



**2023-2024**

**Aurora Academy Charter School  
Parent/Student Handbook**

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# AURORA ACADEMY

## PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

### 2023-2024

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#### Mission Statement

*Aurora Academy Charter School's mission is to provide a well-rounded, rigorous curriculum with high academic standards for kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.*

#### Introduction

Aurora Academy Charter School (AACS) is a parent governed charter school authorized by Aurora Public Schools (APS). This handbook provides considerable information regarding student and parent expectations. Please be sure you are familiar with its content.

#### AACS Board of Directors

AACS is managed by an elected governing board known as the Board of Directors. It is made up of parents with children at the school and community members. The parent members of the Board of Directors hold three-year terms, and the community member holds a one-year term. Elections are held yearly in January. The Board of Directors meets August through June at 6 pm in the AACS library (unless otherwise noted on the website). Parents are welcome, and encouraged, to attend the open-forum session of these meetings.

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# Policies and Procedures

## Academic Expectations:

Aurora Academy's mission is to *"provide a well-rounded, rigorous curriculum with high academic standards"* for all students. In order to achieve academic growth and learning, students are expected to complete and turn in all work (class work and homework) that is assigned. This work should be done to a student's best ability, be neat in appearance, and shall be turned in on time. Extra activities within the school day are a privilege and will be awarded to those students who have met their academic responsibilities. Students who have missing assignments and have been given additional opportunities to make up those missing assignments but have not done so may be withheld from special activities in order to complete the assignments they have failed to submit. These extra activities may include but are not limited to field trips, assemblies, guest speakers, and/or quarterly SOAR events.

## Admissions:

**Age Requirements** - AACCS follows the APS policy that requires a student to be five (5) years old on or before October 1 in order to attend kindergarten. A child must be six (6) years old on or before October 1 in order to attend first grade.

**Sibling Priority Policy** – It is important to us that siblings, living in the **same home**, can all attend the same school so families can be together. Aurora Academy would like to extend a benefit to our current families by offering priority enrollment to children that live in the same home. In order to qualify for this benefit, the following criteria must be met.

### **Note: All three of the following criteria must be met to qualify for sibling priority:**

- Currently enrolled child(ren)'s family must have completed 50% of volunteer hours by mid-January to qualify for openings prior to the lottery.
- Child(ren) must live in the same home of the child attending Aurora Academy and
- To be considered a "sibling", children must meet this definition:

"Sibling" means one of two or more children or wards related:

(a) By blood, legal guardianship or adoption through a common legal parent; or

(b) Through the marriage of the children's or wards' legal or biological parents.

Note: Being a "relative", "relation", or "family member" does not meet the requirement of "sibling". Different families living in the same home does not qualify children as "siblings".

Should the above criteria not be met, then children wishing admittance must submit an application through the lottery system conducted each year, in the spring. For more information regarding our full-enrollment policy and the lottery system please see our website at [www.aacademy.org](http://www.aacademy.org)

**Withdrawals** - Parents who are withdrawing their children from Aurora Academy should notify the school office and complete the necessary withdrawal forms which can be found online. In addition, students who miss ten consecutive days of school due to travel or other official or personal business must officially withdraw from Aurora Academy. The school will then process the paperwork and notify the Aurora Public School District admissions office.

## After School Activities Supervision

Siblings of students participating in a supervised after school activity must be picked up during normal release time. Students remaining after the pick-up time stated in the AACS policy will be sent to the school's after school care program. Parents will be charged according to the company's fee structure.

## Asbestos Management Plan:

In accordance with 40 CFR 763.93(i) of the Environmental Protection Agency Asbestos-Containing Material in Schools regulation, Aurora Academy notifies parents and staff that the Asbestos Management Plan is available for review in the main office of the school.

## Athletics:

Students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 may participate in extracurricular athletics. A NON-REFUNDABLE athletic fee is required of all students who wish to participate. **Please note:** Student athletes must maintain weekly eligibility requirements outlined in the Athletic Handbook. Students wishing to participate in athletics at AACS must attend the mandatory athletic meeting where the Athletic Handbook will be distributed and reviewed.

## Attendance:

**Reporting Attendance** – If your child(ren) will be absent, please call the school office at 303-367-5983 or email [attendance@auroraacademycharter.com](mailto:attendance@auroraacademycharter.com) to report an absence. If you call before or after school hours, please leave a message including your name, your child(ren)'s name(s), date of absence(s), and reason for absence. If a child is absent and we do not receive a call or an e-mail, the attendance clerk will call the primary parent/guardian noted in Infinite Campus. You must inform the office of an absence, not only the teacher. Students are considered tardy at 7:55 am. Please notify the office if your child has a communicable illness. Absences and tardies will be recorded and reported on the report card each quarter.

**Absences** – Regular attendance is essential for a student to perform at his or her maximum level. School hours are 7:55 am to 3:20 pm. An absent student misses classroom instruction and the class discussion. Homework and assignments can be made up, but the best learning environment is the classroom. With that in mind, we encourage parents to avoid scheduling appointments and vacations during school days. Extended vacation times must be scheduled during non-school times. Vacations are considered unexcused absences. Students who miss ten consecutive days of school due to travel or personal business must officially withdraw from Aurora Academy. Students may not participate in school-sponsored events/activities during or after school on the day of his/her absence.



**Excused Absences** – Excused absences usually involve illness, injury, doctor’s appointments, or bereavement. If a student is absent more than 3 days in a row due to illness, a written doctor’s excuse may be required to excuse absences.

**Make-up work** – Two class days per day of excused absence will be granted for students to make up work. Failure to make up missed assignment(s) on time may cause them to be considered late work, with applicable reductions. Make up work is determined by teachers. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the teacher before or after school to find out what assignments have been missed. We emphasize classroom instruction. Missing school for a planned absence is discouraged, as the benefit of a knowledgeable teacher leading a class discussion cannot be replaced. For pre-planned absences, the teacher, along with the student and parents, will agree prior to the absence what the arrangement will be; time to make up missed work may not apply as described above.

**Signing students in/out** – If a child arrives at school after 7:55 am or needs to leave before 3:20 pm, the parent must come into the building and sign the student in/out. If a student is picked up by someone other than a parent or emergency contact between 7:55 am and 3:20 pm, the parent must provide verbal or written consent for pick up. Students will be called out of the classroom when parents have arrived and not prior.

**Tardies** – AACCS expects all students to be in their seats at 7:55 am for instruction. If a student is not in class by 7:55 am, they are considered tardy, and must come through the office for a tardy pass. Students are allowed three unexcused tardies per quarter before consequences apply. For each unexcused tardy thereafter – the 4<sup>th</sup> tardy and after in each quarter – a detention will be assigned. Either the student or the parent can serve the detention. In addition, a parent meeting with school administration will be required at the 4<sup>th</sup> tardy in each quarter.

### **Before and After School Care:**

AACCS offers a fee-based before and after school program through a third party company. The before school hours are 6:30 am - 8:00 am and after school from 3:20 pm - 6:00 pm. You can find more information about our after-school program and rates on our website under the “Parents” tab.

### **Equipment Deposit:**

A \$75 deposit is required for each student. The deposit will be forfeited for any equipment that is lost, stolen, or unduly damaged. Deposits will be refunded when your child leaves AACCS if there has been no need to replace or repair equipment. Parents may elect to donate their deposit, with tax advantages, to the school book fund. Equipment may include but not be limited to textbooks, library books, technology equipment, lockers, etc.

### **Bully/Discrimination Prevention:**

**HB 11-1254: Anti-Bullying Legislation** - In 2011, Colorado passed an anti-bullying bill that prohibits bullying against any student for any reason.

Bullying by students is prohibited on all district property, at district or school-related activities, in district vehicles, and off school property when such conduct has a connection to school or any district curricular or non-curricular activity.

What bullying is: 1) REPETITIVE behaviors often aimed at same target(s) creating 2) an imbalance of power.

More information on bullying can be found at [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov).

**SB 08-200: Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act** - In May 2008, Colorado expanded its anti-discrimination law to include protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

In accordance with federal and state laws, Aurora Academy Charter School prohibits discrimination and bullying based on race, national origin, color, ethnicity, disability, gender, religion, need for special education services, sexual orientation, or gender expression or identity.

### Car Line Expectations:

Carline is a fluid process; meaning it is constantly moving and drivers should anticipate constant movement. Morning drop off begins at 7:30 am. Afternoon pick up begins at 3:20 pm. In order to keep our drop off and pick up moving efficiently, all drivers must adhere to the following expectations:

#### General Code of Conduct

- Do not park your car in drop off lanes during morning and afternoon carline.
- Only students who are being dropped off may exit the car in drop off lanes.
- Students must exit the car on the side closest to the building.
- Do not drop off students or allow students to exit or enter a car in the center lane of drive thru lanes.
- Stay off cell phones.
- Keep eye contact with those who are directing carline and follow their directions.
  - They see things and know things you don't.
  - If you choose to pull forward to a pick-up area without being directed to, you run the risk of being redirected to the back of the line.
- Only enter the lines from designated entry points. Do not jump the line.
- Continually pull forward. Do NOT leave gaps in drop off or pick up lanes. Keep moving forward.

#### Morning Drop Off

During MORNING drop off:

- Cars must pull completely up to the curb.
- Do not park or drop off students along the left hand/driver's side curb. This is an exit lane.
- Do not exit your car. Staff members on duty will assist your child exiting the car.

## Afternoon Pick Up

During afternoon pick up:

- Cars may NOT begin lining up for carline until **3:00 pm**. If you arrive earlier and park in this area, you will be asked to move to a designated parking area.
- There is only ONE line on the side of the building for K-4 carline. Stay in that line until you are directed to move into one of the K-4 pick up areas. Do NOT get out of this single line. If you do, you again, run the risk of being redirected to the end of the line. (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are picked up in the back)
- Cars may not block any entrances to our campus during afternoon pick up. Emergency vehicles must be able to enter these areas at any time. If your car is lined up there, they cannot enter.
- Do not have impromptu conversations with teachers in carline. Instead set up a time to meet.
- Grades k-4, have your grade level sign visible in your front window.
- **How do I know where to pick up all of my children?** All students in the same carpool will report to the youngest student's pick up area. For example, I have an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, a 4<sup>th</sup> grader, and a Kindergarten student to pick up. I will pick up all three students in the Kindergarten pick up area.
  - Please make sure that all of your children know which area to report to.
  - Please make sure any other person who may pick up, knows the grade level of the youngest child.

## Communication:

**Board of Directors** - Board meetings are held once per month on a Monday at 6:00 pm in the Library. The public is always welcome to attend. A time for public comment is included on the agenda. If a parent wishes to make a comment or suggestion to the Board of Directors, they may do so at the open forum session of these meetings.

**Contact** - If you change your address or would like to add a second mailing address during the school year, you must report the change to the Front Office immediately by bringing in proof of address (such as a utility bill). This is required in order to assure registration from year to year, and to assure that written communication from AACS and the district reaches the proper parties.

If you change your email address, phone number, or emergency contact information during the school year, please notify the Front Office. This ensures you receive phone calls regarding your student(s), and information about school emergencies, volunteer opportunities, upcoming dates, and our email blasts of the *Falcon Flash*.

In general, school-wide communication will be sent home with the youngest sibling in your family.

**E-Mail** - All AACS staff and Board members can be reached through e-mail. The address is the person's first initial last name@auroraacademycharter.com (no spaces). Thus, John Smith's email address would be jsmith@auroraacademycharter.com . As stated in our Staff Handbook, **staff have up to two business days to respond to an email**. Please note: Any anonymous letters or messages

that are received by AACCS staff and Board members will be discarded immediately, regardless of content.

**Email Blasts** – We send out weekly blasts to our community at the beginning of each week. This is sent out electronically. Please update your email address with the Front Office if you are not receiving these informative emails.

**Parent Notification Process** - The following process is used for all materials that go home and need to be returned with a parent signature such as behavior forms, referrals, progress reports, permission slips, etc.

If a student does not return an item with parent signature the next day, the student will call the parent to arrange delivery of the item at the parent's earliest convenience (preferably on the same day). The teacher must confirm this contact.

If the item is still not returned the next day, the teacher will send the student to the Front Office. At this time, Administration will contact the parent to arrange the item's return.

We want to make sure parents see the item that is sent home, and to place responsibility for its return upon the child. Rather than engage in an extended exchange of "I'll bring it tomorrow" -- when in fact parents have never seen the item -- we want to complete the process quickly.

**Parent - Teacher Conferences** - We schedule formal parent - teacher conferences twice a year. These dates are listed on the school calendar. All parents are expected to attend the fall conference each year. We request that all parents attend their scheduled appointment for each student during fall/spring conference times.

**Teacher Newsletters** – Homeroom teachers in K-5 will send home important classroom-related information in Monday folders. Please read classroom letters for important information each week. Classroom letters will also be posted on the Aurora Academy website: [www.aacademy.org](http://www.aacademy.org). Middle school (grades 6-8) homeroom teachers send home a middle school newsletter each Monday.

**Telephone** - Telephones in classrooms are intended for adult use only. If necessary, parents may leave a message for their child with the Front Office or on the teacher's voice mail. Except in cases of an emergency, students should not receive calls during the school day. We will relay urgent telephone messages from parents to students. Students may use the office phone or classroom phone with PERMISSION ONLY from a staff member. **Cell phones may NOT be used by students during the school day and must be kept in the student's backpack or locker, turned off.** Please read our school cell phone policy in the Technology section on page 31.

**Website** – Important, up to date information can be found on our website: [www.aacademy.org](http://www.aacademy.org). All staff members maintain their web pages on the AACCS website to include contact information, weekly announcements, and upcoming events. Teachers will update student grades weekly in Infinite Campus. Please see page 26 for more information on utilizing Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

## Counseling:

Aurora Academy's Counseling Program is designed to work collaboratively with students, staff, and parents to provide guidance services to students. Students may have small group activities or meet individually with the counselor either at their own request or by referral from teachers or parents.

## Confidentiality Guidelines

Student confidentiality is important to us. In the school counseling office, what is said there stays there, with the following exceptions as required by law and/or ethical standards:

1. Harm to self or others - This could include things like a suicide attempt or plan, cutting or other self-injury, eating disorders, addictions, fighting or other physical violence, illegal behaviors, threats, etc. -- anything that puts your health or safety, or someone else's health and safety, at risk.
2. Abuse or neglect - If a student or parent talks with a staff member about abuse (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, or other abuse), whether to themselves or to a minor, staff members are required by law to report the issue to Child Protective Services (CPS) and possibly the police. If a student tells us about an abuse case that has already been addressed by CPS or the police, we still may need to make a call to double check.
3. Court or other legal proceedings - By law, if a staff member is subpoenaed (required by law to attend a hearing or other court proceeding), we cannot guarantee that a student's information will be kept confidential.

If there is ever a need to reveal information, we will let the student know in advance and work with the student to handle the situation in a way that respects the student, his/her feelings, and his/her needs.

## Curriculum:

AACS utilizes curricula which supports and upholds the Core Knowledge Sequence as aligned with the Colorado State Academic Standards. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a detailed outline of recommended content knowledge and skills to be taught in language arts, history and geography, visual arts, music, mathematics, and science from preschool through grade eight. The Sequence complements the general skills and objectives typically found in state and local curriculum guides.

Art, Music, Technology, Physical Education, and Library are scheduled for each homeroom class during the school year.

**Accelerated Reader** – AACS uses Accelerated Reader in all of its classrooms. Students earn points by reading books and successfully answering questions in its corresponding AR quiz. Accelerated Reader is a required component in the reading curriculum. It is calculated as 20% of a student's reading grade. To find out if a book you have at home is an Accelerated Reader Book, visit <http://www.arbookfind.com>.

## **Discipline Policy:**

AURORA ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL HAS ADOPTED THE AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE CODE. IN ADDITION, Aurora Academy Charter School has adopted other rules, which will be respected by its students and parents. These include a dress code, and rules concerning acceptable behavior in the classroom, school building, and playground areas with respect for teachers, staff, guests (including visitors and substitute teachers) to our building, and other students.

In addition to our school, this code applies to conduct at any school, in district vehicles, at any school-related curricular or non-curricular activities or events (whether or not the school-related activity is on or off campus), and under circumstances where off-campus behavior has a connection to the school or school activity or event and is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or school personnel.

### **Guiding Philosophy of the AACS Discipline Policy:**

- Everyone has a right to feel safe at school.
- All teachers, staff, and substitutes have the right to do their jobs without encountering disrespect or disruptive behaviors.
- All students have a right to learn without others disrupting the learning environment.
- All students are expected to learn by appropriately participating in classroom activities and instruction.

### **Governing Principles of the AACS Discipline Policy:**

- Behavior support, restorative practices, or discipline will be used for one of two purposes: 1) as a tool for learning; or 2) as a means to maintain an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.
- Discipline practices will focus on helping to change or control disruptive and/or inappropriate behaviors.
- Removal of a student from the learning environment may sometimes be necessary either for the safety of others or to ensure an appropriate learning environment.

## **Classroom**

Each teacher will maintain their own practices and procedures for handling minor day to day disturbances of the classroom while maintaining Aurora Academy's governing principles. This may include issuing a Behavior Reflection and/or Demerit.

## **Behavior Forms**

Aurora Academy will use one of two forms for any disciplinary situation – a Behavior Reflection or a Demerit. Each violation will be categorized into one of three categories as either a minor, major, or serious infraction. Should a student receive either a Behavior Reflection or a Demerit, a copy of the form will be sent home for a parent/guardian to review and sign. The staff member issuing the form



will make reasonable efforts to notify a parent of a Behavior Reflection or Demerit either by phone, email or in person the day it is given. The signed form will then be returned to the student's homeroom teacher on the next school day. Should the student not return the form the next day a phone call to a parent/guardian will be made.

**Behavior Reflections** – Behavior Reflections will be given for minor behavior infractions. Accumulation of Behavior Reflections will reset each quarter.

**When does a Behavior Reflection become a Demerit?** A Demerit will be issued when a behavior is a repeated minor behavior or is classified as a major/serious behavior infraction.

- If at any time the student repeats the same undesired behavior with the same staff member, he/she will be given a Demerit.
- If a student accumulates three Behavior Reflections for different behaviors with the same or a different staff member, he/she will receive a Demerit.
- Being disrespectful or argumentative when being issued a Behavior Reflection will result in a Demerit. This is a disruption to the learning environment.
- **At times, a situation may necessitate a Demerit for a minor infraction rather than a Behavior Reflection. These will be issued at the discretion of staff and administration.**

## Behavior Definitions

**Habitually Disruptive** means a student who has, *on three or more occasions during a school year*, caused a material and substantial disruption in the classroom, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school-related activities.

Once a student has been deemed habitually disruptive, a Level 1 Disciplinary Action will be assigned. After three demerits have been assigned for habitually disruptive behavior, a Level 2 Disciplinary Action will be implemented. When a student accumulates six demerits for habitually disruptive behaviors, a Level 3 Disciplinary Action of suspension will be assigned. Should a student receive nine demerits for habitually disruptive behaviors, a Level 4 Disciplinary Action will be implemented ordinarily beginning the expulsion process.

Aurora Academy administrators reserve the right to determine how and when suspensions and expulsions will be carried out in accordance with Colorado state law.

**Harassment** means any unwanted act that includes physical, sexual, or verbal interactions causing emotional distress.

**Fight/Physical Aggression** means (1) A student acts with the intent of making physical contact with another person that could result in injury; (2) physical contact with another person that results in injury; and (3) the intended contact is significantly offensive to the other person.

## Disciplinary Action Levels

Level 1 – Conferences

- Conference with student and/or staff

- Conference with parent/guardian and student
- Contract with student
- Time with Counselor
- Other similar actions

#### Level 2 – Interventions

- In-school suspension
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities
- Assignment to another class or teaching teammate
- Community service
- After school detention
- Confiscation of unauthorized materials
- Victim-initiated conferences
- Apologies
- Payment of restitution by student to one who was wronged
- Meet with school counselor
- Other similar actions

#### Level 3 – Suspension / Emergency Removal / Reassignment

- Out-of-school suspension
- Time in office
- Emergency removal – immediate danger or serious disruption presented

#### Level 4 – Expulsion

- Out-of-school suspension pending expulsion
- Expulsion

#### Level 5 – Mandatory Expulsion

- Mandated by federal law.

Acts resulting in a suspension or an expulsion, will be documented and stored in a student's cumulative file, as well as, being documented and recorded into Infinite Campus.

### **Suspension, Expulsion & Denial of Admission**

By Colorado law and APS policy, a student may be suspended or expelled or denied admission for behavior which constitutes any of the following:

- continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority;
- willful destruction or defacing of school property;
- behavior on or off school property which is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or of school personnel, including behavior which creates a threat of physical harm to the child or other children;



- committing one of the following offenses on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or at a school activity or sanctioned event;
  - possession of a dangerous weapon
  - the use, possession, or sale of a drug or controlled substance as defined in C.R.S. 18-18-102(5)
  - the commission of an act by a student at least ten years of age which, if committed by an adult would be robbery pursuant to title 18, article 4, part 3 of the Colorado Revised Statutes;
  - the commission of an act by a student at least ten years of age which, if committed by an adult would be assault pursuant to title 18, article 3, part 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (other than third degree assault);
  - carrying, using, actively displaying, or threatening with the use of a firearm facsimile that could reasonably be mistaken for an actual firearm in a school building or in or on school property; AND
  - pursuant to C.R.S. 22-12-105(3), making a false accusation of criminal activity against an employee of an educational entity to law enforcement authorities or school district officials or personnel
- declaration as a “habitually disruptive student”, (which is defined in our handbook); and/or
- repeated interference with a school’s (including any teacher’s) ability to provide educational opportunities to other students.
- Under certain circumstances, students without documentation of immunization may be suspended, though such suspensions are not considered disciplinary.

**Robbery** means property is taken from the person of or in the presence of a victim, the victim’s using force, threats or intimidation.

#### **Degrees of Assault:**

**(3<sup>rd</sup> Degree)** means a person knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury (even slight injury) to another person.

**(2<sup>nd</sup> Degree)** means intent to cause “bodily injury” which results in injuries such as significant facial scars, broken bones, second or third degree burns, impairment of vision or hearing for an extended period of time or injuries resulting in impaired mobility for an extended time period.

**(1<sup>st</sup> Degree)** means intent to cause “bodily injury” which results in a substantial risk of death, or serious and permanent injuries such as disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any part or organ of the body; or broken bones or burns of the second or third degree.

The following shall constitute additional grounds for denial of admission to Aurora Academy Charter School:

- having been expelled or in the process of being expelled from any school district during the preceding twelve months
- behavior in another school district during the preceding twelve months that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or of school personnel.
- To the extent provided by law, Aurora Academy Charter School shall prohibit any student who is expelled from a public school from enrolling or reenrolling in our school where the victim of the expulsion offense or member of a victim’s immediate family is enrolled or employed (See C.R.S. 22-33-106(4)(a) for further details).

#### **Restorative Practices**

Restorative practices (such as apologies, restitution, community service, and counseling) may be used in lieu of or in addition to traditional disciplinary measures, as decided on a case-by-case basis. Where restorative practices involve meetings between a victim and perpetrator, these must be attended voluntarily and with parental agreement.

## **Suspension Process**

Suspensions may be in-school or out-of-school and will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The length of any suspension depends upon the severity and type of infraction and may proceed directly to expulsion. Aurora Academy administrators have the ultimate authority on how and when suspensions will be carried out.

### **Removals, Special Education & Section 504**

Students who are on IEPs or Section 504 Plans will not be suspended for more than 10 days nor expelled without first following the requirements for and/or meeting the criteria for a “change of placement” under these statutes.

Parents shall be immediately informed of a suspension, the grounds for suspension, the period of suspension. Students shall be provided an opportunity to make up school work, for full or partial credit, during the period of suspension.

## **Procedure for Expulsion:**

When the principal recommends expulsion or denial of admission, he or she shall give appropriate notice, including a description of the student’s right to hearing and appeal, to the student’s parents. If the parents request a hearing, the board shall appoint a hearing officer who shall conduct and appropriate hearing and render a written opinion within five days of the hearing. The parent may appeal any adverse decision of the hearing officer to the Governing Board. Upon appeal, the Governing Board shall promptly conduct an appeal hearing. At such appeal:

1. The Board President shall:
  - a. Preside over the executive session;
  - b. Take appropriate action in order that the proceedings may be conducted in a dignified fair and orderly manner;
  - c. Shall adjourn the session as s/he deems appropriate;
  - d. Hear the evidence and arguments;
2. The board president may, among other actions, properly intervene to manage time efficiently.
3. Procedure
  - a. The meeting will be called to order and all person's present will be introduced;
  - b. The notice of charges will be read aloud;
  - c. Administration will present documentation and discipline records and recommendation resulting from the hearing as relevant to the expulsion.
  - d. Parent of student may present their case;
  - e. The board will take the facts and argument presented during the executive session under advisement;
  - f. The meeting will be adjourned;

4. Miscellaneous
  - a. The executive session is not open to the public
  - b. A recording shall be made of the executive session;
  - c. The student may be represented by a parent and/or attorney
  - d. The board has up to three business days to submit their written report and decision regarding expulsion.

Expulsion proceedings, from initial suspension through final Governing Board decision on appeal must be completed within 25 school days. Under the charter contract, parents have the option of further discretionary appeal to the Board of Education of APS. The Board of Education may or may not accept such an appeal.

**Self Defense** - Many parents counsel their children to defend themselves when hit. We do not want any child to be hurt. However, we need to be clear about what, exactly, constitutes self-defense.

**Self-defense is action taken to remove oneself** from injury attempted by another. In any case of self-defense, a person may use reasonable force when it appears reasonably necessary to prevent an impending injury. If a child can retreat or escape, self-defense in the form of physical aggression should not be used. If the child can escape but still “defends themselves” by physically attacking the other person, the child will face the same consequences as any other child using physical aggression. Self-defense is only appropriate when a child has been physically accosted and must use physical force to get out of the situation and avoid being injured.

**Scenario** - On the playground, Ludwig and Etienne get into an argument about a game. When Ludwig makes an unkind remark about Etienne’s little brother, Etienne pushes Ludwig. Ludwig pushes back (this is *not* self-defense). Etienne, now really angry, attacks Ludwig. (This is *not* self-defense). The two boys fall together to the ground. Seriously concerned for his safety and feeling trapped, Ludwig fights back just enough to get Etienne off him and get away. (This *is* self-defense).

While Ludwig has made several poor decisions already (getting into the argument about the game, making an unkind remark about Etienne’s brother, pushing Etienne), here are decisions he can make now:

- a) If he leaves the scene now, his physical action to remove himself from the situation *is considered self-defense*.
- b) If he goes back to Etienne in order to continue the physical altercation, *his ability to claim self-defense is nullified by re-engaging*.
- c) If he tries to get away and is caught by Etienne and once more put in danger, he may use reasonable force to remove himself from the situation *which is self-defense*.

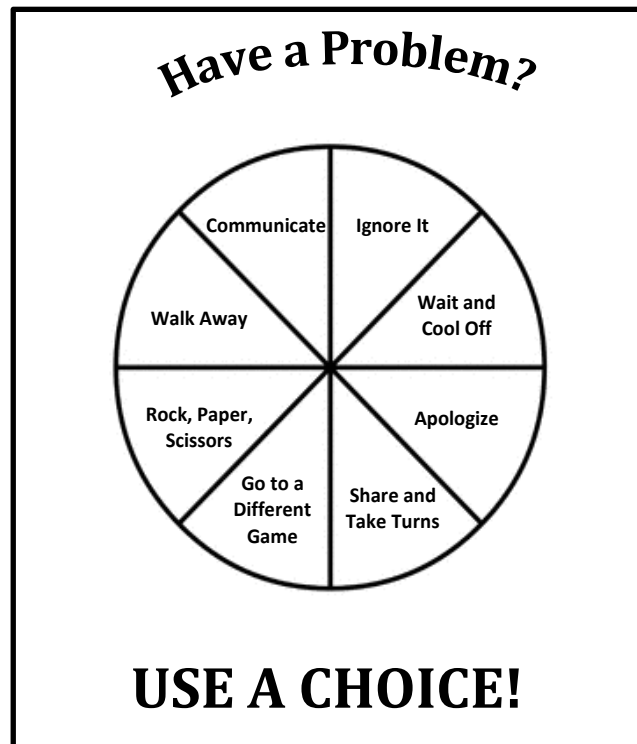
In all cases, Ludwig will still face consequences for making the unkind remark and pushing Etienne.

**Please note** - If Ludwig hits Etienne, and Etienne – able to walk away – hits Ludwig back, *both boys will receive consequences*.

We consistently apply this definition of self-defense. Please familiarize yourself with it and, as appropriate, clarify any questions your child may have.

We teach students at Aurora Academy that if they have a problem, they should use the Choice Wheel. The Choice Wheel as shown here can be found posted around the school. Choices students have are as follows:

- Walk Away
- Communicate
- Ignore It
- Wait and Cool Off
- Apologize
- Share and Take Turns
- Go to a Different Game
- Rock, Paper, Scissors



### Dress Code:

**Introduction** - The learning environment is significantly influenced by students' attire. Parents are expected to enforce the uniform dress code as part of their child's enrollment at Aurora Academy. The purpose of the uniform dress code is to promote learning, reduce the distraction and cost of fashion, reduce disruptions and disciplinary problems, and promote school pride.

A brochure, complete with color pictures of typical uniform items can be found on the school's website or at the front desk. The intent is to provide a simple visual reference: **If the uniform items look like those in the pictures, they will be acceptable.**

**Enrollment at Aurora Academy constitutes acceptance of this policy, agreement to adhere to and support the policy, and acknowledgment of discipline for non-compliance as set forth in the Aurora Academy Discipline Code.**

Uniform clothing is required for all students. It is the responsibility of students, parents, and staff to follow this code. Uniforms must be worn during school hours, except under special circumstances, as announced by the Administration.

## Uniforms

### General –

- Students must present a neat appearance. Shirts must be worn tucked in. Shoes should be tied and belts must be worn with belt-looped pants and shorts.
- Uniforms, including Aurora Academy sweatshirts, are to be of appropriate size – not oversized or undersized.
- School uniforms must be in “good repair” as determined by Aurora Academy staff.
- Any parent with a student with special needs may petition the administration for a waiver from specific items in the dress code.

### Footwear –

- All footwear should be free of lights and 'characters' (e.g., Pokémon, Barbie, etc.)
- Sandals must have a strap around the heel and may be worn without socks.
- 'Flip-flops' are not allowed.
- Slippers or other footwear not intended to be worn outside are not allowed.
- Any heels or platform shoes should be a safe height of no more than 1½".
- Tennis shoes are required for gym, but separate tennis shoes are not necessary. (If a child wears tennis shoes to school, they may wear the same shoes to PE if they have PE that day.)
- Snow boots must be changed into school-approved footwear while inside the building.

### Socks/Tights –

- Socks should be worn in plain solid colors of navy, white, hunter green, black, or khaki.
- Socks may be any length.
- Smooth opaque tights and/or cable knit footed tights in solid colors may be worn in navy, white, hunter green, or black.
- Ankle length leggings in solid colors may be worn in navy, white, hunter green, or black under skirts, skorts, and/or jumpers.
- Capri leggings are not allowed.
- Socks or tights must always be worn except with sandals.
- Inconspicuous shorts may be worn under skirts and jumpers. Pants that show underneath these articles of clothing are not allowed.

### Bottoms –

- Uniform pants must be navy or khaki, pleated or flat front, cotton or twill. Baggy pants, colored jeans, “skinny” pants (which are tight, and cling to the leg), or cargo style pants are not acceptable.
- Uniform bottoms do not have full back pockets.
- Jumpers may be worn in approved color: AACCS school plaid, khaki, or navy.
- Skorts may be worn in approved colors: AACCS school plaid, khaki and navy.
- Polo dresses may be worn in approved colors: forest green or navy.
- Shorts in pleated or flat front should be navy or khaki in color, cargo style shorts are not acceptable.
- Uniform capris should be navy or khaki in color.
- Hemlines of skirts, jumpers, shorts, and skorts must be of modest length. The hemlines of jumpers and skirts should not be shorter than 3" above the knee. This is to be measured by the student kneeling on the floor and staff measuring 5" from the floor.
- No "low-riding" of pants will be allowed.

## **Belts –**

- Uniform bottoms that have belt loops must be worn with a belt.
- Approved belt colors are solid brown, navy, black, or khaki.
- Belts and buckles should be plain and without adornments.
- Belt loops may not be removed.
- Belts must be completely tucked into loops and are not to hang down.
- Kindergarten students are excused from wearing belts.

## **Tops –**

- Approved tops are short/long sleeved oxford button down in white, short/long sleeved peter pan blouse in white or short/long sleeved polo shirts in navy, hunter green, or white.
- Plain white undershirts may be worn under school shirts for warmth. Sleeves of white undershirts should not exceed the length of the uniform shirt (i.e. a long-sleeved undershirt with a short sleeved uniform top is not allowed).
- Aurora Academy sweatshirts may be worn at any time.
- Aurora Academy T-shirts may be worn only on Fridays (shirts must say Aurora Academy).
- Uniform shirts must be worn under sweatshirts and sweaters.
- A plain navy-blue tie may be worn with the oxford shirt.
- Plain solid color uniform cardigan sweaters may be worn in white, navy, or hunter green.
- Plain solid color uniform sweater vests may be worn in navy or hunter green.
- Outerwear that is worn for warmth to and from school, and at outside recess, is not considered a uniform item. Any sweaters/sweatshirts worn inside the school must be an approved uniform item (see brochure).

## **Accessories/Hair –**

- Students may wear small post earrings; no dangling or hoop-style earrings are allowed.
- Rings, necklaces, and bracelets, if worn, must be simple in appearance. Watches are allowed. No other items of jewelry or adornment are allowed. One item per appendage.
- No make-up, including press-on/acrylic/fiberglass nails may be worn in grades K-5.
- In grades 6-8, no excessive make-up may be worn. Any make-up must be simple and neat (no outlandish colors are allowed).
- In grades 6-8, nails must be of an appropriate length and have a natural shape (e.g. rounded, oval, square) thus not seen as a safety concern.
- No hats of any kind may be worn in the building.
- Baseball caps are not allowed at school, including at recess. Knit hats may be worn for warmth at recess.
- Hair must be kept neat and have a combed appearance. Students may wear plain uniform color hair accessories. Hair extensions should be of a natural hair color. Irregular coloring or cutting of hair, including multiple shaved in lines and designs of any sort, mohawks, or any other outlandish hairstyles will be considered inappropriate. A single straight shaved in part is acceptable. If you are unsure if the hairstyle/color your student is considering is acceptable or not, please consult with Administration before changing your student's hair. Hair coloring and extreme hairstyle parameters are left to the discretion of the Administration.

**Gym –** All students in grades 6-8 must wear an approved gym uniform including shorts or sweatpants and a t-shirt to Physical Education class. This specific uniform (shorts or sweatpants and a t-shirt) must be purchased from Aurora Academy. Purchasing two uniforms is recommended for

each student to make laundering more convenient. PE uniforms may be passed down to other family members/friends or sold back to the uniform store if in good condition.

- No substitutes or look-alikes will be permitted.
- PE uniforms must fit appropriately.
- PE uniform shirts may not be worn for Falcon Fridays.
- Tennis shoes and socks are required for all students, grades K-8.

**Approved Uniform Items** – To view a complete listing of acceptable uniform items, review the uniform brochure on the AACCS website or visit the website of one of the following uniform vendors that we have worked with and fit within the Dress Code Policy. \*Again uniforms only have to look like the items in the brochure. It is not required that families purchase from a uniform provider.

- Tommy Hilfiger: <https://www.globalschoolwear.com/>
- Dennis Uniforms: [www.dennisuniform.com](http://www.dennisuniform.com) (school code: C0W - that's C Zero W)
- Educational Outfitters: [www.educationaloutfitters.com](http://www.educationaloutfitters.com) (school code: CO01177 – that's C, O, zero, one, one, 7, 7)

**Dress-of-Choice Days** – Dress-of-Choice days occur on one designated day of each month as a reward for those students who have not received any demerits in the previous month. On Dress of Choice days, students are to follow these general rules:

- Clothing must be in good repair.
- T-shirts must not have any sayings that relate to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gangs, or weapons or have any offensive phrases, as determined by Administration.
- Bare midriffs are not permitted.
- Shirts must have sleeves.
- Length of shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses must follow the length specified in the Dress Code.
- Clothing must be the appropriate size.
- Dress Code rules regarding hair and cosmetics still apply.

**Falcon Fridays** – To show school pride every Friday, students may wear T-shirts and/or sweatshirts with Aurora Academy name or logo instead of a uniform shirt. These may be purchased at the school. PE uniform shirts are not to be worn as Falcon Friday shirts. All other elements of the dress code still apply.

**Athletic Pants/Jeans Day** – Athletic Pants/Jeans Days occur at various times throughout the year and are used as a fundraiser for a variety of school activities. On Athletic Pants/Jeans Days all other general guidelines stated in the Dress Code still apply. On Athletic Pants/Jeans Days, the following additional rules apply:

- Jeans
  - Only plain black or blue denim jeans may be worn; no adornments, prints, or rhinestones.
  - Jeans must be in good condition; no rips or tears.
  - No skintight jeans or sagging jeans.
- Athletic pants (e.g. joggers or sweatpants)
  - Solid color joggers or sweatpants in navy, gray, white, or black may be worn.
  - Athletic pants must be in good condition; no rips or tears.
  - No form fitting or skin tight athletic pants (e.g. no leggings, no yoga pants).
- Students must wear approved uniform tops/Friday shirts/approved spirit wear.
- All other Dress Code rules apply.

*Dress Code items not covered above but considered inappropriate and a distraction from the learning environment are subject to review by Administration.*

**Dress Code Violations** – Students in violation of the dress code will be given a Behavior Reflection the first time they are found to be in violation of any part of the dress code. Any additional dress code violations will result in a Demerit.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy:**

The unlawful possession, use, distribution, being under the influence, manufacture, or dispensation of controlled substances or of illicit drugs or of alcohol by students at Aurora Academy is prohibited. This includes at any school-related activities, on school property, or in school vehicles. Students found to violate this standard of conduct will be suspended for a length of time, prohibited from attending school activities, or expelled from school, as decided by AACS administrators.

### **Emergency Procedures:**

**Building Emergency/Crisis** - AACS has a comprehensive plan for safety and security. If it becomes necessary to invoke a “lockdown” or “lockout,” the cooperation of parents is extremely important. No one will be allowed in or out of the building until a danger assessment is made and the situation is deemed safe -- NO EXCEPTIONS.

**Emergency Procedures** - AACS uses the Standard Response Protocol created by the “I Love U Guys” Foundation. This protocol can be found on the following page as well as in every room in the school.

**Fire Drills** - AACS conducts several fire drills throughout the school year according to Aurora Public School District policy. ALL persons in the building must exit at the time of a drill in compliance with fire department regulations.

**Tornado Drills** - Drills for this emergency will be conducted in the spring as this weather phenomenon becomes more likely. During an actual Tornado Warning, staff will not leave their place of safety in order to release a student to a parent.





## Student Safety

A critical ingredient in the safe school recipe is the classroom response to an incident at school. Weather events, fire, accidents, intruders and other threats to student safety are scenarios that are planned and trained for by students, teachers, staff and administration.

### SRP

Our school is expanding the safety program to include the Standard Response Protocol (SRP). The SRP is based on these four actions: Lockout, Lockdown, Evacuate and Shelter. In the event of an emergency, the action and appropriate direction will be called on the PA.

**Lockout** - "Secure the Perimeter"

**Lockdown** - "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight"

**Evacuate** - "To the Announced Location"

**Shelter** - "Using Announced Type and Method"

## Training

Please take a moment to review these actions. Students and staff will be trained and the school will drill these actions over the course of the school year.

More information can be found at <http://iloveugays.org>



## Lockout

### Secure the Perimeter

Lockout is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building.

#### Students:

- Return to inside of building
- Do business as usual

#### Teachers

- Recover students and staff from outside building
- Increased situational awareness
- Do business as usual
- Take roll, account for students



## Lockdown

### Locks, Lights, Out of Sight

Lockdown is called when there is a threat or hazard inside the school building.

#### Students:

- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence

#### Teachers:

- Lock classroom door
- Lights out
- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Wait for First Responders to open door
- Take roll, account for students



## Evacuate

### To the Announced Location

Evacuate is called to move students and staff from one location to another.

#### Students:

- Leave stuff behind
- Form a single file line
- Take the hands of person in front and behind
- Be prepared for alternatives during response.

#### Teachers:

- Grab roll sheet if possible
- Lead students to Evacuation Location
- Take roll, account for students



## Shelter

### Using the Announced Type and Method

Shelter is called when the need for personal protection is necessary.

#### Types:

- For Tornado
- For Bomb
- For Hazmat

#### Methods:

- Drop, Cover and Hold
- And Seal
- In Silence

#### Students:

- Use Appropriate Method

#### Teachers:

- Use Appropriate Method
- Take roll, account for students



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DRAFT SRP Handout for Students and Parents | Version 0.9.3 | 08/18/2009 | Revised: 10/06/2009 | <http://iloveugays.org>

## FERPA

### **Aurora Academy Charter School Notification of Rights under FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal or assistant principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal or assistant principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, 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); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving 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 to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(4) 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. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

## Grades:

**Academic Awards** – AACS awards Honor Roll certificates each quarter for a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5-3.9. High Honor Roll certificates are awarded each quarter for a GPA of 4.0.

**Late Work** - Assignments not submitted on time (not due to an absence) will not receive full credit. For assignments not submitted on time, credit will be reduced 10% per day late. Students submitting late work must hand it directly to their teacher who will write the date submitted on the assignment in order to eliminate confusion about potential credit received.

**Report Cards** – Report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter. Letter grades are given for core classes in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as, specials classes in 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Letter grades are determined by the scale below. Academy classes for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades are graded on an S, IP, U scale (Satisfactory, In Progress, Unsatisfactory).

("+" grades are the top 2% points; "-" are the lowest 2% points in each range.)

Kindergarten scale:

P = Proficient  
NP = Non Proficient

First - eighth grade scale:

A = 90 - 100%  
B = 80 - 89%  
C = 70 - 79%  
D = 60 - 69%  
F = 59% or lower

AACS uses Infinite Campus (IC) to maintain and update grades. Parents may log in and check their child(ren)'s grades by visiting <https://sis.aps.k12.co.us/campus/portal/aurora.jsp>.

**Progress Reports** - Progress reports will be sent home with students receiving a letter grade of D or F at the midpoint of each quarter.

**Retention** - Students' grade placement due to advanced abilities or significant deficiencies is a difficult decision. Many factors play into the equation that it must be considered entirely on a case-by-case basis, with the goal always to do what is best for the child.

- For K-3 students completing the year with a Significant Reading Deficiency, a retention conversation is required.
- Students who do not show adequate progress in reading may be retained in their current grade.
- Students who do not show adequate progress in math will be retained at their current math level. If they have advanced in other areas, particularly reading, they may be promoted to the next grade while still repeating the math level.

Children with Special Education (IDEA) or 504 designations are the exception; their educational plans are outlined in the appropriate documents and guided by assigned staff.

### Standardized Assessment Policy

Colorado requires all students enrolled in a public school to participate in state academic assessments as specified in the state law. As of July 2015, new legislation was passed (HB15-1323) that gives parents the right to excuse their child from state-mandated testing.

The accuracy of state accountability data is impacted when students do not participate, as well as, the ability to track students' progress.

However, students cannot be penalized by the school for not participating in state mandated testing (including, but not limited to, prohibiting school attendance, imposing an unexcused absence of participation in extracurricular activities).

Please note, in accordance with Colorado HB15-1323, Aurora Academy has passed the following policy in effect beginning in the 2015-16 school year:

*The parent/guardian of a student(s) enrolled in Aurora Academy may request that his or her child be exempt in participating in one or more state assessments. The parent/guardian must fill out the Aurora Academy State Testing Excusal Form and return the form to the front office. The request will be valid for one school year. Request for excusal from state assessments in subsequent school years will require a new written request. Excusal forms can be obtained from the front office.*

### Grievances:

AACS encourages open communication and dialogue among parents, staff, and the Board of Directors. There are, however, established venues in which to share dissatisfaction and/or grievances. All classroom concerns should FIRST be directed to the appropriate classroom teacher. If a resolution is not reached, the Principal or Assistant Principal may become involved. Any concerns with a staff member who is not a classroom teacher (e.g. paras or office staff) should be directed to the Principal. Any concerns with the Principal should be addressed first with the Principal and then with the Board of Directors if a resolution is not reached.

**Parent/Student Claim of Harm by Employee** - If a parent or student claims any type of harm or injury has been committed by an employee towards a student, the following procedures will be followed by Administration:

1. Meeting with Parents
2. Investigation of everyone involved, including any witnesses
3. Discussion with School District Legal Department
4. Discussion with Aurora Academy's legal contact
5. If necessary, report to police and social services as outlined in Child Protection Act of 1987.
6. If necessary, take disciplinary action against employee, up to and including immediate discharge.

## Health:

**Herbal/Non-Prescription Items** - Students should not have any of these items at school. If a parent would like a substance administered to their child, they will make arrangements with the health office.

**Immunizations** – The Colorado Board of Health requires the specified immunizations for compliance with the School Immunization Law and admission into public schools. **Children will be denied admission to, or may be suspended from, any Colorado public school if not properly immunized or exempted.** The school requires an updated copy of a student's immunization record annually at the start of the school year. Students not in compliance will be given two weeks to comply before the policy to exclude is enforced.

**Medications** - No student may self-administer any medication (over-the-counter or prescription), including any ointments, spray, cold medicine, or pain medication.

### Exceptions:

- 1) Students may self-carry an Asthma inhaler with School Nurse permission and proper paperwork. See School Nurse to start this process.
- 2) Any medication that is to be administered at school will require a *Permission to Give Medication at School* form found on the school website. This include over-the-counter medications like Tylenol and Ibuprofen. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian and an authorized medical provider. You will also find specific forms for Asthma and Allergy medication on the school website.
  - a. Parents must supply all medication in the original labeled container with the original packaging.
  - b. The school does not supply Tylenol or Ibuprofen, even if the student has the proper permission form. These also must be provided by the parent in an unopened bottle with the original packaging.

**Physical/Mental Health Concerns** – If a student has a serious physical or mental health concern, we strongly advise a meeting with the parent and school personnel so we can prepare how to adequately meet the student's needs.

In accordance with APS district guidelines, if a student has been treated by a mental health facility, we require a Re-Entry meeting with the student and parent to complete a Safety Contract before the

student returns to school. In this case, we also require the parent to sign a Release of Information Form.

**Staff** - AACCS does NOT have a full-time school nurse on staff. The health office is staffed by a full-time health para; the School Nurse is at AACCS on a limited schedule.

## Homework:

Homework is a part of our academic program; it is cited as a highly effective instructional strategy. The purposes of homework are to a) “cement” the child’s understanding of new concepts or skills, b) provide the child an opportunity to practice new concepts and skills, c) help the teacher identify areas of need, and d) provide the child the opportunity for truly independent work outside the classroom.

All students are expected to complete homework assignments. It is the student’s responsibility to record these assignments in their school agenda on a daily basis. (Monday folders will NOT always contain specific homework information.) Each classroom teacher has his/her own homework policies and/or consequences for incomplete work. Homework will NOT always consist of “written work” but might include reading, studying in advance for tests, working on projects, reviewing material and concepts, etc.

## Library Policy:

K-8<sup>th</sup> grade students have a weekly library time to check out books. Books may be checked out for 2 weeks, magazines for 1 week.

**Library Overdue Book Policy** – When a book is overdue, an **overdue notice** will be sent home in the Monday folder following a class’s assigned library day. When students receive a written overdue (or damaged) book notice, they have 4 options to resolve the situation:

- Return the book
- Renew the book (must have book in hand to renew)
- Pay for the replacement of the book (lost or damaged)
- Have parent set up a payment plan with the business manager

At the second written notice, the student will make a call home to inform parents of the missing book. The librarian will oversee a conversation with the student’s parent or guardian.

If a book is overdue for two weeks without meeting the above criteria to rectify the situation students will be required to return all outstanding materials and will not be allowed to check out any additional books until the situation has been resolved.

Library contact information: (303-367-5983 x 153)

## Lockers:

Students in grades 6-8 will be issued individual lockers. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain an orderly and neat locker. Lockers are to be kept locked at all times. Lockers are the



property of the school and may be revoked or inspected at any time by school officials without notification or permission.

## Meal Services:

**Breakfast** - AACS offers breakfast served by APS in the cafeteria. Breakfast is served from 7:40 – 7:55 am. Students take their food to the classroom. Breakfast will be offered on half days.

**Lunch** - AACS offers hot lunches served by APS in the cafeteria. K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students must sign up for hot lunch each morning by raising their hand in their homeroom class. Middle School (grades 6-8) students must physically sign their name on the sign-up sheet in their homeroom class. **If you have concerns or questions about the APS kitchen staff, please contact their supervisor with Nutrition Services at (303) 343-0295.**

**Menus and Payment Options** - Meal menus go home in Monday folders at the end of each month for the following month. Both lunch and breakfast are shown on the menu. Menus can also be found on our website on the Lunch Menu quick link or under the Parents tab.

Parents are able to make online payments for lunches at [www.payschoolscentral.com](http://www.payschoolscentral.com). Payschoolscentral.com will send parents an email when the online balance is low. You may also buy lunches with cash. Student lunch and milk prices, as well as lunch and recess schedules by grade, are posted on our website.

**Free and Reduced Meal Application** - Through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, Free and Reduced-Price Meals are provided to those students who meet eligibility guidelines. The program is completely confidential and applications for Free and Reduced Price meals may be completed at any time during the school year. Free and Reduced meals applications are available in the main office or on the school's website. Complete the application and return it to either the School Kitchen Manager or the Main Office.

Each year a new application must be completed and a new determination of eligibility will be made. Completion of an application does not automatically qualify a student for the Free and Reduced Meals Program. Once the district Nutrition Services office receives an application, eligibility determination may take up to ten business days to complete.

All applications are confidential. Once a household is approved for free or reduced-price meals benefits, the household will remain eligible for those benefits for the remainder of the school year plus a maximum of 30 operating days after the first operating day in the following school year.

## Recess:

**Outdoor Recess** - Recess will be held daily for grades K-8 before or after the students' lunch time. Recess may also be scheduled on an individual classroom basis.

Outdoor recess will be held every day unless there is precipitation, ice on the playground, or a wind chill of 20°F or below. Students must bring a hat, coat, gloves, and boots for outdoor recess on cold days. If students wear snow/rain boots to school, they are required to change into street shoes or athletic shoes while inside the building. It is the responsibility of the child and parent to bring proper

outerwear to school. Students will not be allowed to stay indoors because they failed to bring a coat, hat, and/or gloves. Colorado weather changes quickly; please keep outerwear in your child's backpack at all times.

### **School Schedule:**

Normal school hours are 7:55 am – 3:20 pm. We have Early Dismissal days in order to accommodate Professional Development. Make sure to see the current school year calendar (available on our website) for specific Early Dismissal days.

### **Special Education:**

The process of identifying students needing Special Education (ESS) services is driven by federal law. A host of interventions may be applied to assist learners in the regular education classroom, without needing to access ESS services. If a parent has a concern regarding his/her child's learning, the parent should speak with the teacher and request a meeting to discuss the child's performance. Students who qualify under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are placed on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which stipulates what services they will receive. If a student is enrolled in Aurora Academy, any existing IEP or 504 plans will be honored until any necessary changes might be made.

### **Student Council:**

Students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade who meet the AACS eligibility requirements are eligible to join Student Council. Please note: Student Council members must maintain weekly academic eligibility requirements. One student from each homeroom in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade will be elected to participate by his/her classmates each school year. The aim is to promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school in cooperation with the Board of Directors, parents, and staff. Student Council provides a forum to enhance student participation in the life of the school.

### **Technology:**

Maintaining a safe environment conducive to learning is of utmost importance. To this end, personal electronic devices are not allowed to be used at school unless students are given express permission by staff.

- Cell phones: At school, there is no need for a student to use a cell phone. Parents needing to get messages to a student can do so through the main office. Some middle school parents wish their child to carry a cell phone. In such cases, cell phones must remain turned off and in the child's locker during the day, and are not to be turned on until the child has left our campus. After school, a child may be given permission to use their cell phone to call home. Permission must be requested and granted or the phone will be confiscated. If a cell phone is used on school grounds without express permission the cell phone will be confiscated, and the student may retrieve their phone from the staff member at the end of the day. The second time a cell phone is used on school grounds without express permission, the cell phone will be confiscated, and a parent must pick up the cell phone from the Main Office.
- CD and MP3 players, electronic games, cameras, etc: These entertainment devices do not serve our educational purposes and must be left at home unless students are given express permission by staff.



- Earbuds and headphones are not allowed on or with students UNLESS the student has been specifically told by a teacher they may use them in class. If a student is seen wearing earbuds or headphones at any other time, those earbuds/headphones will be confiscated. This means: no earbuds or headphones in the halls, at recess, in the lunchroom, etc.
- Smart Watches are allowed; however, they must be on “airplane mode”. Placing the watch in this mode prevents the watch from sending and receiving text messages and phone calls. If they become a distraction or a student is seen using communication capabilities, it will be confiscated. The student may then retrieve the watch from the front desk at the end of the school day. Should a student’s watch be confiscated a second time, a parent will be required to collect the watch.
- During any state standardized testing, students will be required to turn off and place all personal electronic devices (e.g. cell phones, smartwatches, and any similar items) in their lockers or backpacks as required by the Colorado Department of Education.

It has been our experience that personal items, especially technology, are easily lost or damaged in a school setting and may serve as a source of conflict between students. **Aurora Academy is not responsible for the loss or damage of any item deemed inappropriate for school.**

## Volunteers:

### Volunteer Hours

All families are required to fulfill their volunteer hours each year. All single-parent families\* are required to fulfill 20 hours of volunteer time. All two-parent families\*\* are required to fulfill 40 hours of volunteer time per school year.

Families must complete half of their required volunteer hours by January 15 to receive sibling priority for the following year.

Volunteers must be 18 years of age, or older, and a member of the family, in order to qualify as a volunteer. Aurora Academy reserves the right to request proof of age.

Children may not accompany adults during their volunteer time.

Donations of any kind may not be made in lieu of volunteer hours with the following exception. When the school requests specific donations, school requested items may earn up to a maximum of 10% of a family’s required hours. Homemade food will be eligible for two hours and store bought food or store bought items will be eligible for one hour. Families must earn their remaining hours through time given.

All volunteers must have a background check completed before volunteering in the school building or at any event that involves children outside of the building.

All volunteer drivers must be 21 years of age and have a valid driver’s license on file. In addition, all drivers must have a copy of their auto insurance declarations page on file with liability insurance for the minimum amount prescribed by the District: \$300,000 single limit or \$100,000/\$300,000/\$25,000 automobile liability insurance.

Volunteers assume responsibility for any and all injuries they, or other family members, may incur while fulfilling their volunteer hours. Volunteers are also responsible for all subsequent medical treatment(s) such injuries may require.

*Revised July 2023*

*\*Aurora Academy defines a “single-parent family” as one parent/legal guardian living within the household having sole custody of the child(ren).*

*\*\*Aurora Academy defines a “two-parent family” as two adults or legal guardians living within the household.*

## Volunteer Procedures

Volunteers must sign-in and out at the Main Office. The assignment will be verified and the volunteer will receive a nametag. Volunteers will need their Driver’s License or state ID for a background check before their first volunteer shift.

Volunteers must have an arranged volunteer time or shift with school personnel. Drop in volunteering cannot be accommodated.

Volunteer Hours can be logged online at <https://www.volgistics.com/ex2/vicnet.dll?FROM=542984>

## Additional Information

We understand that a hardship may occur that could affect a family’s ability to fulfill their volunteer hours. Every effort will be made to help each family complete their volunteer hours. Please do not wait until the end of the school year to communicate your hardship.

Volunteer time cannot be used to conduct an impromptu conference with your child’s teacher. Please make an appointment to discuss any concerns or questions.

Volunteers are to avoid situations that could result in a conflict of interest between their child and other students. (An example of a conflict of interest would be having a parent volunteer conduct an exam on their own child.)

Loitering in the classroom is prohibited. It is both the teacher’s and the volunteer’s responsibility to make sure that valuable volunteer work is being done.

All volunteers are required to wear appropriate attire while fulfilling their volunteer hours on or off school property (i.e. field trip), alone or with students. Aurora Academy reserves the right to reschedule volunteer time for inappropriate attire.

## Weapons:

Aurora Academy Charter School adheres to Aurora Public School district policies concerning weapons in school. This policy is provided as a supplement to this handbook and can also be found on the district website at <http://aurorak12.org/pol-reg/SectionJ/jici.pdf>.

Despite their common utility at home, kitchen knives, pocket knives, matte knives, “X-Acto” knives, and the like are considered weapons at school. **Possession of a weapon at school carries serious consequences and may include criminal charges and expulsion from school.**

If a student inadvertently brings a dangerous weapon to school, and upon realizing the mistake promptly brings it to the attention of a teacher, administrator or other employee authorized by the school and delivers the dangerous weapon to an authorized person as soon as possible, then

expulsion is not mandatory and such action shall be considered in determining what disciplinary action, if any, should be taken. If the child does not immediately follow this procedure, and shows it to peers, uses it, or plays with it during school, disciplinary action will follow.

**Weapons on School Property** – Per C.R.S. 18-12-105.5, the possession of any deadly weapon is illegal on public school property unless by a police officer or other security personnel for the sole purpose of carrying out their legally authorized duties. The weapons ban applies to all employees, students, parents and all other visitors to Aurora Academy Charter School. Per the state statute, the definition of *Deadly Weapon* is: a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; or a knife, bludgeon, or any other weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, whether animate or inanimate, that, in the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of producing death or serious bodily injury.

## **Weather:**

**Weather-related school closures** – *Aurora Academy will follow all Aurora Public School closures and delayed starts.* You will find this information reported on local radio and TV stations, as well as, the school's website and Facebook page. Families with updated cell phone information in Infinite Campus, will also receive a text and/or phone call from APS. However, if you have opted out of those text messages, you will not receive a text alert. When school is closed, all school-sponsored activities are also canceled.

A Delayed Start postpones the start of school by 1 hour allowing families to arrive at school safely and be in class by 8:55.

**Early school dismissal** - Aurora Public Schools or Aurora Academy may schedule an early dismissal because of weather or another emergency. Our school will follow the APS Early Elementary Dismissal Schedule. These dismissals could be deemed necessary at any time. If an early dismissal is called, staff will be notified via faculty-wide email and/or announcements. When all district schools are closed or dismissed early, all school-sponsored activities are canceled.