written statement of the complaint will be obtained from the complainant.

If the complainant files a written complaint and no other school policy or procedure is applicable, the Principal (or designee) shall abide by the following process:

1. Within 10 working days of the receipt of the complaint, the Principal or designee shall use his or her best efforts to talk with the parties identified in the complaint and to ascertain the facts relating to the complaint.
2. In the event that the Principal (or designee) finds that a complaint against an employee is valid, the Principal (or designee) may take appropriate disciplinary action against the employee. As appropriate, the Principal (or designee) may also simply counsel/reprimand employees as to their conduct without initiating formal disciplinary measures.
3. The Principal's (or designee's) decision relating to the complaint shall be final unless it is appealed to the Board of Directors of the School. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

Confidentiality

Complainants will be notified that information obtained from the complainants and thereafter gathered will be maintained in a manner as confidential as possible, but in some circumstances absolute confidentiality cannot be assured.

Non-Retaliation

Complainants will be advised that they will be protected against retaliation as a result of the filing of any complaints or participation in any complaint process.

Resolution

The administration will investigate complaints appropriately under the circumstances and pursuant to the applicable procedures, and if necessary, take appropriate remedial measures to ensure effective resolution of any complaint.

Uniform Complaint Procedure

Voices has the primary responsibility to insure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and has established procedures to address allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, and complaints alleging violation of state or federal laws governing educational programs and the charging of unlawful pupil fees.

Voices shall investigate and seek to resolve complaints using policies and procedures known as the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) adopted by our local board. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or

bullying complaints may be based on actual or perceived age, ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or on a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance.

The UCP shall also be used when addressing complaints alleging failure to comply with state and/or federal laws (where applicable) in:

- Consolidated Categorical Aid Programs
- Child Care and Developmental Programs
- Child Nutrition Programs
- Special Education Programs
- Safety Planning Requirements
- Local Control Funding Formula
- A complaint of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees may be filed pursuant to the local UCP. A pupil enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity.

A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

1. A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.
2. A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment.
3. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

Complaints other than complaints relating to pupil fees must be filed in writing with the following compliance officer:

Voices Academies
CEO
14271 Story Rd.
San Jose, CA 95127

Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees are filed with a principal of a school. A complaint regarding pupil fees may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information to support an allegation of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees.

Complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, must be filed within six (6) months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, occurred or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, unless the time for filing is extended by the superintendent or his or her designee.

Complaints will be investigated and a written Decision or report will be sent to the complainant within sixty (60) days from the receipt of the complaint. This sixty (60) day time period may be extended by written agreement of the complainant. The LEA person responsible for investigating the complaint shall conduct and complete the investigation in accordance with sections 4680-4687 and in accordance with local procedures adopted under section 4621.

The complainant has a right to appeal Voices' Decision to the California Department of Education ("CDE") by filing a written appeal within 15 days of receiving Voices' Decision. The appeal must include a copy of the complaint filed with VCBLA and a copy of Voices' Decision.

Civil law remedies may be available under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying laws, if applicable. In appropriate cases, an appeal may be filed pursuant to Education Code Section 262.3. A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside of Voices's complaint procedures. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders.

A copy of Voices' UCP policy and complaint procedures is available in the school office or by contacting the Principal.