ASCEND A School Cultivating Excellence and Nurturing Diversity



Family Handbook

2026-2027

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ASCEND Overview

ASCEND is a TK-8 school serving roughly 500 students. Starting in the summer of 2012, ASCEND became a charter school created through a unique partnership between Education for Change (EFC), a local charter management organization, and our former school district, Oakland Unified (OUSD). We are an arts-integrated school that utilizes learning expeditions to promote student inquiry and engagement and prioritizes family and community partnerships in order to meet our students' academic and social-emotional needs.

The vision of ASCEND is to nurture a passion for learning and cultivate personal agency in order to discover who we are, what we need and how to advocate for it. Together, our community of students, families and staff explores, learns and grows through success and failure. Diverse learners thrive through an approach that develops the whole individual, which includes arts-integration, expeditionary learning, personalization, and a focus on social and emotional growth. Through a common vision guided by love, we empower each other to forge our own paths and to create a school that reflects the world we want.

Our **Habits of Work and Learning** are a commitment that staff, students, and families make to each other and ourselves, and serve as the core values for our work together.

Compassion	Perseverance	Craftsmanship	Responsibility	Curiosity

In January of 2016, parents, students, and staff all engaged in the process of re-visioning and revaluing the school. While ASCEND remains the same school it has always been, at its core, we have learned and made shifts to educate the 21st-century learners of our community today, most effectively. After many rounds of iteration, we finalized our new vision.

The group of stakeholders that drafted this vision also deeply believe that there are habits that an ASCEND student must develop, refine, and embody to meet these expectations and aspirations. These are known as the ASCEND HOWLs: Habits of Work and Learning.

- ★ Compassion
- ★ Perseverance
- ★ Craftsmanship
- ★ Responsibility
- ★ Curiosity

As can be seen in our vision statement, all ASCEND community members are expected to uphold and demonstrate these habits as we learn and grow from one another.

ASCEND's successes over the last 15 years are the result of a rich and engaging academic curriculum fostering academic, social/civic, and emotional development; an excellent and dedicated staff; a strong and committed community of family leaders; extensive partnerships with community; and intensive collaboration at the school among teachers, parents and the community.

Family & Community Partnerships

Family involvement and community partnerships are fundamental to meeting the needs of the whole child. When we refer to ASCEND, we mean equal participation and appreciation for all individuals and organizations that work for our children. We recognize the challenge of developing a culture and program that authentically includes families and community members. Towards our goal of valued and integral partnership over token committees and activities, we implement the following:

a. **Student-led Conferences**
   Parent-teacher conferences are viewed as an opportunity to expand the teacher-student-parent relationship and showcase the work students do daily as they drive their own educational journeys. Students prepare for and facilitate conferences, focusing on their successes, areas for growth, and future goals.
b. **A whole-child focus**
   At ASCEND, we focus on nurturing the whole child, enabling each student to realize their full potential. We partner with the Seneca Agency of Families to provide a comprehensive range of mental health and social-emotional support services to students and their families.
c. **Parent education on the curriculum**
   Teachers in the primary grades hold regular class meetings with parents to review what children are learning and how they are learning it, offer suggestions on helping with homework, and discuss upcoming units. Our Family Resource Center provides parents with workshops on early literacy and college preparedness.
d. **Family Resource Center**
   ASCEND has created a central space on campus to serve as a Family Resource Center, which our Family Resource Center coordinator runs. We provide a variety of services to our families through this center. The center offers a computer, printer, Internet access, phone, kitchen facilities, parent resources, and a community bulletin board featuring opportunities for parent education, community events, important meetings, and job postings.
e. **Family Leadership Council & Class Leaders**
   Family members are elected to participate in class initiatives, fundraisers, and events, as well as represent the parents of each grade level through our Family Leadership Council (FLC). During these regular meetings, parents develop their leadership skills and help make important decisions around school programming, family engagement strategy, budget, and more.

ASCEND Inclusivity Stance

ASCEND School stands against racism and identity-based hatred in all its forms.

Guided by love, our vision is to empower each other to create a school that supports our community of students, families, and staff. Our community, diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and culture, will feel a sense of belonging, inclusion, and celebration of their identities.

Ascend commits to:

- **Creating the conditions** for inclusivity and belonging by proactively teaching our students about diverse identities and identity-based harm.
- **Responding to and disrupting harmful acts** of hatred or ignorance within our community of staff, families, and students.
- **Providing staff with the tools and training** needed to implement restorative justice circles as a part of our restorative approach to repair relationships when students, families, or staff experience harm

We will develop staff capacity by creating a common framework and providing the necessary tools to engage in in-depth, meaningful dialogue and teaching on these topics.

To **build staff's capacity** to identify, challenge, and change those practices and infrastructures to provide our students with an inclusive and equitable education, staff will:

- Engage in community building and professional development to do the introspective work on personal identities and white supremacy.
- Analyze and reflect on the current infrastructures and practices that perpetuate white supremacy, anti-Blackness, and other forms of oppression in our learning spaces.

Accessing Interventions at ASCEND

If one of your students is struggling, and the interventions you have tried are not yielding sufficient progress, you can use the following referral to get additional assistance for the student: **COORDINATION OF SERVICES TEAM (COST)**

COST is designed to be a collaborative space for brainstorming new strategies to support students based on their strengths and areas of need. We will have weekly COST sessions during the school year. The COST will include an Administrator, Academic Interventions Specialists, Therapists, Behavior Intervention Specialists, Speech and Language Specialists, the classroom teacher, and any other community member who may be able to provide critical information about the student.

Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLS)

	Compassion	Perseverance	Craftsmanship	Responsibility	Curiosity
	Practice kindness and empathy	Always keep trying	Create your highest quality work	Own your role and be accountable	Ask questions, find solutions
K–2	To care for myself and to care for others. To care about my community, my school, my world. To use words and actions that show I care. To treat other people the way they feel they should be treated. To look for and appreciate the goodness in others.	To be brave and try new things. To try things even when they are challenging. To set goals and reflect on them. To never give up. To make mistakes and learn from them.	To do my best quality work. To use materials and resources safely and appropriately. To make a plan to meet my goals. To ask for and give kind, specific and helpful feedback. To revise my work using input from others.	To help myself stay focused and do my work. To keep my personal belongings and the community's belongings organized. To make positive choices that help the community and myself. To keep others and myself safe.	To be open to new ideas and experiences. To search for resources because I want to know more. To know what I'm passionate about. To can use strategies to solve challenges.
3–5	To demonstrate care for myself, my peers, my school, my community, and the world. To speak and act in a respectful, open-minded, and inclusive way. To stand up for others when they are being mistreated. To consider and appreciate others' needs and ideas.	To take time to ask questions, and to use appropriate resources to work through challenges. To set goals, reflect and make growth, in both areas of success and challenge. To push yourself, no matter what. To reflect, learn and grow from mistakes and challenges.	To produce my best quality work and proudly present it to others. To deliberately choose which tools, materials, and/or modalities to use. To carefully plan and begin work with the end in mind. To use a rubric to self-assess the quality of my work and provide meaningful feedback to my peers. To engage in drafting and revision, and	To be responsible for my own learning, and advocate for myself. To take care of my personal belongings and space, and the community's belongings and space. To commit to make positive choices, even in the face of adverse peer pressure. To do my best to work well, independently and collaboratively.	To ask thoughtful, relevant questions to gain deeper knowledge and form my own opinions. To investigate a topic using a variety of sources, ideas and viewpoints. To pursue my passions and to extend learning beyond school. To take risks and undertake tasks that are new and interesting.

	To practice conflict resolution and compromise.		incorporate feedback into future drafts.	To take ownership for my actions and the outcomes of my choices, and repair harm.	
6-8	To demonstrate care for my personal well-being and those around me. To utilize strategies for recognizing and expressing my emotion and ask for help when needed. To care about local and global issues. To respect the unique needs of others by using inclusive words and actions. To use conflict resolution and be an upstander, not a bystander.	To recognize when a challenge is encountered and seek solutions. To make plans, set goals, and adjust when I encounter an obstacle, setback, or success. To have a mindset that celebrates success, and uses failure and success as a chance to grow.	To produce my best quality work and to present it proudly to others. To use and choose materials, resources, and modalities deliberately and with care. To carefully plan and begin quality work with the end in mind. To use feedback and rubrics to strengthen my work and to deepen my understanding. To know my work can always improve and embrace the process of reflecting, editing, and revising multiple drafts.	To understand how to be responsible for my own learning, and how to advocate for myself appropriately. To take initiative and participate as a positive community member. To make thoughtful decisions that benefit myself, my peers, and my community, even in the face of adverse peer pressure. To keep myself and peers accountable to our community agreements and shared learning. To take ownership for my actions and the outcomes of my choices, and repair harm. To know and respect boundaries of self and others.	To ask thoughtful and relevant questions to gain deeper knowledge and form my own opinions. To use research and gather information from multiple sources to develop an informed opinion. To take risks and gain expertise in areas of personal interest. To pursue my passions to extend learning beyond school.

Teachers /Staff Members	To demonstrate and model respect and care for others To be intentional in building relationships with all community members To be open-minded and flexible in my thinking To consider other people's perspective	To embrace cognitive dissonance when faced with change, with the understanding that we are working for what is best for students, families, and teachers. To recognize when a challenge is encountered and creatively seek solutions. To have a mindset that celebrates success and recognizes failure as an opportunity for growth.	To honor our commitments and responsibilities. To model the behavior and mindset of lifelong learners. To collaborate with staff, parents and students, to ensure the best outcomes for our community.	To have clear, direct communication that leads to collaboration and problem-solving. To follow through on my commitment to serve all students and families. To commit to ongoing reflection, learning and growth. To be intentional about my choices and the ways I engage in our community.	To dedicate time to explore and push our own practices. To actively seek out opportunities to learn from those around us.
Parents/ Families	To treat and act respectfully with one another. To talk kindly and patiently with each other. To listen and create safe spaces for others To be role models and examples for students. To work to resolve our conflicts.	To rise above the challenges. To stay calm and work to find solutions when there are obstacles. To continue to work until we meet our goals. To restore relationships and repair any harm to our community	To follow through with our commitments and our responsibilities To model the quality of behaviors and actions that we want our students to see. To work collaboratively with one another to ensure the best outcomes for students.	To seek out opportunities to support the school and all students. To take pride in the space and ownership over its well-being. To have clear, direct communication that leads to collaboration and problem-solving. To actively seek understanding about our children's growth and performance in school. To actively share ownership of school initiatives.	To follow up with ASCEND Staff to learn more about our children's performance and progress. To look for new ways of doing things that would benefit our children. To ask questions of community members we don't know, in order to learn more about them and bring them in. To reflect on our own performance stay curious about how we can do better.

** This is ASCEND's family, school, and student agreement for you to preview.
We will review this further and sign it at Back to School Night.

ASCEND A School Cultivating Excellence and Nurturing Diversity

2026-2027 Home-School Compact

STAFF COMMITMENT	PARENT COMMITMENT	STUDENT COMMITMENT
We believe that all students can learn, and we will do the following to ensure their success: ❏ We will hold high expectations for all students. ❏ We will welcome you and treat you with respect as partners in your child's education. ❏ We will respect and follow ASCEND's Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs): Compassion, Perseverance, Craftsmanship, Responsibility, Curiosity. ❏ We will respond to your requests for information in a timely manner and inform you about your child's strengths and challenges. ❏ We will regularly share with you concerns and progress regarding your child. ❏ We will provide engaging and motivating learning experiences in all classes. ❏ We will use teaching methods and materials that work best for your child academically and socially / emotionally. ❏ We will regularly assign homework to your child to help them master grade-level standards. ❏ We will help you meet your child's educational needs. ❏ We will believe in your child; we will show them that they are important and will never give up on them. ❏ We commit to cultivating a community that celebrates the diversity of our students and families. ❏ We commit to intervene/disrupt any comments or actions that are hate-based (Race,Culture, Gender Sexual orientation, or Religion), against any student/staff/family.	Parents and family are the first and most important teachers. I will support my child's learning and success in school by doing the following: ❏ I will work together with my child's teacher to support my child. ❏ I will help my child follow all school rules and policies. ❏ I will provide a quiet place and time for my child to engage in classwork that is live and asynchronous. ❏ I will read to or to my child or have my child read for at least 20 minutes every day. ❏ I will support my child to attend school on time each day. ❏ I will make sure my child gets enough sleep and eats well. ❏ I will limit the amount of time my child watches television and plays video games. ❏ I will respect and follow ASCEND's Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs): Compassion, Perseverance, Craftsmanship, Responsibility, Curiosity. ❏ I will attend Back-to-School Night, Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences, grade level meetings, student learning displays, and other school events related to my child. ❏ I will ask for help when in doubt. ❏ I commit to collaborating with the school to nurture/cultivate an environment that feels inclusive to all students, families, and staff, including participating in learning with my child. ❏ I commit to intervene/disrupt any comments or actions that are hate-based (Race, Culture, Gender, Sexual orientation, or Religion), that my child does or says. ❏ In accordance with the law, I am prepared to sit with my child at school in the event negative behaviors need to be corrected.	I believe that I can be successful in school and will show it by doing the following: ❏ I will follow the school's rules. ❏ I will go to school and do my best: I will push myself, work hard, and ask for help. ❏ I will support my classmates to do their best work and learn alongside me. ❏ I will go to class on time every day. ❏ I will go to school ready to learn. ❏ I will respect and follow ASCEND's Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs): Compassion, Perseverance, Craftsmanship, Responsibility, Curiosity. ❏ I will be a cooperative learner. ❏ I will speak up when I am struggling and ask for help when I need it. ❏ I will turn in my homework on time. ❏ I will read at home for at least 20 minutes every day. ❏ I will bring information from the school and my parents/guardians. ❏ I will attend every student learning expo. ❏ I commit to cultivating a welcoming environment that celebrates the diversity of all of our students and families. ❏ I will commit to respect all students/staff/families regardless of their identity (Race, Culture, Gender, Sexual orientation, or Religion)

Technology Device and Materials Use Agreement

Purpose

The materials that we provide at school are for instructional purposes on the school campus. The resources put into providing these materials to students is excellent, and it is imperative that they be utilized and treated with respect and care. We provide initial access to and use of the materials free of charge. It is the responsibility of the student and family to replace or restore any damaged, broken, or lost materials. "Normal" wear and tear will be outlined here. Any wear beyond these conditions or premature wear of the materials will be subject to the next steps outlined in this agreement.

System and Normal "Wear and Tear"

Tech Devices

All Chromebooks will be assigned to students individually within a classroom space for daily use. There will be cases where the device may be shared between two students, but this is rare. Students are responsible for notifying teachers immediately if damage to the device occurs. Teachers are responsible for inspecting devices daily, when they are in use during instruction, to ensure the quality of the device. If the device is shared the cost will be shared if fault is unknown.

Device "life" is 3-4 years with minimal damage. We are replacing devices at this increment. Any damage to the device before this will be the responsibility of the family. This includes missing keys, cracked screens, and dropped devices that affect hardware or software.

Take this page HOME, Sign the next page and leave it with the TEACHER

Technology Device and Materials Use Agreement

Replacement or Restoration

Tech Devices

	Family will pay...	**School will pay...**
Chromebooks Screen $ 35.00	50% @ $17.50	50% @ $17.50
Chromebooks Keys $7/ key	$7.00 per key	0.00
Entire Chromebook $180/ device	20% @ $36.00	80% @ $144.00

We commit to this agreement to care for our materials and replace or restore them if necessary.
Nos comprometemos a este convenio para el cuidado de nuestros materiales y reemplazar o restaurar si es necesario.

Date:_____

Student: _____

Teacher: _____

Parent : _____

Attendance Policy

Every minute of a child's time at school is essential. Children who are absent for even one day or who arrive late to school miss valuable instructional time and can easily fall behind in their studies. When a student is absent from school, it results in a loss of funding for our schools, which the State does not reimburse. As a parent or guardian, you are responsible for ensuring your child attends school and plans vacations and absences for personal reasons that align with school holidays, so that the educational process is not disrupted.

ABSENCES:

Reporting/Clearing an Absence:

- If your child will be absent, please phone the main office or stop by to notify us and provide the reason for the absence.
- If your child is marked absent and the office has not received a phone call or notice of absence, you will receive a call from the school.
- Absences must be cleared within 3 days; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence.
- Repeated absences for health reasons will require a doctor's note
- Students may be withdrawn from classes and placed on inactive status if 10 consecutive days of absence occur (5 to start the year) and the parents have failed to contact school staff to make arrangements.

Excused Absences:

The following conditions *may* excuse a student from school attendance:

- Personal illness or injury (A Medical Verification note may be required by the school attendance clerk or school principal after 2 days.)
- Medical Appointment for the student
- Exclusion for failure to present evidence of immunizations
- Quarantine of the home by local health officials
- Attending a funeral service of a member of the student's immediate family (limited to one day, unless reasonable cause can be shown for a longer absence)
- Observance of a religious holiday, consistent with the student's established beliefs or creed
- Attendance at the naturalization ceremony

Tardies:

- Students shall arrive at school and be in the classroom at the proper scheduled time. Habitual tardiness, according to California law (Ed Code. 48260-48273), is truancy and will be treated as such.
- Students are considered tardy when they arrive after the second bell rings, and within 29 minutes of the start of class, they are considered tardy. After 30 minutes, it is considered a truant tardy, except for medical reasons
- Students must pick up a tardy pass from the office before entering class.
- If your child is arriving late to school for any reason, the parent or guardian must call the office before the student's arrival. The student MUST pick up an "admit to class" pass from the office before entering class; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence.

Truancy:

- In California, all children are required by law to attend school between the ages of 6 and 18, and must have good attendance records as well. If the student is under the age of 6, the school is still required to follow the same procedure, as the student becomes our responsibility to ensure their attendance at school.

- 3 Unexcused Absences and/or tardies more than 30 minutes will generate a SART meeting to implement an attendance contract.
- Failure to meet the attendance contract's expectations will result in a meeting with SARB at the District Home Office, where a plan will be developed. If that plan is not completed, the parents may be referred to the Alameda County District Attorney.

Chronically Absent:
Any student who is absent (Excused or Unexcused) for more than 10 percent of their days enrolled is considered chronically absent. Chronic absence causes extended loss of instructional time. Extended loss of instructional time leads to students falling behind and possibly to retention. In cases where a student is chronically absent, a meeting will be held with the School Attendance Review Team to create a contract aimed at improving student attendance. If absences continue to occur, the school will refer the parents to a School Attendance Review Board at the District Home Office, where a plan will be developed. If that plan is not completed, the parents may be referred to the Alameda County District Attorney.

Independent Study:
If you know your child will be out for more than two days, an Independent Study Contract may be assigned to that student upon approval from the school. The initial request should be made in the main office. Please stop by the front office in advance and pick up an Independent Studies contract so that class assignments can be provided and the guardian can sign the contract. An Independent Study contract is provided as an alternative instructional strategy, not an alternative curriculum. Independent study students work independently, according to a written agreement and under the general supervision of a credentialed teacher.

Early Dismissal of Students
- Students leaving before the end of the school day are dismissed through the school office. They are not allowed to wait in front of the building or to enter cars unless accompanied by a parent. These rules are necessary to ensure the safety of students. <u>You must come to the office to sign your child out.</u>
- Early dismissal will not be granted to any student 30 minutes before the scheduled dismissal time unless a doctor's note is provided to excuse the child from school early.
- We will ask to see identification of any person we do not know and will not release a child to a babysitter, step-parent, or friend without prior authorization.

Illness Policy

Although children with contagious illnesses need to be excluded from school, most children with mild illnesses can still attend school.
Excluding children with mild illnesses when it is not necessary can result in parents missing work and children missing valuable school time.

It can sometimes be challenging to determine when to keep your child at school and when to keep them at home.

If your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms, keep your child at home and call your Pediatrician to discuss your child's illness.

Guidelines for keeping your child from school and at home include the following:

- **Fever:** 100 degrees orally or under the arm. Keep the child home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal (without the aid of fever reducers). Also, a fever with a sore throat and /or swollen glands and/or rash.
- **Diarrhea:** Two or more watery stools in 24 hours or stools with blood/mucus in it.
- **Vomiting:** Two or more times in a 24-hour period.
- **Eye Drainage**: Pink eye or conjunctivitis: thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, which causes matting of the eyelid, and can be highly contagious. Once antibiotic treatment is started, students may return to school after 24 hours.
- **Rash:** Anybody with a rash, fever, sore throat, or swollen glands.
- **Ringworm:** Ringworm on the scalp requires treatment for 24 hours before returning to school. Ringworm elsewhere on the body needs to be covered during school.
- **Asthma:** Children with wheezing, upper respiratory infection, and coughing that interfere with their ability to drink, talk, or sleep should stay home until respiratory distress symptoms have resolved. Asthma without these symptoms, with medication readily available, can be effectively managed at school.

Children SHOULD ATTEND SCHOOL if they have a mild upper respiratory tract infection, a cold, even if it is associated with green or yellow nasal discharge, as long as the child does not have a fever or any of the listed above.

IMPORTANT: Physical complaints that quickly 'disappear' once a decision is made for the child to stay at home may suggest that there is some emotional cause behind the 'illness'. Talk with your child to address fears, misunderstandings, and school-related problems. Talk with your child's teacher and work together to find a solution.

Parent Leadership Structures

Family Engagement Systems/ Sistemas de participacion Familiar

Family Leadership Council / *Consejo de Liderazgo Familiar*	Class Leaders *Lideres de sal*	EFC Family Leadership / *EFC Liderazgo Familiar*	Other Participation/ *Otra Participación*
Parents elected to represent each grade-level who come to FLC to focus on school-wide issues and programming and facilitate engagement for parents across Ascend.	Parents chosen for each class who collaborate with teachers and parents of their child's grade on grade-level initiatives and engagement.	2 parents from our leadership Council that represent Ascend within the EFC Family Leadership Council.	• Volunteering • Planning for class or school events • Attending class or school events • Sharing feedback with teachers/school
Padres elegidos para representar a cada nivel de grado que viene al Consejo de liderazgo familiar para enfocarse en los problemas y la programación de toda la escuela y facilitar la participación de los padres en Ascend.	Padres elegidos para cada clase que colaboran con los maestros y los padres del grado de su hijo en iniciativas y participación a nivel de grado.	2 padres de nuestro consejo de liderazgo que representan a Ascend dentro del consejo de liderazgo familiar de EFC.	• Ser voluntario • Planificación eventos escolares o de clase • Asistir a eventos escolares o de clase • Compartir comentarios con profesores / escuela

Other Ways to Help Your Child ASCEND

ASCEND's parents and teachers have found that the following suggestions help students become more focused and successful in school.

- ➢ Students need a consistent bedtime with at least 11 to 13 hours of sleep a night. ASCEND suggests an 8:00 PM bedtime for K-3 students and 8:30 PM for 4-5 students.
- ➢ A nutritious, low-sugar breakfast helps your child be ready to learn in the morning.
- ➢ Avoid consuming foods that are high in added sugar, caffeine, or artificial food dyes.
- ➢ Children should only watch movies rated G or PG and play video and computer games rated E for everyone.
- ➢ Television and technology time should be limited to one hour a day at most, and children should avoid watching violent programming or using apps that are not legally age-appropriate (such as Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter).
- ➢ Daily outdoor play promotes healthy bodies and minds.
- ➢ Read with your child every day.
- ➢ Every day when your child comes home from school, ask them to tell you about their day.

Volunteer Policy

Parent Volunteer Opportunities Survey Registration.doc
GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Family Communication Systems



We want to communicate with you and ensure you can communicate with us. ASCEND uses Parent Square to send messages and important information

Directions for creating an account:

1. Go to www.parentsquare.com/signin. You can also install the ParentSquare app and follow the prompts to sign up.

2. Use your email, your phone number, or Google single sign-on to set up your account. Your email/phone number must match the contact details in the school's database for this to work.

3. **If your contact details aren't recognized, contact the school office to get them added**. After they update your information in their database, the new contact details will appear in ParentSquare after the next daily sync, and you will be able to create an account.

Chaperone Policy Update

In order to ensure safety on field trips, all EFC chaperones for day or overnight field trips must be fingerprinted and have a clear, current TB test.

*See TB Testing locations below.

*Fingerprinting is available every Thursday 10:30am at EFC Home Office

333 Hegenberger Rd # 705, Oakland, CA 94621

(510) 568-7936

TB TESTING LOCATIONS

***Information in Spanish is on the next page|Información en español en la página siguiente*.**

Fingerprints and Clear TB Tests are required to chaperone any ASCEND Field Trip. Contact one of the following TB clinics immediately to schedule a TB Questionnaire or TB exam. You may also schedule an appointment with your regular health care provider.

EFC does not reimburse people for TB Tests. Please submit your proof of TB to the school's main office or email it to hr@efcps.net.

- The TB Questionnaire is linked below:
- Option 1: TB Questionnaire (if appropriate, have a health care professional fill it out, sign and stamp it) (form is attached)
- Option 2: TB Skin Exam (if appropriate, a traditional TB exam administered by a health care professional)

Here are some Clinics that offer the TB Questionnaire or TB Skin Exam services. Please contact the clinic BEFORE visiting, as some families have reported clinics not being open during listed hours.

1. CheckPoint OTC website
2. wellnessmart
3. Berkeley Free Clinic
4. TB Resources by Alameda County Public Health
5. TB Clinics by Alameda County Public Health

Other Options

Berkeley Department of Health and Human Services 830 University Ave. Berkeley, CA 94710 (510) 981-5350 HOURS = Drop-in for skin test on Tuesday from 9:00 – 11:00 am or 1:00 – 4:00 pm Reading on Thursdays from 1:00 – 4:00 pm. FEES = Sliding scales based on income.	Prescott-Joseph Center 920 Peralta St., West Oakland, CA 94607 (510) 835-8683 HOURS = First come, first served for skin test Mondays from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Reading Wednesdays from 1:00 – 2:00 pm. FEES = None.	LA CLÍNICA DE LA RAZA: FRUITVALE VILLAGE 3451 E 12th Street Oakland, CA 94601 (510) 535-3650 **info-laclinica@laclinica.org**

Dress Code Policy

TK-8 Dress code Policy 2026-27
TK-8 Póliza de Código de Vestimento 2026-27



Pants
- **Khaki or Black**
- Not ripped
- No jeans
- No leggings/yoga pants/sweatpants
- Shorts must be worn with a belt and at or slightly above knee level

Pantalones
- **Caqui o negro**
- No rasgados *No mezclilla (jeans)
- No medias(mayas)/ pantalones de
- yoga/pantalones deportivos (sweatpants)
- Los pantalones bermudas (shorts) deben usarse con cinturón y a la altura de la rodilla o ligeramente por encima de la rodilla

Shirts
- **Green ASCEND Shirts & ASCEND Swag** (sports, clubs)
- **White or Green Collared Shirt** (very small logos, no words)
- Abdomen and shoulders covered

If it is not an ASCEND shirt, It must be a collared shirt

Camisas
- **Camisas ASCEND verdes y camisas ASCEND** de deporte/viaje
- **Verde o Blanca Camisa con Cuello** (logotipos muy pequeños, sin palabras)
- Abdomen y hombros cubiertos

Debe ser un una camisa con cuello si no es una camisa ASCEND

Sweatshirts or jackets worn INSIDE
- Any ASCEND sweatshirts
- Black sweater/Jackets with very small logos, no words)
- Other jackets can be worn outside

Sudaderas o chaquetas llevadas DENTRO
- Sudaderas ASCEND verdes
- Sudaderas y Abrigos negros (logotipos muy pequeños, sin palabras)

Otras chaquetas se pueden llevar fuera

Shoes: Must be appropriate for PE and recess. No **crocs** or sandals

Hats only outside or for religious reasons

Zapatos: Deben ser apropiados para PE y recreo. No crocs o sandalias
Gorras sólo en el exterior o por motivos religiosos

Dress Code Violations

If an ASCEND staff member determines that a student's attire does not follow the dress code and/or is inappropriate or disruptive to the educational environment as described, the following may occur:

1. The student may be asked to briefly leave class to change clothing to align with this dress code.
2. ASCEND may confiscate items that violate the dress code.
3. ASCEND may notify the student's parents/guardians of the dress code violation(s).
4. ASCEND may schedule a conference with the student's parents/guardians to discuss the dress code violation(s).

Students may not be disciplined, penalized academically, or removed from class as a consequence for wearing "inappropriate" attire.

Cell Phone Follow up

1. Phones must be turned off and put in backpacks the moment students get to school. They are not to be out before school, not on the yard nor cafeteria. Phones must remain off and in backpacks throughout the day.

2. Phones are only allowed to be used after school outside the building. If students need to contact their family, they need go to the office.

3. First time: Staff asks student to turn off the phone and put it in their backpack.
   Second time: Phone is taken by teacher, lunch reflection, you can pick up at end of day.
   Third time: lunch reflection + Phone is taken to office. Family picks up.
   Fourth time: Phone held for a week. On Contract.
   *If students post pictures during school, lunch reflection + Phone is taken to office. Family picks up with a meeting.

education for change
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board Policy #: 26-0609-1
Adopted/Ratified: June 9, 2026

SMARTPHONES AND MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICES POLICY

The EFC Board of Directors acknowledges and supports California's Phone-Free School Act (AB 3216), which mandates that every local education agency adopt a policy limiting or prohibiting student smartphone use during school hours.

PURPOSE

To promote a focused, engaging, and physically and emotionally safe educational environment, EFC schools restrict the use of mobile communication devices (including smartphones, smartwatches, and smart glasses) during the school day.

SCOPE AND RESTRICTIONS

Students may possess smartphones and mobile communication devices on campus, but devices must be put away and turned off or set to silent, with notifications disabled, according to the following minimum restrictions:

- Elementary and middle schools / grades (TK-8): Devices must be put away or stored in designated classroom caddies, turned off or set to silent, with notifications disabled, on campus during school hours.
- High schools / grades (9-12): Devices must be stored in classroom caddies and set to silent, with notifications disabled, from the beginning to the end of each class period during the school day. Students may use devices on campus before and after school and during passing periods, nutrition / morning break, and lunch.
- Privacy: Devices with camera, video, or voice recording functions shall never be used in a manner that infringes on the privacy rights of any person.

EFC schools may impose restrictions above and beyond the above minimum restrictions. Such restrictions must be clearly communicated in writing via the school's Student and Family Handbook.

PERMITTED EXCEPTIONS

As required by California Education Code, exceptions to this policy are granted under the following circumstances:

- Medical Needs: When a licensed physician or surgeon verifies in writing that device possession is essential for the student's health or well-being.
- IEP/504 Plans: When the use or possession of a device is required under a student's active Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan.
- Emergencies: In the event of an emergency involving imminent physical danger to the student or others.
- Translation Needs: When explicitly authorized by staff for Level 1 or 2 English Learner translation assistance.

Except in the case of imminent physical danger to the student or others, all exceptions must be approved by the school principal. The number of approved exceptions is to be tracked and monitored by the principal or designee throughout the school year.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Students must follow school personnel instructions any time a request is made to cease the use of a smartphone or other electronic signaling device.

Violations of this policy will result in age-appropriate progressive discipline, such as:

- Verbal warning and restorative conversation with the teacher or staff member.
- Written warning or referral and notification to parent/guardian.
- Confiscation of the device, parent contact, and referral to administration.
- Subsequent Offenses: Revocation of the privilege to bring a device on campus and/or further disciplinary actions per the school's discipline policy or behavior matrix.

EFC schools may impose restrictions above and beyond the above-mentioned disciplinary measures. Such actions must be clearly communicated in writing via the school's Student and Family Handbook.

CONFISCATIONS AND RETURN PROCEDURES

If a device is used in violation of this policy, district staff may direct the student to put the device away or confiscate it. If a device is confiscated:

- It will be stored securely by site administration in a centralized location.
- Confiscated devices will be made readily available to the student at the end of the school day.
- For repeated offenses, a parent/guardian may be required to retrieve the device, in accordance with school-based policies.

An employee who is acting within the scope of their work duties, in this case, enforcing EFC or the school's Smartphone and Mobile Communications Devices Policy, is not responsible for replacement if smartphones or electronic signaling devices are lost, stolen, or damaged.

Schools are to establish a procedure whereby staff can turn in confiscated personal property of students and the property is placed in a secured and locked location. A log noting the student name and an accurate description of the device should be maintained. Access should be limited to an administrator or designee. All confiscated cellphones that have not been returned to students should be returned no later than the final week of school.

COMMUNICATIONS DURING EMERGENCIES

Parents/guardians needing to reach their child urgently during the school day should call the main front office of the school. Office staff will immediately relay messages or call students down for emergencies to ensure student safety and compliance with safety protocols.

POLICY DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be made available to all students, parents, and staff at the beginning of every school year and to newly enrolled students and their parents within one week of enrollment.

Students and parents/guardians are hereby also advised that EFC schools are not responsible for the students' lost, damaged, or stolen smartphones or electronic devices.

REVISIONS AND UPDATING THE POLICY

EFC will update or modify this policy as EFC priorities change; community needs change; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

POSTING REQUIREMENTS

EFC will post its Smartphone and Mobile Communication Devices Policy on the school website. Additional school-based information will be made available in each school's Student and Family Handbook.

Healthy eating is important!

At Ascend, we care about your learning *and* being healthy!

Eating healthy foods helps your brain and body:

- Strong bones and teeth
- Makes you think clearly and be more alert
- Keeps you with the right amount of energy–not too hyper and not too tired
- Helps keep you from getting sick
- Helps you have better moods

What snacks and food are okay to bring to school?

Yes! (examples)	No
Fruit Vegetables Crackers Granola bars Fruit Snacks Water Nuts or Trail Mix	Cookies Chips Juice (Honest Kids is ok) Soda (no sugary beverages) Chocolate bars Candy Cake Cupcakes













Wait... What about celebrations?

Can we have treats for celebrations like parties and birthdays?

Yes!

Celebrations are SO important! Bringing treats for special events can be planned with your teacher.



What happens if my child brings a snack they shouldn't?

We will ask students to put the snack away in their backpacks. We have other snacks on hand.

We also always have water and milk.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the office



Responding to Behavior at ASCEND

Our Pedagogy of School Culture

ASCEND cultivates relationships with our students, families, and staff, so that together we create a learning environment grounded in healing, self-exploration, and a commitment to personal growth. Our goal is to develop young people committed to self-awareness, integrity, love, and hope in their pursuit of justice and equity for all. We seek to honor those who came before us and to build a diverse community where all members are seen and cared for as their whole selves.

ASCEND School stands against racism and hatred in all its forms.

We commit to intervene/disrupt any comments or actions that are hate-based (Race, Culture, Gender, Sexual orientation, or Religion), against any student/staff. Guided by love, our vision is to empower each other to create a school that supports our community of students, families, and staff.

Behavior Matrix	
Tier 1 Behaviors	**Actions Steps**
- Disengagement - Calling Out - Dress code - Single Action: inappropriate language (not directed at a person), - Horseplay (no one feeling harmed)	**In the classroom:** ● Name behavior, value/agreement broken, impact on community ● Assign Give Back Time/ Community Service ● Set a Timer or boundary (for Middle School, lunch reflection if needed) ● Break, reflection in room / Access to different sensory regulating tools **Outside the classroom:** ● Reflection* in Buddy Classroom, hallway ● Take a walk break with a support person if needed ● 1:1 check-in to ask the student what they need ● Lunch Reflection + Facilitated restorative conversation with persons harmed

Behavior Matrix Continued

Tier 2	Action Steps
- Repeated Tier 1 behavior* - Non-consensual (non-sexual) Contact - Minor Physical Aggression - Threatening - Inappropriate language - Stealing - Eloping - Technology Misuse* - Academic Dishonesty/Cheating* (*Referral based on circumstance and severity)	**<u>In the classroom:</u>** - Responding adult names behavior, names value/agreement broken, names impact on community. - Completed reflection or referral form and alerts the culture team **<u>Outside the classroom:</u>** - Staff and/or Culture team member notifies the family - Student completes statement and/or reflection in the office - Consequences are identified and planned - *Learning modules* - *Presentation or apology* - *Community service* - *Family meeting* - *Student Contract* - *Restorative conversation(s)* - *Suspension (as a last resort)* **<u>Possible further steps:</u>** - Wellness check, Recurring check-in with parents, Referring student to COST, Peer Mediation, Student Contract

Tier 3-4	Action Items
- Severe property damage - Presence or under the influence of drugs/alcohol - Weapons - Assault - Sexual Assault or harassment - Hate Speech - Harassment/bullying - Discrimination	- Responding staff alert the administration immediately - Referral is completed - Families are notified of the incident and investigation - Administration determines the next steps - *Suspension* - *Student Contract* - *Learning modules* - *Presentation or apology* - *Restorative Conversation* - *Community Service*

ASCEND Office Referral Definitions

Minor Problem Behavior	Definition
Disrespect (M-Disrespect)	Students deliver low-intensity, socially rude, or dismissive messages to adults or students.
Dress Code Violation (M-Dress)	Students wear clothing that is near, but not within, the dress code guidelines established by the school or district.
Inappropriate Language (M-Inapp Lan)	Students engage in low-intensity instances of inappropriate language.
Physical Contact/ Physical Aggression (M-Contact)	Students engage in non-serious but inappropriate physical contact.
Property Misuse (M-Prpty Misuse)	Students engage in low-intensity property misuse.
Tardy (M-Tardy)	Students arrive at class after the bell (or wait for the signal that class has started).
Technology Violation (M-Tech)	Students engage in non-serious, but inappropriate (as defined by the school) use of cell phone, pager, music/video players, camera, and/or computer.

Major Problem Behavior	Definition
Abusive Language/ Inappropriate Language/ Profanity (In app Lan)	Students deliver verbal messages that include swearing, name-calling, or the use of words in an inappropriate way.
Hate Speech (Racist/Bullying)	Students used verbal and written derogatory language, slurs, and insults. (Offensive graffiti, letters (hate mail), drawings etc.)
Bullying (Bullying)	The delivery of direct or technology-based messages that involve intimidation, teasing, taunting, threats, or name-calling. These behaviors are targeted and repeated.
Defiance/ Insubordination/ Non-Compliance (Defiance)	Students may engage in refusing to follow directions or talking back.
Disruption (Disruption)	Students engage in behavior that disrupts a class or activity. Disruption includes sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials; horseplay or roughhousing; and/or sustained out-of-seat behavior.
Fighting (Fight)	Students are involved in a mutual participation incident involving physical violence.
Harassment (Harass)	The delivery of disrespectful messages in any format related to gender, ethnicity, sex, race, religion, disability, physical features, or other protected classes.
Lying/Cheating (Lying)	The student delivers a message that is untrue and/or deliberately violates the rules.
Physical Aggression (PAgg)	Students engage in actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur (e.g., hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, pulling hair, scratching).

Property Damage/Vandalism (Prop dam)	Students participate in an activity that results in the destruction or disfigurement of property.

Who responds to what?		
Minor Incidents e.g., argument between students, mildly unsafe play, in-class distraction, etc.	**Responding Adult** Any adult present - Teacher, yard duty, or other staff	**Response Process** The issue is resolved by responding staff member(s) through discussion or a minor consequence. The same staff member notifies families and the primary teacher(s). May use office reflection (TK-5) or Give Back Time /Lunch Reflection (6-8).
Minor to Moderate Incidents e.g., Mildly unsafe behavior, one-time conflicts, incidents that *can* be solved via an isolated restorative conversation or one-time GBT/reflection, non-harmful incidents related to a student's disability/IEP needs.	**Responding Adult** Dean of Culture	**Response Process** The behavior response flow chart is followed, including documentation. Families are notified. Case workers, service providers, admin, and primary teacher(s) are notified in detail.
Moderate to Severe Incidents e.g., Very unsafe behavior, repeated concerns, major student conflicts, bullying or hate speech/incidents, violence, drugs, incidents that cannot be solved through one-time discussion/ restoration/GBT..	**Responding Adult** Dean of Culture *with* Admin support/guidance	**Response Process** The behavior response flow chart is followed, including documentation. Families are notified. Case workers, admin, and primary teacher(s) are notified in detail. Any suspensions (in school for more than one hour or out of school) are approved by the Principal.

ASCEND Bullying Policy

A person is being bullied when he/she is *exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons*. Negative action is when a person *intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person through physical contact, words, or other means*.[1]

The following examples illustrate common bullying behaviors. Remember, bullying is a pattern of behavior that is repeated over time against the same person(s) with a noted power differential.

1. Saying hurtful and unpleasant things
2. Making fun of others
3. Using mean and hurtful nicknames
4. Completely overlooking someone
5. Deliberately excluding someone from a group of friends
6. Hitting, kicking, pulling hair, pushing, or shutting a person inside
7. Telling lies
8. Spreading false rumors
9. Sending mean notes, emails, or text messages; posting mean notes on electronic social media (Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc.)
10. Trying to get other students to dislike another person

If you are being bullied, the behavior should be reported to a trusted adult.

ASCEND's Consequences for Bullying:

1. **First offense:** Loss of recess privileges and community service for 1-5 days (depending on severity of incident and student's level of reflection), phone or in-person conference with parents, Restorative Justice essay, and possible 1-3 day suspension (depending on severity of incident).

2. **Second offense:** 2-5 day suspension(depending on severity of incident), conference with parents, loss of recess privileges for 2-4 weeks and community service (depending on severity of incident and student's level of reflection), and Anti-bullying project. Apology Letter, Restorative Conversation.

[1] *Definition and description of bullying behaviors from researcher Dan Olweus.*

education for change
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

POLICY: Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying

Discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors, which interfere with students' ability to learn and negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, Education for Change (the "School") prohibits any acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying altogether. This policy 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 in the School's policy, discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are described as the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication or cyber-bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, based on the actual or perceived characteristics of mental or physical disability, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions, and parental status), race or ethnicity (including ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, ethic background, and traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twist), religion (including agnosticism and atheism), religious affiliation, medical condition, genetic information, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality (including national origin, country of origin, and citizenship), marital status, age, sexual orientation, immigration or citizenship status, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or based on any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. In addition, bullying encompasses any conduct described in the definitions set forth in this Policy. Hereafter, such actions are referred to as "misconduct prohibited by this Policy."

To the extent possible, the School will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond, address and report on such behaviors in a timely manner. School staff that witness acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.

Moreover, the School will not condone or tolerate misconduct prohibited by this Policy by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the School does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This policy applies to all employees, students, or volunteer actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. The School will promptly and thoroughly investigate any

complaint of such misconduct prohibited by this Policy in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted. The School complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and local ordinances in its investigation of and response to reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying Coordinator ("Coordinator"):

Larissa Adam
Superintendent of Schools
333 Hegenberger Road, Suite 600, Oakland, CA 94621
ladam@efcps.net
510-568-7936

Definitions

Prohibited Unlawful Harassment

● Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments or slurs;

● Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with school because of sex, race or any other protected basis;

● Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment;

● Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected classes above.

Prohibited Unlawful Harassment Under Title IX

Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et. seq; 34 C.F.R. § 106.1 et. seq) and California state law prohibit discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex. In accordance with these existing laws, discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex in education institutions, including in the education institution's admissions and employment practices, is prohibited. All persons, regardless of sex, are afforded equal rights and opportunities and freedom from unlawful discrimination and harassment in education programs or activities conducted by the School.

The School is committed to providing a work and educational environment free of sexual harassment and considers such harassment to be a major offense, which may result in disciplinary action. Inquiries about the application of Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106 my be referred to the Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

Sexual harassment consists of conduct on the basis of sex, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct on the basis of sex, regardless of whether or not the conduct is motivated by sexual desire, when: (1) Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, education, academic status, or progress; (2) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment, educational or academic decisions affecting the individual; (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; and/or (4) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual

regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the educational institution.

It is also unlawful to retaliate in any way against an individual who has articulated a good faith concern about sexual harassment against him/her or against another individual.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

● Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:

o Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.

o Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.

● Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as:

o Sexually oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.

o Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an individual for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.

o Subjecting or threats of subjecting a student to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making the student's academic performance more difficult because of the student's sex.

● Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the educational environment, such as:

o Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing or possessing any such material to read, display or view in the work or educational environment.

o Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the educational environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic.

o Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an individual by sex in an area of the educational environment (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this Policy.

Prohibited Bullying

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. Bullying includes one or more acts committed by a student group or group of students that may constitute as sexual harassment, hate violence, or creates an intimidating and/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:

1. Placing a reasonable pupil* or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.

2. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.

3. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her academic performance.

4. 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.

* "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.

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 means the creation and transmission originated on or off the schoolsite, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

1. A message, text, sound, video, or image.

2. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:

a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in the definition of "bullying," above.

b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of "bullying," above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.

c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of "bullying," above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.

3. An act of "Cyber sexual bullying" including, but not limited to:

a. The dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in definition of "bullying," above. A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude,

semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.

b. "Cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

4. Notwithstanding the definitions of "bullying" and "electronic act" above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment means a written document filed and signed by a complainant who is participating in or attempting to participate in the school's education program or activity or signed by the Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

The School has adopted the following procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying.

1. Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

The School advises students:

a. To never share passwords, personal data, or private photos online.
b. To think about what they are doing carefully before posting and by emphasizing that comments cannot be retracted once they are posted.
c. That personal information revealed on social media can be shared with anyone including parents, teachers, administrators, and potential employers. Students should never reveal information that would make them uncomfortable if the world had access to it.
d. To consider how it would feel receiving such comments before making comments about others online.

The School informs Charter School employees, students, and parents/guardians of the school's policies regarding the use of technology in and out of the classroom. The school encourages parents/guardians to discuss these policies with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with such policies.

2. Education

The School employees cannot always be present when bullying incidents occur, so educating students about bullying is a key prevention technique to limit bullying from happening. The School advises students that hateful and/or demeaning behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable in our society and at the school and encourages students to practice compassion and respect each other.

Charter School educates students to accept all student peers regardless of protected characteristics (including but not limited to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identification, physical or cognitive disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration status) and about the negative impact of bullying other students based on protected characteristics.

The School's bullying prevention education also discusses the differences between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and includes sample situations to help students learn and practice appropriate behavior and to develop techniques and strategies to respond in a non-aggressive way to bullying-type behaviors. Students will also develop confidence and learn how to advocate for themselves and others, and when to go to an adult for help.

The School informs the school employees, students, and parents/guardians of this Policy and encourages parents/guardians to discuss this Policy with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with this Policy.

3. Professional Development

The School annually makes available the online training module developed by the California Department of Education pursuant Education Code section 32283.5(a) to its certificated employees and all other school employees who have regular interaction with students.

The School informs certificated employees about the common signs that a student is a target of bullying including:

- Physical cuts or injuries
- Lost or broken personal items
- Fear of going to school/practice/games
- Loss of interest in school, activities, or friends
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Anxious/sick/nervous behavior or distracted appearance
- Self-destructiveness or displays of odd behavior
- Decreased self-esteem

Charter School also informs certificated employees about the groups of students determined by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for bullying. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth ("LGBTQ") and those youth perceived as LGBTQ; and
- Students with physical or learning disabilities.

The School encourages its employees to demonstrate effective problem-solving, anger management, and self-confidence skills for the school's students.

Grievance Procedures

1. Scope of Grievance Procedures

The School will comply with its Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") policy when investigating and responding to complaints alleging unlawful harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying against a protected group or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of the protected characteristics set forth in the UCP that:

a. Are written and signed;

b. Filed by an individual who alleges that that individual has personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying, or by one who believes any specific class of individuals has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying prohibited by this part, or by a duly authorized representative who alleges that an individual student has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and

c. Submitted to the School's UCP Compliance Officer not later than six (6) months from the date the alleged unlawful 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.

The following grievance procedures shall be utilized for reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy that do not comply with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements of a uniform complaint. For formal complaints of sexual harassment, the School will utilize the following grievance procedures in addition to its UCP when applicable.

2. Reporting

All staff are expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, to intervene as soon as it is safe to do so, call for assistance, and report such incidents. The Board requires staff to follow the procedures in this policy for reporting alleged acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Any student who believes they have been subject to misconduct prohibited by this Policy or has witnessed such prohibited misconduct is encouraged to immediately report such misconduct to the Coordinator:

Ombudsperson:
Larissa Adam
Superintendent of Schools
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Complaints regarding such misconduct may also be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. Civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders may also be available to complainants.

While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report to the Coordinator. The School will investigate and respond to all oral and written reports of

misconduct prohibited by this Policy in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on an anonymous report.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy or other verbal, or physical abuses. Any student who feels she/he is a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the Principal, Coordinator, a staff person or a family member so that she/he can get assistance in resolving the issue in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.

The School acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. All reports shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process. This includes keeping the identity of the reporter confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by the Coordinator or administrative designee on a case-by-case basis.

The School prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who files a report or complaint, testifies, assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation or proceeding related to misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation or lack of participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the individual. Individuals alleging retaliation in violation of this Policy may file a grievance using the procedures set forth in this Policy. Knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

All supervisors of staff will receive sexual harassment training within six (6) months of their assumption of a supervisory position and will receive further training once every two (2) years thereafter. All staff, and any individual designated as a coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker will receive sexual harassment training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment as required by law.

3. Supportive Measures

Upon the receipt of an informal or formal complaint of sexual harassment, the Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures. The Coordinator will consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and explain the process for filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment.

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint of sexual harassment or where no formal complaint of sexual harassment has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the school's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures available to complainants and respondents may include but are not limited to counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. The School will maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the School to provide the supportive measures.

4. Investigation and Response

Upon receipt of a report of misconduct prohibited by this Policy from a student, staff member, parent, volunteer, visitor or affiliate of the School, the Coordinator or administrative designee will promptly initiate an investigation. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than seven (7) school days. If the Coordinator, or administrative designee determines that an investigation will take longer than seven (7) school days, he or she will inform the complainant of the reasons for the delay or extension and provide an approximate date when the investigation will be complete.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Coordinator or administrative designee will meet with the complainant and, to the extent possible with respect to confidentiality laws, provide the complainant with information about the investigation, including any actions necessary to resolve the incident/situation. However, in no case may the Coordinator or administrative designee reveal confidential information related to other students or employees, including the type and extent of discipline issued against such students or employees.

For investigations of and responses to formal complaints of sexual harassment, the following grievance procedures will apply:

· Notice of the Allegations

o Upon receipt of a formal complaint of sexual harassment, the Coordinator will give all known parties written notice of its grievance process, including any voluntary informal resolution process. The notice will include:

§ A description of the allegations of sexual harassment at issue and to the extent known, the identities of the parties involved in the incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident;

§ A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a final decision is reached;

§ A statement that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence; and

§ A statement that the School prohibits an individual from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

· Emergency Removal

o The School may place a non-student employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of a formal complaint of sexual harassment grievance process in accordance with the School's policies.

o The School may remove a respondent from the School's education program or activity on an emergency basis, in accordance with the School's policies, provided that the School undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

o This provision may not be construed to modify any rights under the IDEA, Section 504, or the ADA.

· Informal Resolution

o If a formal complaint of sexual harassment is filed, the School may offer a voluntary informal resolution process, such as mediation, to the parties at any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility. If the School offers such a process, it will do the following:

§ Provide the parties with advance written notice of:

· The allegations;

· The requirements of the voluntary informal resolution process including the circumstances under which the parties are precluded from resuming a formal complaint of sexual harassment arising from the same allegations;

· The parties' right to withdraw from the voluntary informal resolution process and resume the grievance process at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution; and

· Any consequences resulting from participating in the voluntary informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared; and

§ Obtain the parties' advance voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

o The School will not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

· <u>Investigation Process</u>

o The decision-maker will not be the same person(s) as the Coordinator or the investigator. The School shall ensure that all decision-makers and investigators do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.

o In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than twenty-five (25) school days. If the investigator determines that an investigation will take longer than twenty-five (25) school days and needs to be delayed or extended due to good cause, the investigator will inform the complainant and any respondents in writing of the reasons for the delay or extension and provide an approximate date when the investigation will be complete.

o The parties will be provided with an equal opportunity to present witnesses, to inspect and review any evidence obtained that is directly related to the allegations raised, and to have an advisor present during any investigative meeting or interview.

o The parties will not be prohibited from discussing the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.

o A party whose participation is invited or expected at an investigative meeting or interview will receive written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the meeting or interview with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.

o Prior to completion of the investigative report, the School will send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, a copy of the evidence subject to inspection and review, and the parties will have at least ten (10) days to submit a written response for the investigator's consideration prior to the completion of the investigation report.

o The investigator will complete an investigation report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send a copy of the report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, at least ten (10) days prior to the determination of responsibility.

· <u>Dismissal of a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment</u>

o If the investigation reveals that the alleged harassment did not occur in the School's educational program in the United States or would not constitute sexual harassment even if proved, the formal complaint with regard to that conduct must be dismissed. However, such a dismissal does not preclude action under another applicable the School policy.
o The School may dismiss a formal complaint of sexual harassment if:
§ The complainant provides a written withdrawal of the complaint to the Coordinator;
§ The respondent is no longer employed or enrolled at the School; or
§ The specific circumstances prevent the School from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a decision on the formal complaint or the allegations therein.
o If a formal complaint of sexual harassment or any of the claims therein are dismissed, the School will promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal simultaneously to the parties.

· Determination of Responsibility
o The standard of evidence used to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard.
o The School will send a written decision on the formal complaint to the complainant and respondent simultaneously that describes:
§ The allegations in the formal complaint of sexual harassment;
§ All procedural steps taken including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, and methods used to gather other evidence;
§ The findings of facts supporting the determination;
§ The conclusions about the application of the School's code of conduct to the facts;
§ The decision and rationale for each allegation;
§ Any disciplinary sanctions the recipient imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity will be provided to the complainant; and
The procedures and permissible bases for appeals.

5. Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy, knowingly make false statements or knowingly submit false information during the grievance process may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the School or termination of employment. The Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies order by the School in response to a formal complaint of sexual harassment.

6. Uniform Complaint Procedures

When harassment or bullying is based upon one of the protected characteristics set forth in this Policy, a complainant may also fill out a Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") complaint form at any time during the process.

7. Right of Appeal

Should the reporting individual find the School's resolution unsatisfactory, the reporting individual may, within five (5) business days of notice of the School's decision or resolution, submit a written 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 decision.

The following appeal rights and procedures will also apply to formal complaints of sexual harassment:

· The complainant and the respondent shall have the same appeal rights and the School will implement appeal procedures equally for both parties.
· The School will notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed.
· The decision-maker for the appeal will give both parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result; and provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

8. Recordkeeping

All records related to any investigation of complaints under this Policy are maintained in a secure location.

The School will maintain the following records for at least seven (7) years:

· Records of each sexual harassment investigation, including any determination of responsibility; any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript; any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent; and any remedies provided to the complainant.
· Records of any appeal of a formal sexual harassment complaint and the results of that appeal.
· Records of any informal resolution of a sexual harassment complaint and the results of that informal resolution.
· All materials used to train Title IX coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process.
· Records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment.

Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drugs Policy

ASCEND and the Oakland Unified School District believe that the use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs adversely affects a student's ability to achieve academic success, is physically and emotionally harmful, and has serious social and legal consequences. We desire to keep our school free of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. This effort is a crucial step towards preventing violence, promoting school safety, and fostering a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

- Any ASCEND student **who possesses tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drug at school** will be subject to disciplinary measures and participation in an intervention program.
- Any ASCEND student **who provides or sells tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drug to another student** will be subject to disciplinary measures and participation in an intervention program.
- Any ASCEND student **who consumes/uses tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drug on campus or on the way to/from school** will be subject to disciplinary measures and participation in an intervention program.

Disciplinary and intervention measures include any combination of the following measures, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, the number of previous offenses, and the student's disciplinary record.

- In-school or out-of-school suspension, and/or recommendation for expulsion.
- Mandatory after-school tutoring (to keep up with class work during the suspension).
- Completion of 40-100 hours of community service.
- Parent attendance at school (up to 5 days).
- Participation in a drug/alcohol abuse prevention and/or rehabilitation program.

Music Policy

ASCEND strives to create flexible and personalized learning environments that cater to individual needs. To allow students to explore the learning styles that work best for them, we are *open* to the use of music in the classroom; however, the use of technology and music is dependent on staff approval and discretion. All students must receive staff approval before using technology to listen to music.

Music *may* be used during independent work time under the following conditions:

- The teacher or staff offer music by playing it aloud for the whole group at the same time.
- Teachers or staff explicitly offer the use of music to the whole class during independent work and provide expectations of usage that align with this policy.
- Music has been documented and shared on students' Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) as a strategy that can be used to improve a student's concentration, regulate the nervous system, or provoke creative thinking.

Music *may* be used as an intervention when a student is escalated:

- ONLY when music has been documented and shared on the student's Behavior Intervention Map (BIM) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) as an intervention strategy that can be used to de-escalate student behavior

Music usage expectations:

- Music is accessed independently
- Headphones are used
- Volume is low-medium, so that music does not distract others
- Music is played using shuffle (limited adjustments)

If a student is not using music appropriately at any point, privileges will be revoked until the team can reconvene to adapt the student's PLP, BIM, or BIP.

Gum Policy

ASCEND strives to create welcoming learning environments. To ensure that all classrooms and spaces remain clean, gum use is strictly prohibited on campus.

- All students who are observed chewing gum should be asked to dispose of it immediately.
- If gum use becomes a recurrent problem for any student, staff should refer to the Behavior Intervention Matrix to determine potential next steps.

The only exception to gum use:

Gum *may* be used as an intervention when a student is escalated:

- ONLY when gum has been documented and shared on the student's Behavior Intervention Map (BIM) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) as an intervention strategy that can be used to de-escalate student behavior
- Gum must be disposed of when the student has returned to baseline

education for change
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Rev 04.12.18
Rev 01.12.23
Rev 08.08.24
Rev 06.09.26

Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedures

Purpose: To promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students

Code of Conduct

The goal of the Education for Change ("EFC" or "Charter School" or "the School") is to operate schools that foster student self-discipline in a warm, supportive school climate that is conducive to maximum learning for all students. All EFC schools will develop site-specific Codes of Conduct as general guides for behavior, but not as mechanisms for rigid control. To ensure success for ALL children, the individual backgrounds of students or extenuating circumstances will always be considered before corrective measures are prescribed. Codes of conduct will be presented in student/parent handbooks. Every family will receive a new copy of the Parent-Student Handbook annually.

EFC is a charter management organization that operates the following charter schools: Achieve Academy, ASCEND K-8 School, Cox Academy, Latitude 37.8 High School, Lazear Charter Academy, and Learning without Limits. The following policy on suspension and expulsion shall apply to all of the above- mentioned EFC charter schools, and will be included in all EFC schools' handbooks.

Suspension, Expulsion, and Involuntary Removal

The following Student Suspension and Expulsion Procedures have been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at Education for Change Public Schools. Although charter schools are exempt from school district procedures and processes for suspensions and expulsions, in creating these procedures, EFC has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* which describe the offenses for which students at non charter schools may be suspended or expelled and the procedures governing those suspensions and expulsions in order to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions, expulsions and involuntary removals. The language that follows is largely consistent with the language of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* EFC is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions, expulsions, and involuntary removals, and may

modify the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension, expulsion, or involuntary removal, and the procedures thereto so long as not materially different from this charter petition.

Consistent with this Policy, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension, expulsion, and involuntary removal, and it may be amended from time to time without the need to seek a material revision of the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements.

EFC fundamentally believes that providing an orderly, safe, and warm classroom and school environment is the foundation for positive behavior in children and a comprehensive MTSS model is the vehicle through which to support ALL children to respond positively in that environment. When children break rules in an orderly, safe and warm environment, EFC believes there is a logical root cause for that behavior which must be addressed. There is minimal research to support suspending and expelling children, and research verifies that African-American and Hispanic students are disproportionately impacted. Therefore, EFC expects its schools to develop a positive school culture, provide social emotional learning, and implement the behavioral interventions necessary to minimize the need for out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary policies and procedures fairly, respectfully and consistently among all students while considering the needs of individual children. Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians[1] are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of this Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

The EFC administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline and involuntary removal policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy and its Procedures are available on request at the Principal's office. The Policy and its Procedures will also be printed and distributed annually as part of the Student Handbook which will clearly describe discipline expectations.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the IDEA or who is qualified for services under Section 504 is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law requires additional or different procedures. EFC schools will follow all applicable federal and state laws, including but not limited to the applicable provisions of the Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities for whom EFC schools has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by EFC for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or

the student's parent or guardian, and shall inform the student, and the student's parent/guardian of the basis for which the student is being involuntarily removed and the student's parent/guardian's right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal. When no native written language exists, oral translation shall be provided to the student and their parent/guardian. If a student's parent/ guardian requests a hearing, EFC shall utilize the same hearing procedures specified below for expulsions, before the effective date of the action to involuntarily remove the student. If the student's parent/guardian requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until EFC issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include removals for misconduct which may be grounds for suspension or expulsion as enumerated below.

Procedures

A. Alternative Means of Correction

For a student facing discipline for a discretionary offense listed below, the Principal or designee may, whenever possible and practicable, provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion. These alternatives shall use a research-based framework with age-appropriate strategies that improve behavioral and academic outcomes while addressing and correcting the student's specific misbehavior.

The Charter School shall not suspend or expel any student based solely on the fact that they are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from school activities. Violations of the Charter School's attendance expectations shall be addressed in accordance with Charter School's Attendance Policy and/or Independent Study Policy, as applicable.

No student may be suspended or expelled for willful defiance or disruption. Alternatively, Charter School staff may refer a student who engages in willful defiance and/or disruption to the Principal or designee for appropriate and timely in-school interventions or supports. Within five (5) business days, the Principal or designee shall:

1) Document the actions taken and save the document to the student's record
2) Inform the referring staff member what actions were taken and if none, the rationale used for not providing any appropriate or timely in-school interventions or supports.

For a student who has been suspended, or for whom other means of correction have been implemented, for an incident of racial bullying, harassment, or intimidation, Charter School may require all students associated with the incident(s) to engage in restorative justice practices and/or cultural sensitivity programs.

Charter School may utilize its Multi-Tiered System of Supports, which includes restorative justice practices, trauma-informed practices, social and emotional learning, and schoolwide positive behavior interventions and support, to help students gain critical social and emotional skills, receive support to help transform trauma-related responses, understand the impact of their actions, and develop meaningful methods for repairing harm to the school community.

B. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time including but not limited to:

a. while on school grounds;

b. while going to or coming from school;

c. during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; or

d. during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

C. Enumerated Offenses

1. Discretionary Suspension and Expulsion Offenses. Students may be suspended and/or recommended for expulsion when the Principal or designee determines the student:

a. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person

b. Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense

c. Unlawfully possessed, used, or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Students who voluntarily disclose their use of a controlled substance, alcohol, or an intoxicant of any kind in order to seek help through services or supports shall not be suspended solely for that disclosure.

d. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant

e. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion

f. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.

g. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.

h. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of a student's own prescription products by a student. Students who voluntarily disclose their use of a tobacco product in order to seek help through services or supports shall not be suspended solely for that disclosure.

i. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity

j. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5

k. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases

l. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm

m. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness

n. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma

o. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this policy, “hazing” means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective student. For purposes of this policy, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

p. Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this policy, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars ($1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for their own safety or for their immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, or the personal property of the person threatened or their immediate family.

q. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this policy, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This provision shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 5, inclusive.

r. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in Education Code Section 233(e). This section shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 5, inclusive.

s. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This provision shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 5, inclusive.

t. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.

i. "Bullying" means 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 which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of their age, or for a person of their age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.

2. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on their physical or mental health.

3. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their academic performance.

4. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.

ii. "Electronic Act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

1. A message, text, sound, video, or image.

2. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:

a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.

b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual student for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a student for the purpose of bullying the student and such that another student would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the student was or is the student who was impersonated.

c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious student or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual student other than the student who created the false profile.

3. An act of cyber sexual bullying.

a. For purposes of this policy, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual

recording by a student to another student or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.

b. For purposes of this policy, "cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

u. A student who aids or abets, as defined in Penal Code Section 31, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion. However, if a juvenile court finds that a student committed a crime as an aider and abettor and the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury, the student may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion for causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person, and/or willfully using force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.

v. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee's concurrence.

w. Assault or battery, as defined in Penal Code Sections 240 and 242, upon any school employee.

2. Non- Discretionary Suspension and Expulsion Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion when it is determined the student:

1. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other destructive device unless, in the case of possession of any device of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee's concurrence
2. Brandished a knife at another person.
3. Unlawfully sold a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, *et seq*.
4. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 287, 288, or 289 or former Section 288a of the Penal Code, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4

If it is determined by the Hearing Officer, Administrative Panel and/or Board that a student has brought a firearm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or destructive device on campus, the student shall be

expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994. In such instances, the student shall be provided due process rights of notice and a hearing as required in this policy.

The Charter School applies the following definitions:

The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term "destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (A) bomb, (B) grenade, (C) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (D) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (E) mine, or (F) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

The term “knife” means (A) any dirk, dagger, or other weapon with a fixed, sharpened blade fitted primarily for stabbing; (B) a weapon with a blade fitted primarily for stabbing; (C) a weapon with a blade longer than 3½ inches; (D) a folding knife with a blade that locks into place; or (E) a razor with an unguarded blade.

D. Suspension Procedure

A student may be suspended by the Charter School Principal or designee. Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. ***Conference***

Suspension shall be preceded, if practicable, by a conference conducted by the Principal or designee with the student and their parent/guardian and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal or designee. The conference may be held in-person, telephonically, or via other electronic means.

The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or Charter School personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, the student and student’s parent/guardian shall be notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against the student and shall be given the opportunity to recount their version of the incident and provide any evidence in their defense.

This conference shall be held within two (2) school days, unless the student waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. The conference shall be held as soon as the student is physically able to participate in the conference. Penalties shall not be imposed on a student for failure of the student’s parent/guardian to attend a conference with Charter School officials. Reinstatement of the suspended student shall not be contingent upon attendance by the student’s parent/guardian at the conference.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of suspension, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by email, telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian

shall be notified in writing of the suspension. This notice shall include: (a) the specific offense(s) committed by the student, (b) duration and dates of the suspension, (c) the date when the student may return to school following the suspension, and (d) an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges.

If EFC officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian will be invited to an in-person, telephonic, or virtual conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. In such instances when EFC has determined a suspension period shall be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the student and the student's parents/guardians, unless the student and the student's parents/guardians fail to attend the conference.

This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

4. Student Work/Homework during Out-of-School Suspension

In accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2(a), upon the request of a parent, a legal guardian or other person holding the right to make education decisions for the student, or the affected student, a teacher shall provide to a student in any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, who has been suspended from school for two (2) or more school days, the homework that the student would otherwise have been assigned.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2(b), if a homework assignment that is requested pursuant to Section 47606.2(a) and turned into the teacher by the student either upon the student's return to school from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, is not graded before the end of the academic term, that assignment shall not be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in the class.

D. Authority to Expel

The Charter School may expel a student following a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer to determine whether the student should be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing.

A student may be expelled by the Superintendent upon the recommendation of a neutral and impartial Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Chief of Schools as needed. The Administrative Panel shall consist of at least three (3) members who do not have an instructional or supervisory relationship with the student and are not a member of EFC's Board. The Administrative Panel shall be presided over by a designated neutral hearing chairperson. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any

student, with the determination by the Superintendent, subject to review by the Board of Directors on appeal if requested by the student and/or parent/guardian.

E. Expulsion Procedures

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal or designee determines that the student has committed an expellable offense and recommends the student for expulsion. If postponed for good cause, the expulsion hearing may be extended for an additional thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the original hearing, unless otherwise agreed upon in writing by the Administrative Panel and student's parent/guardian.

The Administrative Panel's hearing shall be held in a confidential session (complying with all student confidentiality rules under FERPA).

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served. The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based
3. A copy of the Charter School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment
5. An explanation of the opportunity for the student and/or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person and/ or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor
6. An explanation of the right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
7. An explanation of the opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing
8. An explanation of the opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

G. Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

H. Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay. Signed and dated written statements/declarations may be admitted as testimony.

I. Expulsion Decision

The recommendation of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Superintendent, who will make a determination regarding the expulsion. The Superintendent shall make the determination regarding the expulsion, which will be provided to the student and parent/guardian within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing.

If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, or the Superintendent ultimately decides not to expel, the student shall immediately be returned to their educational program at the Charter School.

The Superintendent may also determine to suspend the enforcement of the expulsion order for a period of not more than one (1) calendar year from the date of the expulsion hearing and return the student to the student's educational program at the Charter School under a probationary status and rehabilitation plan issued by the Superintendent. During the period of the suspension of the expulsion order, the student is deemed to be on probationary status. The Superintendent may revoke the suspension of an expulsion order if the student commits any of the enumerated offenses listed above or violates any of the Charter School's rules and regulations governing student conduct. If the Superintendent revokes the suspension of an expulsion order, the student may be expelled under the terms of the original expulsion order.

J. Notice of Expulsion Decision

The Chief of Schools or designee, following a decision of the Superintendent to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Superintendent's adopted findings of fact, to the student and student's parent/guardian, within ten (10) school days of the expulsion hearing. This notice shall also include the following:

a. The Findings of fact, including the student's name, the specific offense(s) committed by the student, as well as the duration and term of the student's expulsion; and

b. Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with EFC

The Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the chartering authority (if required), upon finality of the expulsion.

This notice shall include the following:

a. The student's name

b. The specific expellable offense committed by the student

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(3), the Charter School shall send notice of the expulsion to the student's district of residence within 30 calendar days.

K. Disciplinary Records

EFC shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at EFC. Such records shall be made available to the chartering authority upon request.

L. Appeals

A student or parent/guardian may appeal the Superintendent's expulsion decision by submitting a written appeal request to the Board within five (5) calendar days or the date the Charter School issues the written notice of expulsion.

If no appeal is requested, the expulsion becomes final on the sixth (6th) calendar day after the notice of expulsion is issued to the student and student's parent/guardian.

If an appeal is requested, the Board or a committee thereof, will review the appeal as soon thereafter as practicable, but no later than its next regularly scheduled meeting.

The Board will not hold a new hearing or reconsider the case facts. Instead, the Board will limit its review to the following question:

- Did the hearing entity act without authority or exceed its jurisdiction?
- Was the hearing fair and conducted in accordance with the Charter School's Suspension and Expulsion policy and procedures?
- Did the hearing entity abuse its discretion in a way that caused harm?

The Board will hold the appeal review in a closed session to comply with FERPA and all applicable provisions of the Brown Act. The student and/or parent/guardian may address the Board in closed session.

The Board may overturn or uphold the decision of the Superintendent. The Board will issue its written decision on appeal to the student and student's parent/guardian within five (5) school days of the appeal review. If the Board overturns the expulsion decision, the student will immediately return to their educational placement at the Charter School. The Board's decision regarding the expulsion appeal is final – there is no further appeal.

M. Expelled Students/Alternative Education

Students who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the District or their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with student and/or student's parents/guardians as requested or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

N. Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled from EFC shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Superintendent at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the student may reapply to EFC for readmission.

O. Readmission or Admission of Previously Expelled Student

The decision to readmit a student at the end of the student's expulsion term or to admit a previously expelled student from another school district or charter school who has not been readmitted/admitted to another school or school district after the end of the student's expulsion term shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the Principal or designee and the student and student's parent/guardian to determine whether the student has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the student poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to EFC environment. The Principal or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding the Principal or designee's determination. The Board shall then make a final decision regarding readmission or admission of the student during the closed session of a public meeting, reporting any action taken during closed session consistent with the requirements of the Brown Act. The student's readmission is also

contingent upon EFC's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission or admission to the Charter School.

P. Notice to Teachers

The Charter School shall notify teachers of each student who has engaged in or is reasonably suspected to have engaged in any of the acts listed in Education Code Section 49079 and the corresponding enumerated offenses set forth above.

Q. Involuntary Removal for Truancy

As charter schools are schools of choice and as a charter school student who fails to attend school is potentially depriving another student of their opportunity to enroll, a student may be involuntarily removed as described within the Board adopted Attendance Policy after notice and an opportunity for a parent/guardian or other educational rights holder to request a hearing prior to any involuntary removal. Students who are involuntarily removed for truancy will be given a rehabilitation plan and will be subject to the readmission procedures set forth herein.

R. Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

EFC may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations, which shall be examined only by the EFC or the hearing officer in the expulsion. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the student.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of their right to (a) receive five days notice of their scheduled testimony, and (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of their choosing present in the hearing at the time the complaining witness testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel
2. EFC must also provide the complaining witness a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the entity conducting the expulsion hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which the complaining witness may leave the hearing room
4. The entity may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness
5. The entity may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours the complaining witness is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons will be reminded that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the entity presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding entity finds is disrupting the hearing. The entity conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany the complaining witness to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, EFC must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to EFC. The Superintendent shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the

testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official will remind the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the Superintendent from exercising their discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom they believe is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the hearing room during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, the complaining witness shall have the right to have their testimony heard via alternative means that may include but are not limited to, videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the Superintendent that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstance can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

R. Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion or Involuntary Removal of Students with Disabilities

1. Notification of SELPA

EFC shall immediately notify the SELPA (and/or the chartering authority if required) and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA the discipline of any student with a disability or student who EFC or the SELPA would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability.

2. Services during Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting (which could constitute a change of placement and the student's IEP would reflect this change), and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP or 504 plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

3. Procedural Safeguards

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, EFC, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504 plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent/guardian to determine:

a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or

b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 plan

If EFC, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If EFC, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that EFC had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement

b. If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and

c. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent/guardian and EFC agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan

If EFC, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a direct result of the failure to implement the IEP/504, then EFC may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

4. Due Process Appeals

The parent /guardian of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or EFC if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures.

5. Special Circumstances

Education for Change Public Schools personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

a. Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C Section 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function

b. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or

c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function

5. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 team.

6. Procedures for Students not yet eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEA and who has violated the Charter School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if EFC had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

EFC shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

a. The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to EFC's supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.

b. The parent/guardian has requested an evaluation of the child.

c. The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the Director of Special Education or to other School supervisory personnel

If EFC knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If EFC had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. EFC shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however, the student shall remain in the education placement determined by EFC pending the results of the evaluation.

EFC shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if the parent/guardian has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

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[1] The Charter School shall ensure that a homeless child or youth's educational rights holder; a foster child or youth's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker; and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker have the same rights as a parent or guardian to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, involuntary removal notice, and other documents and related information. For purposes of this Policy and its Procedures, the term "parent/guardian" shall include these parties.

education for change
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Complaint Policy and Procedures

Scope

The Education for Change (the "Charter School") policy is to comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. The Charter School is the local agency primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing educational programs. Pursuant to this policy, persons responsible for conducting investigations shall be knowledgeable about the laws and programs which they are assigned to investigate. This complaint procedure is adopted to provide a uniform system of complaint processing for the following types of complaints:

(1) Complaints of discrimination against any protected group including actual or perceived, including discrimination on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any Charter School program or activity; and

(2) Complaints of violations of state or federal law and regulations governing the following programs including but not limited to: special education, Title II, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, consolidated categorical aid, No Child Left Behind, migrant education, career technical and technical education training programs, child care and development programs, child nutrition program.

The Charter School acknowledges and respects every individual's rights to privacy. Discrimination complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects [to the greatest extent reasonably possible] the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process. While the Charter School cannot guarantee anonymity of the complainant, this includes keeping the identity of the complainant confidential, as

appropriate and except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation or proceedings, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") or designee on a case-by-case basis.

The Charter School prohibits any form of retaliation against any complainant in the complaint process, including but not limited to a complainant's filing of a complaint or the reporting of instances of discrimination. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of the complainant.

Compliance Officers

The Governing Board designates the following compliance officer(s) to receive and investigate complaints and to ensure the Charter School's compliance with law:

Larissa Adam
Superintendent
Education for Change
333 Hegenberger Road, Suite 705
Oakland, CA 94621
(510) 568-7936

The CEO or designee shall ensure that employees designated to investigate complaints are knowledgeable about the laws and programs for which they are responsible. Designated employees may have access to legal counsel as determined by the CEO or designee.

Should the complaint be specific to the CEO, the complaint will be directed to and the investigation will be conducted by the Board Chair.

Notifications

The CEO or designee shall annually provide written notification of the Charter School's uniform complaint procedures to students, employees, parents/guardians, the Governing Board, appropriate private officials or representatives, and other interested parties.

The CEO or designee shall make available copies of the Charter School's uniform complaint procedures free of charge.

The notice shall:

1. Identify the person(s), position(s), or unit(s) responsible for receiving complaints.

2. Advise the complainant of any civil law remedies that may be available to him/her under state or federal discrimination laws, if applicable.

3. Advise the complainant of the appeal process pursuant to Education Code Section 262.3, including the complainant's right to take the complaint directly to the California Department of Education ("CDE") or to pursue remedies before civil courts or other public agencies.

4. Include statements that:

a. The Charter School is primarily responsible for compliance with state and federal laws and regulations;

b. The complaint review shall be completed within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt of the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of the timeline;

c. An unlawful discrimination complaint must be filed not later than six months from the date the alleged discrimination occurs, or six months from the date the complainant first obtains knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination;

d. The complainant has a right to appeal the Charter School's decision to the CDE by filing a written appeal within 15 days of receiving the Charter School's decision; and

e. The appeal to the CDE must include a copy of the complaint filed with the Charter School and a copy of the Charter School's decision.

Procedures

The following procedures shall be used to address all complaints which allege that the Charter School has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs. Compliance officers shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions.

All parties involved in allegations shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when a complaint meeting or hearing is scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

- Step 1: Filing of Complaint

  Any individual, public agency, or organization may file a written complaint of alleged noncompliance by the Charter School.

  A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination shall be initiated no later than six months from the date when the alleged discrimination occurred, or six months from the date when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination. A complaint may be filed by a person who alleges that he/she personally suffered unlawful discrimination or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to unlawful discrimination.

  The complaint shall be presented to the compliance officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a code number and date stamp.

  If a complainant is unable to put a complaint in writing due to conditions such as a disability or illiteracy, Charter School staff shall assist him/her in the filing of the complaint.

- Step 2: Mediation

  Within three days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer may informally discuss with the complainant the possibility of using mediation. If the complainant agrees to mediation, the compliance officer shall make arrangements for this process.

Before initiating the mediation of a discrimination complaint, the compliance officer shall ensure that all parties agree to make the mediator a party to related confidential information.

If the mediation process does not resolve the problem within the parameters of law, the compliance officer shall proceed with his/her investigation of the complaint.

The use of mediation shall not extend the Charter School's timelines for investigating and resolving the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to such an extension of time.

- Step 3: Investigation of Complaint

The compliance officer is encouraged to hold an investigative meeting within five days of receiving the complaint or an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the complaint. This meeting shall provide an opportunity for the complainant and/or his/her representative to repeat the complaint orally.

The complainant and/or his/her representative shall have an opportunity to present the complaint and evidence or information leading to evidence to support the allegations in the complaint.

A complainant's refusal to provide the Charter School's investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or his/her failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or his/her engagement in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegation.

The Charter School's refusal to provide the investigator with access to records and/or other information related to the allegation in the complaint, or its failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or its engagement in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in a finding, based on evidence collected, that a violation has occurred and may result in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant.

- Step 4: Response

OPTION 1:

Unless extended by written agreement with the complainant, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the Charter School's investigation and decision, as described in Step #5 below, within 60 days of the Charter School's receipt of the complaint.

OPTION 2:

Within 30 days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the Charter School's investigation and decision, as described in Step #5 below. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the compliance officer's decision, he/she may, within five days, file his/her complaint in writing with the Board.

The Board may consider the matter at its next regular Board meeting or at a special Board meeting convened in order to meet the 60 day time limit within which the complaint must be answered.

The Board may decide not to hear the complaint, in which case the compliance officer's decision shall be final.

If the Board hears the complaint, the compliance officer shall send the Board's decision to the complainant within 60 days of the Charter School's initial receipt of the complaint or within the time period that has been specified in a written agreement with the complainant.

- Step 5: Final Written Decision

The Charter School's decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant. The Charter School's decision shall be written in English and in the language of the complainant whenever feasible or as required by law.

The decision shall include:

1. The findings of fact based on evidence gathered.

2. The conclusion(s) of law.

3. Disposition of the complaint.

4. Rationale for such disposition.

5. Corrective actions, if any are warranted.

6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal the Charter School's decision within fifteen (15) days to the CDE and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.

7. For discrimination complaints arising under state law, notice that the complainant must wait until 60 days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies.

8. For discrimination complaints arising under federal law such complaint may be made at any time to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

If an employee is disciplined as a result of the complaint, the decision shall simply state that effective action was taken and that the employee was informed of the Charter School's expectations. The report shall not give any further information as to the nature of the disciplinary action.

Appeals to the California Department of Education

If dissatisfied with the Charter School's decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the CDE within fifteen (15) days of receiving the Charter School's decision. When appealing to the CDE, the complainant must specify the basis for the appeal of the decision and whether the facts are incorrect

and/or the law has been misapplied. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the locally filed complaint and a copy of the Charter School's decision.

Upon notification by the CDE that the complainant has appealed the Charter School's decision, the CEO or designee shall forward the following documents to the CDE:

1. A copy of the original complaint.

2. A copy of the decision.

3. A summary of the nature and extent of the investigation conducted by the Charter School, if not covered by the decision.

4. A copy of the investigation file, including but not limited to all notes, interviews, and documents submitted by all parties and gathered by the investigator.

5. A report of any action taken to resolve the complaint.

6. A copy of the Charter School's complaint procedures.

7. Other relevant information requested by the CDE.

The CDE may directly intervene in the complaint without waiting for action by the Charter School when one of the conditions listed in Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 4650 exists, including cases in which the Charter School has not taken action within 60 days of the date the complaint was filed with the Charter School.

Civil Law Remedies

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside of the Charter School'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. For discrimination complaints arising under state law, however, a complainant must wait until 60 days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies. The moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief and is applicable only if the Charter School has appropriately, and in a timely manner, apprised the complainant of his/her right to file a complaint in accordance with 5 CCR 4622.

Uniform Complaint Procedure Form

Last Name: _____ First Name/MI: _____

Student Name (if applicable): _____ Grade: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Street Address/Apt. #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

School/Office of Alleged Violation: _____

For allegation(s) of noncompliance, please check the program or activity referred to in your complaint, if applicable:

- ☐ Adult Education
- ☐ Career/Technical Education
- ☐ Child Development Programs
- ☐ Consolidated Categorical Programs
- ☐ Migrant and Indian Education
- ☐ Nutrition Services
- ☐ Special Education

For allegation(s) of unlawful discrimination/harassment, please check the basis of the unlawful discrimination/harassment described in your complaint, if applicable:

- ☐ Age
- ☐ Ancestry
- ☐ Color
- ☐ Disability (Mental or Physical)
- ☐ Ethnic Group Identification
- ☐ Gender
- ☐ National Origin
- ☐ Race
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Sex (Actual or Perceived)
- ☐ Sexual Orientation (Actual or Perceived)
- ☐ Based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics

1. Please give facts about the complaint. Provide details such as the names of those involved, dates, whether witnesses were present, etc., that may be helpful to the complaint investigator.

_____

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2. Have you discussed your complaint or brought your complaint to any School personnel? If you have, to whom did you take the complaint, and what was the result?

_____

_____

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_____

_____

3. Please provide copies of any written documents that may be relevant or supportive of your complaint.

I have attached supporting documents. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail complaint and any relevant documents to:

Larissa Adam
Superintendent of Schools
Education for Change
333 Hegenberger Road, Suite 705
Oakland, CA 94621
ladam@efcps.net
510-759-1331

If the complaint is pertaining to the CEO, please send the complaint to the address above directed to the Chair of the Board, Eva Camp.

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education for change
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board Policy #: 19-0815
Adopted/Ratified: August 15, 2019
Revision Date: August 15, 2019; August 10, 2023; August 8, 2024

Classroom-Based Attendance Policy

It is the intent of the Governing Board ("Board") of the Education for Change Public Schools ("EFC" or the "Charter School") to ensure that students attend school every day on time. Every minute of a child's time at school is important. Being present for classroom instructional time is essential for students to reach their goals and achieve their dreams. Children who are absent for even one day, or who arrive late to school, miss valuable instruction time and can easily fall behind in school. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to an increased likelihood of poor academic performance, disengagement from school, and behavior problems. When a student is absent from school, it also results in a loss of funding for our schools. As a parent or

guardian, you are obligated to send your child to school and plan vacation trips and absences for personal reasons to correspond with school holidays so that the education process is not disrupted.

Definitions

- "*Tardy*": Students shall arrive at school and be in the classroom at the properly scheduled time.
  Students are considered tardy when they arrive after the second bell rings and within the first 30 minutes of class. After the first 30 minutes, the tardy will be recorded as an absence.
  The student MUST pick up an "admit to class" pass from the office before entering class; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence. If your child is arriving late to school for any reason, the parent or guardian must call the office before the student's arrival.

- "*Unexcused Absence*": A student shall have an unexcused absence if the student is absent or is tardy for more than thirty (30) minutes without a valid excuse.

- "*Truant":* A student shall be classified as a truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse three (3) full days in one school year, or if the student is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three (3) occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Any student who has once been reported as a truant and who is again absent from school without valid excuse one or more days, or tardy on one or more days, shall likewise be deemed a truant. Such students shall be reported to the Principal or designee.

- "*Habitual Truant*": A student shall be classified as a habitual truant if the student is reported for truancy three (3) or more times within the same school year. This generally occurs when the student is absent from school without a valid excuse for five (5) full days in one school year or if the student is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on five (5) occasions in one school year or any combination thereof.

- "*Chronic Truant*": A student shall be classified as a chronic truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten (10) percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date.

- *"School Attendance Review Team ("SART"):* The SART panel will be composed of the Principal (or designee), SART Coordinator, and other educators supporting the student, when available. The SART panel will discuss the absence problem with the student's parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and the student's family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.

    1. The SART panel shall direct the parent/guardian that no further unexcused absences or tardies should occur.

    2. The parent/guardian shall be required to sign a contract formalizing the agreement by the parent/guardian to improve the child's attendance. The contract will identify commitments from the school, parent/guardian, and the student, and may include one or more of the following:

        i. Parent/guardian to attend school with the child for a specified amount of time
        ii. After school tutoring program
        iii. Pull out counseling during the school day
        iv. Referral to outside and/or family counseling services
        v. Incentives for improved daily / weekly attendance
        vi. Loss of field trip privileges
        vii. Loss of school store privileges
        viii. Loss of school event privileges
        ix. Student retention

    3. Notice of actions recommended by the SART panel will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian**.**

- *"School Attendance Review Board ("SARB")"*: The SARB panel is composed of the Principal (or designee), SARB Coordinator, and other educators supporting the student, when available. A student will be referred to the SARB panel if, after two meetings with the SART (see truancy procedures below), truancy continues.

ABSENCES:

Reporting/Clearing an Absence:
When students who have been absent return to school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence in alignment with the following process:

- If your child will be absent, please phone the main office or stop by the main office to notify and give a reason for absence. Alternatively, a parent/guardian or parent representative may provide a signed, written note. This phone call and/or signed note should include the following information:
    - Name of student;
    - Name of parent/guardian or parent representative;
    - Name of verifying employee;
    - Date or dates of absence; and
    - Reason for absence.
- If your child is marked absent and the office has not received a phone call or notice of absence, you will receive a call from the school.
- Absences must be cleared within 3 days following the absence; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence. **When a student has had 6 cumulative absences in the school year for illness verified by the parent/guardian but without a healthcare provider's note, any further absences for illness must be verified by a healthcare provider.**

Charter Schools may visit the student's home to verify the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including the information outlined above.

Excused Absences:
The following conditions *shall* excuse a student from school attendance:

- Personal illness or injury (healthcare provider verification required after 6 total absences for this reason). **A Medical Verification note may also be required by the School Attendance Clerk or Charter School Principal after 3 consecutive days of absence due to illness.**
- Medical Appointments for students (including Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments)
    a. Students in grades 7-12, inclusive, may be excused from school for the purpose of obtaining confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent or guardian. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, Charter School staff shall not ask about the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
- Quarantine under the direction of local health officials.
- For the purpose of attending the funeral services or grieving the death of either a member of the pupil's immediate family, or of a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than five (5) days per incident. "Immediate family" means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.
- For any of the following reasons, if an immediate family member of the pupil, or a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, has died:

    - To access services from a victim services organization or agency.

    - To access grief support services.

    - To participate in safety planning or to take other actions to increase the safety of the pupil or an immediate family member of the pupil, or a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, including, but not limited to, temporary or permanent relocation.

Absences under this section shall not be excused for more than three (3) days per incident, unless extended on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the school administrator. “Immediate family” means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.

- Participation in religious instruction or exercises as follows:
    - The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four (4) school day per month.
- Attendance at the student’s naturalization ceremony to become a United States Citizen.
- For the purposes of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.
- Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent, including absences to care for a sick child. (The Charter School does not require a note from the doctor for this excusal.)
- To permit the pupil to spend time with an immediate family who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code Section 49701, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Charter School.
- For purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Election Code Section 12302.
- Authorized parental leave for a pregnant or parenting pupil for up to eight (8) weeks, which may be extended if deemed medically necessary by the student’s physician.
- In order to participate with a not-for-profit performing arts organization in a performance for a public-school pupil audience for a maximum of up to five days per school year provided the pupil’s parent or guardian provides a written note to the school authorities explaining the reason for the pupil’s absence.
- Authorized at the discretion of the School Principal, based on the facts of the pupil’s circumstances, are deemed to constitute a valid excuse.
- A pupil who holds a work permit to work for a period of not more than five consecutive days in the entertainment or allied industries shall be excused from school during the period that the pupil is working in the entertainment or allied industry for a maximum of up to five absences per school year subject to the requirements of Education Code Section 48225.5.
- For the purpose of participating in a cultural ceremony or event. "Cultural" for these purposes means relating to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people.
- For the purpose of a middle or high school pupil engaging in a civic or political event as indicated below, provided that the pupil notifies the school ahead of the absence. A “civic or political event” includes, but is not limited to, voting, poll working, strikes, public commenting, candidate speeches, political or civic forums, and town halls.
    - A middle school or high school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision is required to be excused for only one school day per school year.
    - A middle school or high school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision may be permitted additional excused absences in the discretion of a school administrator.
- For the following justifiable personal reasons, for a maximum of five (5) school days per school year, when the pupil’s absence is requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the Principal or designee pursuant to uniform standards established by the Board.
    - An appearance in court
    - Observance of a holiday or ceremony of the pupil’s religion
    - Attendance at religious retreats for no more than one (1) schoolday during a semester
    - Attendance at an employment conference
    - Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization

A student who is absent due to an excused absence will be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the excused absence that can be reasonably provided and will receive full credit upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time. The teacher of the class from which a student is absent shall determine which tests and assignments are reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the excused absence

Process for Addressing Truancy and Chronic Absences:

1. Daily attendance monitoring and phone calls are made home for any student who is marked absent or is tardy over 30 minutes.

2. Attendance is monitored by the Student Attendance Review Team ("SART") Coordinator and Principal weekly to review data and prioritize action steps

3. Upon reaching three (3) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes, or if a student is in danger of being chronically absent in a school year, the SART Coordinator will call home to the parent/guardian. The SART Coordinator will also send home "**Truancy Letter #1 – Truancy Classification Notice**" notifying the parent/guardian of the student's "Truant" status and scheduling a SART meeting. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Charter School. This letter shall also be accompanied by a copy of this Attendance Policy. This letter, and all subsequent letters, shall be sent by U.S. Mail and email, if an email address is provided. The SART Coordinator will call home to the parent/guardian to confirm receipt of this letter and schedule this meeting with the SART Panel.

4. Upon reaching six (6) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes, or if a student is in danger of being chronically absent in a school year, and regardless of if the parent/guardian attended the 1st SART meeting, the SART Coordinator will send home "**Truancy Letter #2 – Truancy Classification Notice and Invitation to SART Meeting**" notifying the parent/guardian of the student's "Truant" status and scheduling a 2nd SART meeting. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Charter School. This letter, and all subsequent letters, shall be sent by U.S. Mail and email, if an email address is provided. The SART Coordinator will call home to the parent/guardian to confirm receipt of this letter and schedule this meeting with the SART Panel. If the family cannot be reached by phone, email, or mail, a home visit will be conducted by the school.

5. Upon reaching nine (9) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes, or if a student is in danger of being chronically absent in a school year, and regardless of if the parent/guardian attended the 1st SART meeting or 2nd SART meeting, the SART Coordinator will send home "**Truancy Letter #3 – Truancy Classification Notice**" notifying the parent/guardian of the student's "Truant" status and the "**Referral to School Attendance Review Board (SARB) Notification**" notifying the parent/guardian of a referral to SARB. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Charter School. The SARB Coordinator will send a SARB Notification letter via email, U.S. Mail, and Certified Mail with return receipt requested. Parent/guardian attendance at the SARB Hearing is mandatory. A written SARB contract will be provided at the conclusion of the hearing.

6. For all communications set forth in this process, the Charter School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to update the Charter School with any new contact information.

7. If the student is absent ten (10) or more consecutive school days without a valid excuse and the parent/guardian cannot be reached at the number or address provided in the registration packet and does not otherwise respond to the Charter School's communication attempts, as set forth above, the student will be in violation of this Policy and the SARB contract (if any), and my be subject to disenrollment in compliance with the Involuntary Removal Process described below. Any documentation received by the Charter School regarding a student's enrollment and attendance at another public or private school (i.e., CALPADS report) shall be deemed evidence of a voluntary disenrollment and shall not trigger the Involuntary Removal Process below.

Referral to Appropriate Agencies or County District Attorney:
It is the Charter School's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student's success, and the Charter School will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family. For any unexcused absence, the Charter School may refer the family to appropriate school-based and/or social service agencies.

If a child's attendance does not improve after a SARB contract has been developed according to the procedures above, or if the parents fail to attend a required SART or SARB meeting after multiple attempts, the Charter School shall notify the Superintendent, who may refer the matter to the District's Attorney's office, which then may refer the matter for prosecution through the court system. Students 12 years of age and older may be referred to the juvenile court for adjudication.

Independent Study and Home Hospital:

Please contact your Charter School for more information regarding these programs.

Early Dismissal of Students:

- Students leaving before the end of the school day are dismissed through the school office. They are not allowed to wait in front of the building or to enter cars unless accompanied by a parent. These rules are necessary to ensure student safety. You must come to the office to sign your child out.
- Students in grades 7-12, inclusive, may be dismissed before the end of the school day for the purpose of obtaining confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent or guardian.
- Early dismissal will not be granted to any student 30 minutes prior to dismissal time unless a Doctor's note is provided to dismiss the child early.
- We will ask to see the identification of any person we do not know and will not release a child to a babysitter, or friend, or any other person who is not a parent or legal guardian, without prior authorization.

Process for Students Who Are Not in Attendance at the Beginning of the School Year

When a student is not in attendance on the first five (5) days of the school year, the Charter School will attempt to reach the student's parent/guardian on a daily basis for each of the first five (5) days to determine whether the student has an excused absence, consistent with the process outlined in this policy. If the student has a basis for an excused absence, the student's parent/guardian must notify the Charter School of the absence and provide documentation consistent with this policy. However, consistent with process below, students who are not in attendance by the sixth (6th) day of the school year due to an unexcused absence will be disenrolled from the Charter School roster after following the Involuntary Removal Process described below, as it will be assumed that the student has chosen another school option.

1. Students who are not in attendance on the first (1st) day of the school year will be contacted by phone to ensure their intent to enroll in the Charter School.

2. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll but have not attended by the third (3rd) day of the school year and do not have an excused absence will receive a letter indicating the student's risk of disenrollment.

3. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll but have not attended by the fifth (5th) day of the school year and do not have an excused absence will receive a phone call reiterating the content of the letter.

4. Students who are not in attendance by the sixth (6th) day of the school year and do not have an excused absence will receive an Involuntary Removal Notice and the CDE Enrollment Complaint Notice and Form. The Charter School will follow the Involuntary Removal Process described below, which includes an additional five (5) schooldays for the parent/guardian to respond to the Charter School and request a hearing before disenrollment.

5. The Charter School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet.

6. Within thirty (30) calendar days of disenrollment, the Charter School will send the student's last known school district of residence a letter notifying it of the student's failure to attend the Charter School.

7. Any documentation received by the Charter School regarding a student's enrollment and attendance at another public or private school (i.e., CALPADS report) shall be deemed evidence of a voluntary disenrollment and shall not trigger the Involuntary Removal Process below.

Involuntary Removal Process

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of the Charter School's intent to remove the student ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The Involuntary Removal Notice must be provided to the parent or guardian no less than five (5) school days before the effective date of the proposed disenrollment date.

The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian, if available, or if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include:

1. The charges against the student
2. An explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action
3. The CDE Enrollment Complaint Notice and Form

The hearing shall be consistent with the Charter School's expulsion procedures. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the Charter School's suspension and expulsion policy.

Upon a parent's or guardian's request for a hearing, the Charter School will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. The notice of hearing shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder and shall include a copy of the Charter School's expulsion hearing process.

If the parent/guardian is nonresponsive to the Involuntary Removal Notice, the student will be disenrolled as of the effective date set forth in the Involuntary Removal Notice. If parent/guardian requests a hearing and does not attend on the date scheduled for the hearing, the student will be disenrolled effective the date of the hearing.

If as a result of the hearing the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known school district of residence within thirty (30) calendar days.

A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent the Charter School from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy continue or reoccur.

Non-Discrimination:
These policies will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, pregnancy, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

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education for **change**

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy: **Technology Acceptable Use**

Purpose: To define appropriate guidelines for using technology to enhance learning

Revised 3.8.18

Introduction

Education for Change recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn and develop skills for work, life, and citizenship. To that end, we provide access to technologies for student and staff use.

This **Acceptable Use Policy** outlines the guidelines and behaviors that all users - staff, students, admin, family & community members - are expected to follow when using school technologies at school or at home and when using personally-owned devices on the school campus.

As with any educational endeavor, a strong partnership with families is essential to a successful experience. At the end of this document is a signature page for student and families, to verify that they have read and understood this policy.

- Technology use in the Education for Change network is governed by federal laws including:
  Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
  http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act
- Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)
  http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

The policies outlined in this document are intended to cover *all* available technologies provided by Education for Change, such as - but not limited to - computer labs, laptops, internet access, etc. All technologies provided by Education for Change are intended for education purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics of this document as well as the spirit of it: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know. Users of Education for Change technologies are expected to alert IT staff and/or school administration immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

Devices

Education for Change may provide users with devices, and schools may allow users access to devices outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network. Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution. Users should report any loss, damage, or malfunction to IT staff and/or school site administration immediately. Users may be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse. Schools may request that families pay a fee to recover or replace any lost, stolen, and/or damaged school hardware or software. Use of school-issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.

Students should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, and cell phones) turned off and put away during school hours—unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes. Because of security concerns, when personally-owned mobile devices are used on campus, they should not be used over the school network without express permission from IT staff.

Web Access

Education for Change provides its users with access to the Internet. That access will be restricted in compliance with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely. Education for Change does have a powerful web filter in place and makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online.

Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network or onto school resources without express permission from IT staff. Users may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos, with direct permission from teachers and/or administrators. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for education purposes.

Google Apps for Education

Education for Change takes advantage of the Google Apps for Education (GAFE) platform to provide students and teachers with tools to collaboratively create, edit, and share files for school-related projects and communicate via

teacher monitored discussion groups, blogs and wikis. These services are entirely online and available 24/7 from any Internet-connected computer. Availability and use will be restricted based on school policies.

GAFE is free of advertising, and all data stored in Google belongs to the individual user. For more information on the GAFE privacy policies, please see: https://edu.google.com/k-12-solutions/privacy-security

Personal Safety & Security
Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. If you believe a device you are using might have an issue (e.g. contains a computer virus), please alert IT. Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. If users see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult immediately.

Digital Citizenship
Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner. Users should also recognize that among the valuable content available online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. Users should also remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it becomes available for public use—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

Plagiarism
Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet or any other information source. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online or any other information source. Research conducted via the Internet or any other information source should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

Cyberbullying
Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, impersonating, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in disciplinary action and loss of privileges.
Education For Change believes in promoting learning and protect the safety and well being of all students. For further detail on possible consequences for cyberbullying, please refer to EFC's Pupil Suspensions and Expulsions Policy.

Examples of Acceptable Use
I will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher, admin, or IT if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational purposes.
- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

Limitation of Liability

Education for Change will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware. While Education for Change employs safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness. Education for Change will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including: Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges, notification to parents/legal guardians/supervisors, suspension from school and school-related activities, suspension from employment, and legal action and/or prosecution.
