



EMPOWERING MINDS.
TRANSFORMING FUTURES.

2026 – 2027

STUDENT AND FAMILY

HANDBOOK



BIENESTAR
(WELL-BEING)



CULTURE OF
BELONGING



COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP



AGENCY + SELF-
DETERMINATION



JOY

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Aspire Public Schools

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Welcome from Aspire Leadership	5
Aspire Vision, Mission, & Core Values	6
Aspire Public Schools' Non-Discrimination Statement	7
School Operations And Attendance	10
Enrollment	10
Class Placement	10
Foreign Exchange Students	10
Parent/Family Contact Information	10
Custody Orders, Power of Attorney or Caregiver Affidavits	10
Telephones and Calls to Students	11
Dress Code and Uniform Policy	11
Student Dismissal Responsibilities	12
Late Pick Up	12
Rideshare Guidance	13
Attendance	13
Excused Absences	14
Make-up Work	16
General Tardiness	17
Chronic Absenteeism	17
Withdrawal due to Excessive Unverified Absences (AWOL)	17
Truancy	18
Health and Welfare Policies	21
Medication and Immunization Requirements	21
Nutrition Services	24
Alternate Placement Options	26
Emergency Medical Care	27
Student Accident	27
Illness and Contagious or Infectious Disease	28
Suicide Prevention	28
Type 2 Diabetes	29
Type 1 Diabetes	31
Oral Health Assessment	33
Physical Examinations and Right to Refuse	34
Cancer Prevention Act	34
Dangers of Synthetic Drugs	34

Human Trafficking Prevention	35
Toileting Supports	35
Academics	38
Academic Integrity	38
Instructional Materials	38
Required Restitution	39
California Mathematics Placement Act	39
Testing	39
Family Life/HIV/AIDS Education	41
English Learners	42
Physical Education	46
Independent Study	46
Work Permit	47
Expanded Learning/Afterschool Programs	48
Elementary and Middle School Retention (Grades K-8)	48
Secondary Academics	51
Graduation Requirements	51
Diploma Pathways for Students With Disabilities	55
High School Commencement	57
Availability of Prospectus	59
College Preparatory Course Offerings / Concurrent Enrollment	60
Granting Credit from Non-Aspire Schools	62
Secondary Grading	62
Retention and Acceleration	65
Secondary Grading and Transcripts	67
Special Enrollment Circumstances: Over-Age Students	68
Student Rights And Responsibilities	70
Notice for Directory Information	70
Student Fees	74
Married, Pregnant, Or Parenting Teens	75
Professional Boundaries: Adult/Student Interaction Policy	76
Section 504 Plan	80
Special Education	80
Education of Homeless Children and Youth (McKinney-Vento Reauthorization of 2002)	82
Education of Foster and Mobile Children and Youth	88
Social-Emotional School Counseling Programs	97
Extra-curricular Involvement	98
Student Behavior and Discipline	100
Notice of Regulations	100

Positive Behavior Support Systems	100
Behavior Management Cycle	101
Alternative Means of Correction	101
Suspension and Expulsion Policy	103
Safety Policies	123
Closed Campus	123
Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying Policy	124
Transgender Harassment	142
Gender Diverse Student Supports	143
Visitor Policy	143
Searches	145
School Jurisdiction: Agency and Police Interrogation	145
Prohibited items and banned substances	146
Emergency Preparedness at Aspire Public Schools	149
Asbestos Management Plan	149
School Bus and Passenger Safety	150
Child Abuse Reporting	150
Safe Storage of Firearms	150
Aspire Family Engagement, Rights and Responsibilities	151
School-Home communication	151
Family Engagement Activities	152
Parents' Right to Know Teacher Qualifications	152
Volunteers	153
Aspire Student Data Privacy Policy	153
Public Meeting Notice	154
Know Your Rights	154
Collecting and Retaining Student Records	156
Inquiries About Social Security Numbers or Cards	157
Procedures Regarding Information Sharing	157
Responding to the Detention or Deportation of a Student's Family Member	158
Parental Notification of Immigration—Enforcement Actions	159
Responding to On-Campus Immigration Enforcement	159
Directory Information Policy	162
Inquiries Regarding Immigration Status, Citizenship Status, and National Origin Information	162
Monitoring and Receiving Visitors onto Campus	163
Family Concern Process	164
Athletics Annual Notices	165
Uniform Complaint Policy (UCP) Annual Notice	166
Family Concern Documentation Form	170

Welcome from Aspire Leadership

Dear Aspire Public Schools Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year!

There's nothing better than the excitement of seeing our scholars and teammates return, filling our schools with energy, curiosity, and community.

As your Executive Directors, we are honored to support your child's journey this year. Each of us leads a specific region—**Aspire Bay Area**, **Aspire Central Valley**, and **Aspire Los Angeles**—and we are united by a shared mission, vision, and set of core values (pg. 7) that guide our work across all Aspire schools.

Through rigorous, standards-based, and culturally responsive academic programs, we support our more than 15,000 scholars in developing the skills and mindset they need to succeed—creating opportunities for themselves, their families, and our communities.

Our schools are places where every student is known personally, and where our school teams commit to providing meaningful learning experiences, rigorous academics, real-world college and career pathway experiences, and extracurricular activities—all of which are part of what makes an Aspire education distinctive and essential to your student's growth.

This handbook is an important resource for understanding our policies, procedures, and expectations. We also encourage you to stay connected with your school, ask questions, and share your ideas—your partnership is essential to ensuring every scholar feels safe, supported, and valued.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools. Together, we are creating vibrant spaces where every student is inspired to thrive.

Here's to a successful year together!

Warmly,

Dr. Chris Carr

Executive Director, Aspire Los Angeles

Tony Solina

Executive Director, Aspire Central Valley

Jenna Ogier-Marangella

Superintendent & Acting Executive Director,
Aspire Bay Area

Aspire Vision, Mission, & Core Values

Our Vision, Mission, & Core Values

Our Vision

Aspire scholars are prepared and empowered to build a fulfilling and liberated future for themselves and their communities.



Our Mission



Provide a rigorous, joyful academic experience that cultivates our scholars' skills, talents, and gifts, such that they may pursue and persist in college or any post-secondary pathway that is authentic to their identities.



Promote inclusivity and disrupt systems that have historically oppressed marginalized communities, including Black, Latino/a/x, Indigenous, and People of Color.



Nurture our scholars' pride in their abilities, identities, and communities.

Our Core Values



BIENESTAR
(WELL-BEING)



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Aspire Public Schools’ Non-Discrimination Statement

Aspire Public Schools does not discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, immigration status, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code.

Aspire Public Schools does not discriminate against any person on the basis of sex or gender in the operation, conduct, or administration of community youth athletics programs, or in the allocation of parks and recreation facilities and resources or school and recreation facilities and resources that support or enable these programs.

Aspire Public Schools adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEIA”).

The Board of Directors of Aspire Public Schools shall not refuse to approve the use or prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction or any book or other resource in a school library on the basis that it includes a study of the role and contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities, or members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, or socioeconomic status groups.

Instruction and instructional materials shall be factually accurate and align with the adopted curriculum and standards and be consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility, rather than advocacy, personal opinion, bias, or partisanship. A teacher shall not give instruction and Charter School shall not sponsor any activity that promotes a discriminatory bias on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation, or pursuant to a characteristic listed in Section 220. Discriminatory bias in instruction and school-sponsored activities does not require a showing of direct harm to members of a protected group. Members of a protected group do not need to be present while the discriminatory bias is occurring for the act to be considered discriminatory bias. The Board shall take corrective action if it finds that instruction or school-sponsored activities are discriminatory.

The Board shall not adopt or approve the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, professional development materials, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use of such would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code section 220, or if the professional development materials or services promote, endorse, or otherwise support actions or the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum which would subject a pupil to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Section 220.

If the Board knows or has reason to know that materials were used in a classroom, that professional development materials or services were used, or that an action occurred that violated Education Code section 220, the Board shall investigate and remediate the action, which may include, but is not limited to, the implementation of restorative justice practices. Aspire Public Schools does not discourage students from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Charter School for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance, disability, neglect or delinquency, English proficiency, for being homeless or a foster/mobile youth, economic disadvantage, nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Aspire Public Schools shall not encourage a student currently attending any of its school sites to disenroll or transfer to another school based on any of the aforementioned reasons except in cases of expulsion and suspension or involuntary removal in accordance with Aspire Public Schools' charter and relevant policies.

Aspire Public Schools does not request nor require student records prior to a student's enrollment.

Aspire Public Schools shall provide a copy of the California Department of Education Complaint Notice and Form to any parent, guardian, or student over the age of 18 at the following times: (1) when a parent, guardian, or student over the age of 18 inquires about enrollment; (2) before conducting an enrollment lottery; and (3) before disenrollment of a student.

Aspire Public Schools is committed to providing an educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, or national origin); The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the IDEIA; and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA (mental or physical disability).

Aspire Public Schools prohibits sexual harassment, including cyber sexual bullying, and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religion, religious affiliation, creed, color, immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. Aspire Public Schools does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including discrimination, intimidation, or bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which Aspire Public Schools

does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender.

Pursuant to California law and the California Attorney General's guidance to K-12 schools in responding to immigration issues ("Guidance"), Charter School provides equal access to free public education, regardless of a student's or their parent's or guardian's immigration status or religious beliefs. The complete Guidance, including *Appendix G – Know Your Rights* can be reviewed via the following link:

<https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/bcj/school-guidance-model-k12.pdf>

Aspire Public Schools will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted. Inquiries, complaints, or grievances regarding harassment as described in this section, above, should be directed to the Charter School's Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") Compliance Officers:

Regional Director of Student Services, Bay Area Region
1009 66th Avenue
Oakland, CA 94621
510-567-9631
Pamela.Saberton@aspirepublicschools.org

Regional Director of Student Services, Central Valley Region
4202 Coronado Ave
Stockton, CA 95204
209-647-3047
Hugo.Vazquez@aspirepublicschools.org

Superintendent of Culturally Responsive Leadership Development, Los Angeles Region
5901 E. Slauson Avenue
Commerce, CA 90040
323-277-2901
Joel.Ramirez@aspirepublicschools.org

The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in the Aspire Public Schools programs or activities. Aspire Public Schools prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or who participates or refuses to participate in a complaint investigation.

School Operations And Attendance

Enrollment

Parents/guardians of all admitted students will receive a Registration Packet; enrollment is not considered complete until that Registration Packet has been completed and returned. Failure to return the Registration Packet by the specified deadline may result in rescission of the offer of admission, and the spot being given to the next student on the waitlist.

Before new students can be admitted, current families are asked to complete a Registration Packet, indicating whether they plan to return the following school year. Current families matriculating to the next grade at a different Aspire school, must complete an application for admission to that school.

Class Placement

Class placements are carefully considered and created at Aspire Public Schools, with a goal of balancing classes based on a variety of factors. Parents/guardians are welcome to submit a letter describing their child's learning styles and interest, however parent/guardian requests for specific teachers are not accepted.

Foreign Exchange Students

Aspire Public Schools does not accept or enroll foreign exchange students.

Parent/Family Contact Information

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the office in writing as soon as any change of contact information (telephone numbers, address, etc.) occurs. This information can be updated by parents at any point in the school year via the PowerSchool Parent Portal/App. This will ensure that all communication will be received without delay or interruption. Every student must have complete and up-to-date Emergency Contact Information, properly signed and on file in the school Office.

Custody Orders, Power of Attorney or Caregiver Affidavits

We recognize that all families are unique. If you have family situations that involve specific custody or other legal documents, please let the school know so that we can support your child and family.

Telephones and Calls to Students

The office telephone is for school business only. Students using the phones inappropriately will be subject to disciplinary action.

If it becomes necessary for you to reach your child during school hours, or if it becomes necessary for your child to reach you during school hours, all communications should be relayed through the main office. **Only emergency messages will be relayed.** As appropriate, the office staff and administration will determine if a message is an emergency.

Dress Code and Uniform Policy

Aspire Public Schools' Board of Directors (the "Board") believes that appropriate dress and personal grooming contribute to a safe and productive learning environment and supports Aspire's core values of Culture of Belonging and Well-being/Bienestar. At the same time, the Board recognizes that many school systems have implemented dress codes in ways that disproportionately impact students of color, and/or adopted outright discriminatory policies regarding student dress.

To ensure that Aspire schools promote scholar safety and learning, while maintaining our commitment to our equity beliefs, the Board has taken the following position on school uniform and personal grooming policies at Aspire Public Schools:

- All Aspire schools shall adopt school uniform policies requiring their scholars to wear clothing suitable for the activities in which they participate. Such policies shall prohibit scholars from wearing clothing that presents a health or safety hazard, or causes a substantial disruption to the school's educational program.
- School policies pertaining to scholar attire must be included in student handbooks, and all parents/guardians and scholars must be made aware of where to find them. Such policies may also be posted in school offices and classrooms, and may be periodically reviewed with all students as necessary.
- Scholars shall not be prohibited from dressing in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression or with their religious or cultural observance.
- Policies regarding scholar dress or grooming shall not be enforced in a manner that discriminates against a particular viewpoint or results in a disproportionate application of the dress code based on students' gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, household income, or body type or size.
- Such policies shall not discriminate against students based on hair texture or protective hairstyles, including, but not limited to, braids, locs, or twists.
- When practical, scholars shall not be directed to correct a dress code violation during instructional time or in front of other students.

The principal or designee of each school is authorized to enforce this policy and shall inform any scholar who does not reasonably conform to the dress code.

The Board grants schools the ability to institute a school-initiated dress code requiring students at the school to wear a school uniform.

School site administrators shall ensure that resources are identified to assist economically disadvantaged students in obtaining uniforms.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8048 Dress Code Policy

Student Dismissal Responsibilities

- At the end of the school day, students are dismissed in accordance with Aspire's end-of-school-day procedures. After dismissal, students are not permitted to remain on campus or loiter.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for making appropriate after-school transportation arrangements for their child, including picking up their child from school, allowing the child to walk home, or permitting the child to use public transportation.
- Parents/guardians are expected to discuss with their child what steps to take if the child feels unsafe or is approached or bothered while traveling home, including identifying safe places to seek help (such as a restaurant, business, or office).
- Once a student leaves campus in accordance with Aspire's end-of-school-day procedures, Aspire's supervision of and responsibility for the student ends, and responsibility for the student transitions to the parent/guardian.
- Aspire, its board members, employees, authorizer, volunteers, agents, and assignees are not responsible for accidents, injuries, or other harm that may occur off campus after a student has been dismissed.

Late Pick Up

Aspire's expectation is that scholars are picked up on time every day. Late pickups place an undue burden on our staff and can have an emotional and psychological impact on the student who is picked up late. That said, we understand that on rare occasions, family emergencies or other unplanned events might make a late pickup unavoidable.

Notifying the School

If a student must be picked up late due to an unforeseen emergency, parents/guardians must contact the school by phone with as much advance notice as possible to let the staff know that their child will be picked up late that day.

Late Pick-up

School staff will attempt to contact a child's parent/guardian if a child is left on campus after dismissal ends and the parent has not notified the school. Staff may also contact individuals listed on the child's emergency contact card.

Extremely Late Pick-up

If Aspire staff are unable to make contact with the parent/guardian or individuals on the emergency contact card despite repeated efforts, the Principal or another designated member of the School Leadership Team may contact the local authorities (i.e. police or local child protective service agencies). The Principal or designee may release the child to an authorized individual with the local Child Protective Services Agency or the police department.

Recurring Late Pick-up

If a child is picked up late on multiple occasions, school staff may request a meeting with the parent/guardian to determine the cause and implement supportive interventions.

Rideshare Guidance

Aspire generally recommends against using rideshare services such as Lyft and Uber for student drop-off and/or pick-up. Unaccompanied minors are currently prohibited from traveling in [Lyft](#) or [Uber](#) per those companies' own policies.

Aspire does not have a relationship or program with Lyft or Uber to transport students, and, unless stated expressly to the contrary, will not screen, monitor, or otherwise review or assess the safety of any ridesharing service or any ridesharing driver or vehicles.

If you allow and arrange for your child to be dropped off or picked up at school by a ridesharing service, you expressly acknowledge that the school and its employees have no responsibility for your decision and have no responsibility or liability to you or your child related to the ridesharing service.

Attendance

Aspire Public Schools (APS) believes that only through daily participation in classroom activities can students achieve success and progress in their academic and social growth.

Regular attendance is also preparation for entry into the world of employment. All students and parents are accountable for regular class attendance and daily assignments.

Daily Attendance and Participation in Activities

Students must attend school on the day of a school activity or event in order to participate. Students who do not attend school the day of a school activity or event, even if the event is in the evening, may be denied the privilege of attending school activities or events on that date.

Excused Absences

A student not present in class for any reason is considered absent. Students must be excused from compulsory attendance if they are to miss school; a student will be excused for an absence if (1) the reason for the absence is listed below **and** (2) the absence **is communicated to the school within 5 days** of the absence: [Education Code §§ 48205(a), 48205(c)]

1. Due to the pupil's illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health.
2. Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
3. For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered.
 - 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.
4. For the purpose of attending the funeral services or grieving the death of 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 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.
5. 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:
 - a. To access services from a victim services organization or agency.
 - b. To access grief support services.

- c. 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. "Immediate family" means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.

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.

- 6. For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.
- 7. Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent. (The school does not require a note from the doctor for this excusal).
- 8. For justifiable personal reasons for a maximum of five (5) school days per school year (unless otherwise indicated), including, but not limited to, an appearance in court, observance of a holiday or ceremony of the pupil's religion, attendance at religious retreats (for purposes of this section, attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed one school day per semester), attendance at an employment conference, or attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization when the student's absence has been requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designee.
- 9. For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Section 12302 of the Elections Code.
- 10. For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Section 49701, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment. Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Charter School Principal.
- 11. For the purposes of attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a US Citizen.
- 12. Authorized parental leave for a pregnant or parenting student for up to eight (8) weeks, which may be extended if deemed medically necessary by the student's physician.
- 13. Due to the student's participation in military entrance processing.

14. 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. -
15. Authorization at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee, based on the facts of the student's circumstances, are deemed to constitute a valid excuse.
16. A student who holds a work permit to work for a period of not more than five (5) consecutive days in the entertainment or allied industries shall be excused from school during the period that the student is working in the entertainment or allied industry for a maximum of up to five (5) absences per school year subject to the requirements of Education Code section 48225.5.
17. In order to participate with a not-for-profit performing arts organization in a performance for a public-school student audience for a maximum of up to five (5) days per school year provided the student's parent or guardian provides a written note to the school authorities explaining the reason for the student's absence.
18. 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. A middle school or high school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision is required to be excused for only one school day-long absence per school year.
 - b. 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.

Make-up Work

Students who are absent from school for any of the excused reasons stated under "Excused Absences," as well as suspension, shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests. Upon satisfactory completion, the student shall be given full credit for satisfactory completion within a reasonable time. Local school procedures will guide, pursuant to the regulations of APS, what assignments the student shall make-up and in what period of time the student shall complete such assignments. The tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the absence

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7013 Make-up Work

General Tardiness

Any student who arrives at school after the opening-school bell has rung or the official start of the school day, yet less than 30 minutes into the instructional school day, will be considered “tardy.” Once the school day has begun, students who are not present and actively engaged in the learning activities at the start of a class period, and/or when the opening class bell has rung are also considered “tardy.”

Any student who arrives 30 minutes or more after the official start of the school day without a valid excuse will be considered a truant event. Individual schools shall create and publish procedures to govern the admission of students who are tardy to school, including, but not limited to those described in the following section.

Chronic Absenteeism

Any student who has been absent from school (excused or unexcused) for 10% or more of the total days of attendance for that school year may be required by the school Principal to provide an official medical or judicial verification in order to excuse an absence. In lieu of medical verification, a school principal may also allow a student to be brought to school for a school official to determine if a student is too ill to attend. Students with such an excess of absences will be notified in writing of the official verification requirement.

Any teacher may change the grade of a student who has accrued 10 unexcused absences per semester to a failing grade for their courses at the marking period with multiple documented outreach to the student and family regarding their failing grade(grade of “F” or “NC”).

Students with excessive absences may be referred to the school’s Truancy Abatement Program as a way to remediate the excessive absences. The abatement program may include weekly study hall.

Withdrawal due to Excessive Unverified Absences (AWOL)¹

Students not in attendance due to unexcused absences for at least ten (10) consecutive days with no prior notice or without a response to calls, certified letters, or the truancy process may be disenrolled from the school, in accordance with the School’s involuntary removal procedures. Aspire shall create a process for communication with families who meet the above seat abandonment criteria.

Students disenrolled for the above reason may be placed on the waiting list and readmitted on a space available basis.

¹ Not applicable to Foster Youth as defined by EC 48853.5 (a) and Homeless Youth as defined by Section 11434a(2) of Title 42 of the United States Code.

Truancy

A student is considered truant when the student is:

- absent from school without a valid excuse three school days in one school year,
- tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or
- any combination thereof.

Any absence not cleared within five (5) days will be marked as “unexcused”. To avoid truancy, please always inform the office if your child’s absence or tardy is for an excusable reason as defined above.

Notifications of Truancy

If your child is classified as truant pursuant to Aspire’s policy, you will receive the first notification once your child has accrued three (3) truancy events. Please reach out to the school on this first notification, as it will allow the school to work with you in support of your child’s attendance. You will receive additional notifications after six and then again after seven total truancy events.

First Notification of Truancy or Excessive Absences

- Letter #1 sent via email, regular mail, or delivered in person when a student has accrued **three (3) truancy events**.

Student may be assigned, with or without parent/guardian consent, to the school’s truancy abatement program, including, but not limited to, Attendance Recovery program

Second Notification of Truancy or Excessive Absences

- Letter #2 sent via email, regular mail, or delivered in person.
- A student must be notified a **second time** once they have accrued at least **six (6) truancy events**.
- Student may be assigned, with or without parent/guardian consent, to the school’s truancy abatement program.

Notification of Determination of Habitual Truancy and SART

Once your child has received a third notification of truancy after accruing a seventh truancy event, your child is classified as a habitual truant. At this point, the school is required to hold a School Attendance Review Team (SART) meeting with you. At that meeting an attendance contract, including supports, will be discussed and signed and your child will be assigned to the school’s truancy abatement program.

Notification of Determination as a Habitual Truant

- Letter #3 sent via email, regular mail, or delivered in person. In addition, a parent/guardian may be asked to sign the letter in person.
- A student must be notified a **third time** once they have accrued a **seventh (7) truancy event**. Student is identified as a **Habitual Truant**.
 - A SART meeting held with student, parent/guardian, teacher advisor, and Principal. If not already on file, an Attendance Contract must be signed at this meeting. If the parent/guardian chooses not to attend, the SART will convene, develop the contract, and send a written copy to the parent/guardian and student.
 - Student will be assigned, with or without parent/guardian consent, to the school's truancy abatement program.

The school's SARB will consist of:

- The School Administrator;
- Other relevant members, such as another Aspire administrator, an Aspire Home and/or Regional Office representative, other teachers or staff as appropriate, counselor, etc.

Notification of Continued Truancy and Referral to Aspire SARB

Once a student reaches an 8th truancy event, you will receive notification that the student has been referred to the Aspire Student Attendance Review Board process, which is a final attempt to help resolve truancy issues before more stringent consequences are considered, including, but not limited to a recommendation for involuntary removal.

Notification of Continued Truancy—Referral to Aspire SARB

- Letter #4 sent regular and registered delivery confirmation mail from the Regional Office. In addition, a parent may be asked to sign the letter in person.
- A student must be notified a **fourth time** once they have reached an **eightth (8) truancy event**.
- Principal refers student to Aspire SARB with required attachments.
- Student will be assigned, with or without parent/guardian consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including, but not limited to, Attendance Recovery Program.
- If the parent fails to respond within 10 days or attend the scheduled conference, the matter may be referred to the District Attorney's office and other appropriate actions.

The APS SARB will consist of:

- The school principal or their administrative designee;

- A teacher from the school in which the student is enrolled;
- The Executive Director's designee from the Aspire Home Office; and
- Other relevant members, such as local school district representative, District Attorney representative, special education representative, counselor, local police official, etc.

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 intent to remove the student no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The written notice 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. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action. 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 parent/guardian 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 the 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) 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 re-occur.

Health and Welfare Policies

Medication and Immunization Requirements

Students who do not comply with the vaccination requirements shall be excluded from school, meaning, ‘No shots, no school’ . State law requires that for unconditional admission to school, all students under 18 shall be fully immunized according to the requirements of the California Department of Public Health. All entering students must be up-to-date with immunizations according to Aspire policy and the schedule provided by the California Department of Public Health. Exemptions based on personal beliefs, including religious beliefs, are no longer an option for the vaccines that are currently required for entry into school in California. Students may be exempted from this requirement for medical reasons only. As of January 2021, all medical exemptions must be issued through the California Immunization Registry- Medical Exemption (CAIR-ME) website by physicians licensed in California (SB 276 and SB 714). Schools will only accept medical exemptions issued through the CAIR-ME system. In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the child has not been immunized, the child will be excluded from school for the period of communicability.

Students who do not comply with the requirements shall be excluded from school. The immunization requirements do not prohibit pupils from accessing special education and related services required by their individualized education programs. If you have questions about your child’s immunization record and/or admission status, please contact your child’s school.

Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code and the California Code of Regulations, children must provide proof of having received required immunizations (shots) before they can attend school unless they meet the requirements for an exemption. Immunization records are required for all incoming students. Verification of immunizations will be completed with written medical records from the child’s doctor or immunization clinic. To ensure a safe learning environment for all students, Aspire Public Schools follows and abides by the health standards set forth by the state of California. The immunization status of all students will be reviewed periodically. Those students who are not in compliance with the State requirements must be excluded from attendance until the requirements are met. Students who have been exposed to a communicable disease for which they have not been immunized may be excluded from school at the discretion of Aspire Public Schools

These required immunizations include:

Child’s Grade	List of immunizations required to attend school
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TK/K-12 Admission	• Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (DTaP) - Five (5) doses • Polio - Four (4) doses • Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) - Two (2) doses • Hepatitis B (Hep B) - Three (3) doses • Varicella (chickenpox) – Two (2) doses NOTE: 4 doses of DtaP OK if one was given on or after 4th birthday. 3 doses of DtaP OK if at least one dose of Tdap, DTaP, or DTP one was given on or after 7th birthday. For 7th–12th graders, at least one or two doses of Td vaccine given on or after the seventh birthday count towards the requirement for DTaP. Three doses of Polio are allowed if one was given on or after fourth birthday. Oral polio vaccine [OPV] doses given on or after April 1, 2016, do not count MMR doses must be given on or after the first birthday. Two doses of measles, two doses of mumps, and one dose of rubella vaccine meet the requirement, separately or combined. Combination vaccines (e.g., MMRV) meet the requirements for individual component vaccines.
Entering 7th Grade	• Tetanus, reduced Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis (Tdap) - One (1) dose NOTE: In order to begin 7th grade, students who had a valid personal belief exemption on file with a public or private elementary or secondary school in California before January 1, 2016 must meet the requirements listed for grades K-12 as well as requirements for 7th grade advancement (i.e., polio, MMR, varicella and primary series for diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis). At least one dose of pertussis-containing vaccine is required on or after the 7th birthday.

Medication

If your child needs to take any prescription medications, you must have:

1. a doctor's written and signed note (Parent/Physician Statement) detailing the method, amount, and time schedules for such medication, **and**
2. a written and signed note (Parent/Physician Statement) from the parent indicating the parent's desire that the school assist the student as set forth in the physician's statement.
3. All medication must be in their original containers.
4. A separate form is required for each medication.
5. Authorized changes to medication should be in writing from the health care provider.
6. The Parent/Guardian & Healthcare Provider Request for Medication Administration Form must be updated each school year.

For safety reasons, children are not allowed to have medicine in their classrooms, lunchboxes, or in their pockets. All medication must be dispensed through the office. You may also come and administer medication to your child, if needed. From time to time some parents request that their child be able to take Tylenol or Advil at school. This is permissible only with written parent and doctor permission (Parent/Physician Statement) and the medication must be in its original container [

Emergency medicine such as an EpiPen or inhaler may be carried by the student with both a written statement from the physician and surgeon or physician assistant detailing the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken, and confirming that the pupil is able to self-administer auto-injectable epinephrine or inhaled asthma medication, and a written statement from the parent/guardian consenting to the self-administration, providing a release for the designated school personnel to consult with the health care provider of the pupil regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and releasing Aspire and school personnel from civil liability if the self-administering pupil suffers an adverse reaction as a result of self-administering medication .

REFERENCE: Board Policy 6006 Administering Medications and Monitoring Health Conditions

COVID-19 Vaccine

We recommend and encourage students to get the COVID-19 vaccine and boosters as they become available to their age group.

Nutrition Services

Aspire Public Schools participates in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In addition, many of our schools participate in the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which provides snack and supper meals to students enrolled in after school programming.

Universal Meals Program

All Aspire schools will make available a nutritionally adequate breakfast and a nutritionally adequate lunch free of charge and with adequate time to eat during each school day to any student who requests a meal without consideration of the student's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one (1) free breakfast meal and one (1) free lunch meal during each school day. For LCFF funding purposes, families will be asked to complete an alternative income form. The completion of these forms may bring significant additional funding for the school, and qualify students for individual benefits such as college application waivers, AP testing fee waivers and Pandemic-Electronic Benefits (P-EBT) benefits. Income eligibility guidelines for federally funded free and reduced-price meals are available at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/>

Based on a parent/guardian's annual earnings, a parent/guardian may be eligible to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit from the Federal Government (Federal EITC). The Federal EITC is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. The Federal EITC has no effect on certain welfare benefits. In most cases, Federal EITC payments will not be used to determine eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, food stamps, low-income housing, or most Temporary Assistance For Needy Families payments. Even if you a parent/guardian does not owe federal taxes, they must file a federal tax return to receive the Federal EITC. Be sure to fill out the Federal EITC form in the Federal Income Tax Return Booklet. For information regarding your eligibility to receive the Federal EITC, including information on how to obtain the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Notice 797 or any other necessary forms and instructions, contact the IRS by calling 1-800-829-3676 or through its website at www.irs.gov.

A parent/guardian may also be eligible to receive the California Earned Income Tax Credit (California EITC) starting with the calendar year 2015 tax year. The California EITC is a refundable state income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. The California EITC is treated in the same manner as the Federal EITC and generally will not be used to determine eligibility for welfare benefits under California law. To claim the California EITC, even if you do not owe California taxes, you must file a California income tax return and complete and attach the California EITC Form (FTB 3514). For information on the availability of the credit eligibility requirements and how to obtain the necessary California forms and get help filing, contact the Franchise Tax Board at 1-800-852-5711 or through its website at www.ftb.ca.gov.

Dietary modifications can be made for students who meet the criteria and have a completed medical statement submitted for evaluation. Should your child require a special diet, please request a Medical Statement to Request Special Diet form at the school's main office.

Aspire Public Schools allows students, teachers, and staff to bring and carry water bottles. Water bottles may be excluded from libraries, computer labs, science labs, and other places where it is deemed dangerous to have drinking water. Aspire Public Schools may develop additional policies regarding the types of water bottles that may be carried. Aspire Public Schools adheres to all applicable requirements regarding making potable water available to students during meal service. Aspire Public Schools shall encourage water consumption through promotional and educational activities and signage that focus on the benefits of drinking water and highlight any water bottle filling stations that are located on campus.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, Charter School is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
email:
Program.Intake@usda.gov

Charter School is an equal opportunity provider.

A copy of the complete Policy, which includes the Charter School's meal charge policy, is available upon request at the main office.

Student Wellness Policy: All stakeholders are able to participate in the development, review, update and implementation of the local School Wellness Policy. A copy of our Student Wellness Policy may be found on the Aspire Public Schools website at www.aspirepublicschools.org

REFERENCE: Board Policy 5001 Free and Reduced Price Meals

Alternate Placement Options

Should your child experience an illness or medical emergency that prohibits them from physically attending school, the following alternate placement options are available for consideration. Please reach out to your school's main office if you would like to discuss one of the options below for your student.

- **Home Hospital Instruction** - The purpose of Home and Hospital Instruction (HHI) is to provide instruction to a student with a *temporary** disability in the student's home or in a hospital or other residential health facility, excluding state hospitals. The temporary disability must make attendance at Aspire impossible or inadvisable. Home & Hospital Instruction for a student with a temporary disability and/or illness is also available through the district of residence where the student is hospitalized or in the home recuperating and should the student choose that option they may remain dually enrolled in Aspire during that time to maintain their enrollment with Aspire.
 - **Temporary disability means a physical, mental, or emotional disability incurred while a student is enrolled in regular day classes and after which a student can reasonably be expected to return to regular day classes without special interventions. "Individual instruction" means instruction provided to a student in a hospital or other residential health facility (excluding instruction in state hospitals), in the student's home, or under other circumstances prescribed by the State Board of Education. Source: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/hh/>*
- **Homebound Instruction** - This is a placement that is solely available to students with an IEP or 504 plan. Homebound Instruction or Instruction in the Home and is considered a placement on the continuum of services for special education students. If a student with an IEP/504 is deemed unable to access their educational program due to a temporary or ongoing medical disability, the school is obligated to continue to provide a program of special education and related services to the student during that time. Home Instruction is also an educational program option available to students with disabilities who are hospitalized for medical or psychiatric purposes or who cannot be educated in the public school setting due to significant health or mental health needs which may not be temporary in nature.

Emergency Medical Care

All students must have an emergency information card filled out and signed by the parent or guardian at the beginning of each school year. This card delineates what care the parent desires for their child in the event of an emergency, along with noting the current medical and emergency information. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that all emergency contact, medical, and related information remains accurate and up to date throughout the school year.

Student Accident

Aspire is committed to the safety of all students while they are in school. However, student accidents may occur during the school day. These situations are unfortunate and we try our best to support the student and family when these accidents occur.

Student accidents are documented and reported to our insurance. The Charter School will also provide families with a claim form for accidents that are considered “severe”. If your child has an accident at school that you consider severe and would like to submit a claim, please contact your school’s Business Manager as soon as possible. Note that submission of a claim does not guarantee that it will be approved or that any expenses will be reimbursed. In some cases, you may be required to use your own insurance first (*i.e.*, primary insurance), if applicable, before Aspire’s carrier will provide coverage.

All required documentation must be submitted by the parent/guardian in order to process a claim.

Steps to submit a student accident claim:

1. School fills out top portion of claim form and gives it to the parent/guardian
2. Parent/guardian is responsible for completing the remainder of the form, then submit the claim to NAHGA Claim Services, P.O. Box 189, Bridgton, ME 04009; or Email: claims@nahga.com
3. Parent compiles and submits the below documentation to NAHGA Claim Services :
 - a. Itemized bill
 - b. Explanation of Benefits from your insurance
 - c. or Statement of No Insurance
4. Parent submits completed claim form along with supporting documents to insurance (school can assist if needed/requested)

*After submission, the processing time of a claim is approximately 5-10 business days. To check the status of a claim, email or call NAHGA Claim Services; claims@nahga.com, 800-952-4320

Illness and Contagious or Infectious Disease

To protect the health and safety of all, students who are ill or who may have a contagious or infectious disease should remain at home and should not attend school until they are symptom-free, fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication, or cleared to return in accordance with applicable public health guidance. A student may be sent home if they are exhibiting the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 100°F or higher
2. Diarrhea, vomiting or nausea
3. Severe sore throat
4. Eyes that are red, swollen, crusting or draining (conjunctivitis)
5. Untreated, draining ears or earache

Students who have been ill with a fever need to be fever-free, without the use of medication, for 24 hours before returning to school. Students experiencing diarrhea or severe nausea and/or vomiting must be kept at home for 24 hours after they no longer have symptoms. Protocols for illness and outbreaks are based on the directions from the Public Health Department and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A student suspected of having a communicable disease will be sent home and parents will be asked to consult a physician and provide a written note from the physician indicating that the student may return to school.

Suicide Prevention

Aspire recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. As such, Aspire's Board of Directors has adopted a Suicide Prevention Policy, which is implemented in all Aspire schools. Moreover, to attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, Aspire has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures, which are outlined in Aspire Public Schools' Suicide Prevention Policy .

If you are aware of someone who is struggling with, or considering suicide, please immediately contact your local community resources such as a local hospital, law enforcement, or community-based organizations. Additionally, you can call the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8022 Suicide Prevention

Type 2 Diabetes

Pursuant to California Education Code § 49452.7, the below type 2 diabetes information is required to be shared to parents and guardians of incoming seventh grade students:

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes in adults.

- Until a few years ago, type 2 diabetes was rare in children, but it is becoming more common, especially for overweight teens.
- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in three American children born after 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in his or her lifetime.

Type 2 diabetes affects the way the body is able to use sugar (glucose) for energy.

- The body turns the carbohydrates in food into glucose, the basic fuel for the body's cells.
- The pancreas makes insulin, a hormone that moves glucose from the blood to the cells.
- In type 2 diabetes, the body's cells resist the effects of insulin, and blood glucose levels rise.
- Over time, glucose reaches dangerously high levels in the blood, which is called hyperglycemia.
- Hyperglycemia can lead to health problems like heart disease, blindness, and kidney failure.

Risk Factors Associated with Type 2 Diabetes

It is recommended that students displaying or possibly experiencing the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes be screened (tested) for the disease.

Risk Factors

Researchers do not completely understand why some people develop type 2 diabetes and others do not; however, the following risk factors are associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes in children:

- Being overweight. The single greatest risk factor for type 2 diabetes in children is excess weight. In the U.S., almost one out of every five children is overweight. The chances are more than double that an overweight child will develop diabetes.
- Family history of diabetes. Many affected children and youth have at least one parent with diabetes or have a significant family history of the disease.
- Inactivity. Being inactive further reduces the body's ability to respond to insulin.

- Specific racial/ethnic groups. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, or Asian/Pacific Islanders are more prone than other ethnic groups to develop type 2 diabetes.
- Puberty. Young people in puberty are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than younger children, probably because of normal rises in hormone levels that can cause insulin resistance during this stage of rapid growth and physical development.

Warning Signs and Symptoms Associated with Type 2 Diabetes

Warning signs and symptoms of type 2 diabetes in children develop slowly, and initially there may be no symptoms. However, not everyone with insulin resistance or type 2 diabetes develops these warning signs, and not everyone who has these symptoms necessarily has type 2 diabetes.

- Increased hunger, even after eating
- Unexplained weight loss
- Increased thirst, dry mouth, and frequent urination
- Feeling very tired
- Blurred vision
- Slow healing of sores or cuts
- Dark velvety or ridged patches of skin, especially on the back of the neck or under the arms
- Irregular periods, no periods, and/or excess facial and body hair growth in girls
- High blood pressure or abnormal blood fats levels

Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Methods and Treatments

Healthy lifestyle choices can help prevent and treat type 2 diabetes. Even with a family history of diabetes, eating healthy foods in the correct amounts and exercising regularly can help children achieve or maintain a normal weight and normal blood glucose levels.

- Eat healthy foods. Make wise food choices. Eat foods low in fat and calories.
- Get more physical activity. Increase physical activity to at least 60 minutes every day.
- Take medication. If diet and exercise are not enough to control the disease, it may be necessary to treat type 2 diabetes with medication.

The first step in treating type 2 diabetes is to visit a doctor. A doctor can determine if a child is overweight based on the child's age, weight, and height. A doctor can also request

tests of a child's blood glucose to see if the child has diabetes or pre-diabetes (a condition which may lead to type 2 diabetes).

Types of Diabetes Screening Tests That Are Available

- Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test. A blood test measures the average blood sugar level over two to three months. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- Random (non-fasting) blood sugar test. A blood sample is taken at a random time. A random blood sugar level of 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or higher suggests diabetes. This test must be confirmed with a fasting blood glucose test.
- Fasting blood sugar test. A blood sample is taken after an overnight fast. A fasting blood sugar level less than 100 mg/dL is normal. A level of 100 to 125 mg/dL is considered pre-diabetes. A level of 126 mg/dL or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- Oral glucose tolerance test. A test measuring the fasting blood sugar level after an overnight fast with periodic testing for the next several hours after drinking a sugary liquid. A reading of more than 200 mg/dL after two hours indicates diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes in children is a preventable/treatable disease and the guidance provided in this information sheet is intended to raise awareness about this disease. Contact your student's school nurse, school administrator, or health care provider if you have questions.

Type 1 Diabetes

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 49452.6, this type 1 diabetes information is for schools to provide to parents and guardians of incoming elementary school students beginning January 1, 2023.

Type 1 diabetes in children is an autoimmune disease that can be fatal if untreated, and the guidance provided in this information sheet is intended to raise awareness about this disease.

Description

Type 1 diabetes usually develops in children and young adults but can occur at any age

- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cases of type 1 diabetes in youth increased nationally from 187,000 in 2018 to 244,000 in 2019, representing an increase of 25 per 10,000 youths to 35 per 10,000 youths, respectively.
- The peak age of diagnosis of type 1 diabetes is 13-14 years, but diagnosis can also occur much earlier or later in life.

Type 1 diabetes affects insulin production

- As a normal function, the body turns the carbohydrates in food into glucose (blood sugar), the basic fuel for the body's cells.
- The pancreas makes insulin, a hormone that moves glucose from the blood into the cells.
- In type 1 diabetes, the body's pancreas stops making insulin, and blood glucose levels rise.
- Over time, glucose can reach dangerously high levels in the blood, which is called hyperglycemia.
- Untreated hyperglycemia can result in diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), which is a life-threatening complication of diabetes.

Risk Factors Associated with Type 1 Diabetes

It is recommended that students displaying warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes, which are described below, should be screened (tested) for the disease by their health care provider.

Risk Factors

Researchers do not completely understand why some people develop type 1 diabetes and others do not; however, having a family history of type 1 diabetes can increase the likelihood of developing type 1 diabetes. Other factors may play a role in developing type 1 diabetes, including environmental triggers such as viruses. Type 1 diabetes is not caused by diet or lifestyle choices.

Warning Signs and Symptoms Associated with Type 1 Diabetes and Diabetic Ketoacidosis

Warning signs and symptoms of type 1 diabetes in children develop quickly, in a few weeks or months, and can be severe. If your child displays the warning signs below, contact your child's primary health care provider or pediatrician for a consultation to determine if screening your child for type 1 diabetes is appropriate:

- Increased thirst
- Increased urination, including bed-wetting after toilet training
- Increased hunger, even after eating
- Unexplained weight loss
- Feeling very tired
- Blurred vision
- Very dry skin
- Slow healing of sores or cuts
- Moodiness, restlessness, irritability, or behavior changes

DKA is a complication of untreated type 1 diabetes. DKA is a medical emergency. Symptoms include:

- Fruity breath
- Dry/flushed skin
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pains
- Trouble breathing
- Confusion

Types of Diabetes Screening Tests That Are Available

- **Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test.** A blood test measures the average blood sugar level over two to three months. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- **Random (non-fasting) blood sugar test.** A blood sample is taken any time without fasting. A random blood sugar level of 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or higher suggests diabetes.
- **Fasting blood sugar test.** A blood sample is taken after an overnight fast. A level of 126 mg/dL or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- **Oral glucose tolerance test.** A test measuring the fasting blood sugar level after an overnight fast with periodic testing for the next several hours after drinking a sugary liquid. A reading of more than 200 mg/dL after two hours indicates diabetes.

Type 1 Diabetes Treatments

There are no known ways to prevent type 1 diabetes. Once type 1 diabetes develops, medication is the only treatment. If your child is diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, their health care provider will be able to help develop a treatment plan. Your child's health care provider may refer your child to an endocrinologist, a doctor specializing in the endocrine system and its disorders, such as diabetes.

Contact your student's school nurse, school administrator, or health care provider if you have questions.

Oral Health Assessment

Students enrolled in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten in a public school or while enrolled in first grade if the student was not previously enrolled in kindergarten in a public school are required to present proof of having received an oral health assessment completed by a dental professional that was performed within 12 months before the

student's initial enrollment in a public school. Please contact your school's main office if you have questions about this requirement.

Physical Examinations and Right to Refuse

A parent/guardian having control or charge of any child enrolled in the school may file annually with the Principal a written and signed statement stating that the parent/guardian will not consent to a physical examination of the child. Thereupon the child shall be exempt from any physical examination, but whenever there is a good reason to believe that the child is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, the child shall be sent home and shall not be permitted to return until the school authorities are satisfied that any contagious or infectious disease does not exist.

Cancer Prevention Act

Students in the state are advised to adhere to current immunization guidelines, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Family Physicians, regarding full human papillomavirus (HPV) immunization before admission or advancement to the eighth grade level of any private or public elementary or secondary school.

Because the vaccine is more effective when given at younger ages, two doses of HPV vaccine are recommended for all kids between the ages of 9 to 12 years, and the second dose should be given before the start of 8th grade. Kids who wait until later to get their first dose of HPV vaccine may need three doses.

HPV vaccination can prevent over 90 percent of cancers caused by HPV. HPV vaccines are very safe, and scientific research shows that the benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh the potential risks.

Dangers of Synthetic Drugs

The illicit use and abuse of synthetic drugs represents an emerging and ongoing public health threat in California. The fentanyl crisis specifically, has impacted communities across the state, leading to a sharp increase in fentanyl poisonings and deaths in recent years.

This notice aims to address the crisis with a preventative approach ensuring students and families are educated on the deadly consequences of recreational drug use.

A synthetic drug is a drug with properties and effects similar to a known hallucinogen or narcotic but having a slightly altered chemical structure, especially such a drug created in order to evade existing restrictions against illegal substances.

Synthetic drugs include but are not limited to synthetic cannabinoids (“synthetic marijuana,” “Spice,” “K2”), methamphetamines, bath salts, and fentanyl.

The California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) has expounded on the extreme danger of drugs laced with fentanyl. Illicit fentanyl can be added to other drugs to make them cheaper, more powerful, and more addictive. Illicit fentanyl has been found in many drugs, including heroin, methamphetamine, counterfeit pills, and cocaine. Fentanyl mixed with any drug increases the likelihood of a fatal overdose. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to tell if drugs have been laced with fentanyl without additional testing, because fentanyl cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted when used as a lacing agent. Social media platforms may be used as a way to market and sell synthetic drugs, such as fentanyl.

Human Trafficking Prevention

California has the highest number of incidents of human trafficking in the U.S., and all students may be vulnerable. The Charter School believes it is a priority to inform our students about (1) the prevalence, nature of and strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely seek assistance, and (2) how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.

In accordance with the California Healthy Youth Act, the Charter School will provide age-appropriate instruction on the prevention of human trafficking, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment. You have the right to excuse your child from all or part of the instruction on the prevention of human trafficking. An opt-out form is available at the main office for your convenience. Your consent for this instruction is NOT required. If we do not receive a written request to excuse your child, your child will be included in the instruction.

Information and materials for parents/guardians about the curriculum and resources on prevention of human trafficking and abuse, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment are available on Charter School’s website for your review.

Toileting Supports

All age-eligible children are welcome in our classrooms regardless of their toileting status. We know children will need different levels of support, depending on how far along they are toward full toileting independence. For example, some children may still need direct

toileting support, such as assistance in the restroom or changing a pull-up, while other children will need assistance with the occasional accident (for example, changing soiled clothing and putting clean clothing on), and some children will need assistance or additional instruction in wiping or cleaning themselves or handwashing. We will take the following steps to connect with families to support toileting needs:

(1) A Potty Progress Questionnaire will be provided to all families to help the school understand your child's current toileting abilities. In this questionnaire, you can expect to discuss:

- Your child's current toileting skill level
- Toileting routines at home and how they may translate to the school environment
- Resources to support toilet learning, as well as how to handle a toileting regression

Additionally, families will have the opportunity to see the classroom and meet the team. As needed, families and school staff can arrange to reconvene to create individualized toileting plans if the universal supports indicated below do not suffice.

(2) Typical Bathroom Supports: We believe in encouraging toileting independence. In support of that goal, we provide all scholars with the following:

- Reminders to listen to their body to determine if they need to use the restroom and scheduling regular bathroom breaks
- A welcoming bathroom environment (clean, well-stocked with supplies, visual reminders as appropriate)
- Explicit teaching of in-class toileting practices, including learning how to ask to go to the bathroom, how to go to and from the bathroom independently, how to flush the toilet, hand-washing practices, etc.

(3) We understand it is important to ensure all children remain clean throughout the day and are assisted, as needed. Our first step is to ensure all students have access to extra clean clothes, provided by their household, in the event of an accident. Student questionnaires will include a request for an extra set of clean clothes to be sent to school. When an accident occurs, staff will support scholars to ensure they have the means to access clean clothes in a timely manner. Schools will have additional uniforms on hand in the event that personal clothes are not available.

- Trained staff will support children with toileting needs only as necessary in accordance with the toileting plan and use the least amount of adult intervention. If there is a deviation from the plan, Aspire will inform the student's parent/guardian about the deviation and provide a rationale for the change.
- The toileting plan may include:
 - The use of pull-ups until the student is fully toilet independent
 - A toileting schedule
 - A reward system

- Materials plan of who is explicitly providing the supply of pull-ups, changes of clothing, wipes, and zip bags for soiled items
 - Permission to contact parent/guardian or emergency contacts if support is needed for toileting issues
 - The plan will include family preferences and options available related to staff assistance in the event of toileting accidents.
- Staff interventions may include: verbal support with changing clothes from behind a stall door, verbal support and visual support with changing clothes with the door open, minimal support with changing clothes (holding pants or underwear as a child steps in, buckles or tie support; elastic waistbands are highly encouraged), arranging the front and the back of clothing, verbal support with cleaning, and other minimal support with cleaning (handing wipes and visually supporting how to clean oneself by walking a student through the process).
 - Anytime toileting support is required, at least two trained staff members must be present, whenever possible.
 - Soiled garments will be sent home with a note to families at the end of the day. In the event of a stool accident, depending on the severity, the child will be provided with a set of clean clothing, and the soiled clothing may be discarded.
 - Individual toileting plans for children with high toileting needs who do not have toileting in their IEP or 504 plan will be developed in coordination with families and school staff. Please reach out to your classroom teacher or front office if this would be supportive for your family.
 - If a scholar has an IEP or 504 plan, and toileting is related to their disability, the IEP/504 team will discuss and determine appropriate supports and accommodations, which may include physical support with cleaning. If there are medical needs, Aspire will work with the family using an individual health plan to support the child and possibly develop a 504 plan, if indicated.

Please note:

Children will not be sent home, suspended, disenrolled, or encouraged to disenroll due to toileting accidents, but rather schools will partner with families to create toileting plans for children on the road to toileting independence.

For children with medical or physical needs who receive toileting support through a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP), supports and services are determined by the 504 or IEP team.

Academics

Academic Integrity

Aspire Public Schools believes in academic integrity. Students are expected to do their own homework, to test without external resources, including artificial intelligence, and to submit original work for all assignments. Aspire students are expected to deny all requests to copy from their own work.

Potential Consequences for Violating Academic Integrity

1. All test papers, quizzes, or assignments will be taken from the student(s) violating the policy.
2. A student found cheating may receive, at the discretion of the teacher, a grade of “F” or a zero for the test, quiz, or assignment. This may lower a quarter or semester grade substantially.
3. Parents/guardians will be notified and a parent conference will be arranged if the teacher deems it necessary.
4. The Principal will be notified.
5. An incident of cheating and or plagiarism will result in removal from the Honor Roll for that quarter.
6. Repeated violations or a single serious violation may lead to more serious disciplinary actions.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8043: Academic Integrity Policy

Instructional Materials

All instructional materials, including teacher’s manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any applicable (instructional) program, shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of students [20 USC 1232h(a)]. Parents and guardians may request that their child be excused from specific instructional materials or lessons that they believe would substantially burden the exercise of their sincerely held religious beliefs. Written requests for excusal and an appropriate alternative should be directed to the school Principal. This procedure does not apply to broad discussions, materials, or curriculum that support inclusivity or meet California’s legal mandates. Aspire remains committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all students.

Textbooks and Materials

Students are responsible for all books and school materials issued to them. All textbooks are to be protected with sturdy book covers, no contact (adhesive) or other permanent book covers allowed. Students will be fined for unusual wear or damage to books. If a student willfully damages the Charter School's property or the personal property of a Charter School employee, or fails to return a textbook, library book, computer/tablet or other Charter School property that has been loaned to the student, the student's parents/guardians are liable for all damages caused by the student's misconduct not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), adjusted annually for inflation.

Required Restitution

After notifying the student's parent or guardian in writing of the student's alleged misconduct and affording the student due process, the Charter School may withhold the student's grades, transcripts, and diploma until the damages have been paid. If the student and the student's parent/guardian are unable to pay for the damages or to return the property, the Charter School will provide a program of voluntary work for the minor in lieu of the payment of monetary damages. Upon completion of the voluntary work, the student's grades and diploma will be released.

California Mathematics Placement Act

In accordance with the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015 [Education Code § 51224.7], Aspire Public Schools has adopted the "Enhanced Pathway" in the *California Mathematics Framework, 2013* as it allows students to develop a solid foundation on key middle school mathematical concepts, and also gives students time to make key choices on their mathematics pathway. For additional information, please visit www.aspirepublicschools.org.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7010 Mathematics Placement Policy

Testing

California students are required by state law to take multiple assessments to measure their progress and mastery of the CA adopted Common Core standards [Education Code §§ 60640-60649 C]. These include, but are not limited to, the:

- Smarter Balanced Achievement Consortium Tests in grades 3-8 and 11
- CA English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPAC) for English Learners in K-12
- California Science Test (CAST) in 5, 8, and at least one high school grade
- California Alternative Assessment (CAA) for students who qualify based on disability

- Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPAC) for English Learners in K-12 who qualify based on disability
- Physical Fitness Test in grades 5, 7, and 9
- mCLASS with Additional Measures RDRS Screener in grades K-2
- Additional benchmark and interim tests are administered for internal Aspire purposes, including an internal reading diagnostic assessment
- Other federal, state and local tests as required
- A parent's or guardian's written request to school officials to excuse their child from any or all parts of the CAASPP shall be granted. Upon request, parents have a right to information on the level of achievement of their student on every State academic assessment administered to the student.
- A parent or guardian's written request to school officials to excuse their child from the use of mCLASS as a reading difficulties screener in K-2 shall be granted.

Animal Dissections

Students at the Charter School may perform animal dissections as part of the science curriculum. Any student who provides their teacher with a written statement, signed by their parent/guardian, specifying the student's moral objection to dissecting or otherwise harming or destroying animals, or any parts thereof, may be excused from such activities if the teacher believes that an adequate alternative education project is possible. The alternative education project shall require a comparable time and effort investment by the student. It shall not, as a means of penalizing the student, be more arduous than the original education project. The student shall not be discriminated against based upon their moral objection to dissecting or otherwise harming or destroying animals, or any parts thereof.

California Healthy Kids Survey

The Charter School will administer the California Healthy Kids Survey ("CHKS") to students at grades five, seven, nine, and eleven whose parent or guardian provides written permission. The CHKS is an anonymous, confidential survey of school climate and safety, student wellness, and youth resiliency that enables the Charter School to collect and analyze data regarding local youth health risks and behaviors, school connectedness, school climate, protective factors, and school violence.

Family Life/HIV/AIDS Education

In accordance with AB-2601 and the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA), the Family Life Education program is designed to help students understand the biological, psychological, social, moral, and ethical aspects of human sexuality. The program provides information on human growth and development, physical and emotional changes that occur during adolescence, and responsibility. Each school shall ensure that all pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education from instructors trained in the appropriate courses. Each pupil shall receive this instruction at least once in junior high or middle school and at least once in high school [Education Code § 51934]. Comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education may be taught in grades K-6, inclusive. Content that is required in grades 7-12 may also be included in an age-appropriate way in earlier grades. (EC §§ 51933, 51934(b).)

The Family Life Education Program includes age-appropriate instruction about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The course will include information on AIDS and its effects on the human body, HIV transmission and prevention, community resources, decision-making and refusal skills, and public health issues. The Family Life and HIV/AIDS instruction programs follow the guidelines set forth by the California Education Code. Parents and/or guardians may contact the Principal if they would like to preview the classroom materials.

Instruction will affirmatively recognize different sexual orientations and be inclusive of same-sex relationships. It will also teach about gender, gender identity, and gender expression, and address the harm of negative gender stereotypes, as required by the California Healthy Youth Act (EC § 51933).

In accordance with state law, California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA), Aspire Public Schools offers comprehensive sexual health education to its students in grades 7-12. A parent or guardian of a student has the right to excuse their child from all or part of comprehensive sexual health education, HIV prevention education, and assessments related to that education through a passive consent (“opt-out”) process. Aspire Public Schools does not require active parental consent (“opt-in”) for comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education. Parents and guardians may:

- Inspect written and audiovisual educational materials used in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education.
- Excuse their child from participation in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education in writing to the school.
- Be informed whether the comprehensive sexual health or HIV/AIDS prevention education will be taught by school personnel or outside consultants. If the school chooses to use outside consultants or to hold an assembly with guest speakers to teach comprehensive sexual health or HIV/AIDS prevention education, be informed of:
 - The date of the instruction

- The name of the organization or affiliation of each guest speaker
- Request a copy of Education Code sections 51930 through 51939.

However, as stated in Education Code § 51932(b), the opt-out provision of the California Healthy Youth Act applies only to comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education. It does not apply to instruction or materials outside that context, including those that may reference gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, discrimination, bullying, relationships, or family.

Anonymous, voluntary, and confidential research and evaluation tools to measure students' health behaviors and risks (including tests, questionnaires, and surveys containing age-appropriate questions about the student's attitudes concerning or practices relating to sex) may be administered to students in grades 7-12. A parent or guardian has the right to excuse their child from the test, questionnaire, or survey through a passive consent ("opt-out") process. Parents or guardians shall be notified in writing that this test, questionnaire, or survey is to be administered, given the opportunity to review the test, questionnaire, or survey if they wish, notified of their right to excuse their child from the test, questionnaire, or survey, and informed that in order to excuse their child they must state their request in writing to school principal or designee.

A student may not attend any class in comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education, or participate in any anonymous, voluntary, and confidential test, questionnaire, or survey on student health behaviors and risks if the school has received a written request from the student's parent or guardian excusing the student from participation. An alternative educational activity shall be made available to students whose parents or guardians have requested that they not receive the instruction or participate in the test, questionnaire, or survey.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7014 Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction

English Learners

The Charter School will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, English Learners and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. The Charter School will implement policies to ensure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding English Learners and the rights of students and parents.

Assessment

State and federal laws require that all students whose primary language is other than English be assessed for English language proficiency. The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) is California's designated test of English language

proficiency. It is administered each year as an initial assessment (IA) to newly enrolled students whose primary language is not English, as indicated on a home language survey, and as a summative assessment (SA) to students who have been identified previously as English learners.

State law [Education Code §§ 313, 60810] and federal law (Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)) require that schools administer a state test of English language proficiency to: (1) newly enrolled students whose primary language is not English as an IA, and (2) students who are English learners as a SA. For California’s public school students, this test is the ELPAC. The ELPAC has three purposes:

- 1. To identify students who are English Learners (EL)
- 2. To determine the level of English language proficiency of EL students
- 3. To assess the progress of EL students in acquiring the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English

At the time of initial enrollment, a home language survey is used to determine the student’s primary language. [5 CCR 11307] Within 30 calendar days of initial enrollment, each student whose home language is other than English, as determined by the home language survey, and for whom there is no record of results from an English language development test, shall be assessed for English-language proficiency using the state-designated instrument English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). [5 CCR 11511]

All students shall have sufficient time to complete the ELPAC as provided in the directions for test administration. [5 CCR 11516]

Any student with a disability shall take the ELPAC with those accommodations for testing that the student has regularly used during instruction and classroom assessment as delineated in the student’s individualized instruction plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan that are appropriate and necessary to address the student’s individual needs. [5 CCR 11516.5]

Reclassifying and Initially Classifying English Learners

The ELPAC assesses student performance in the following areas: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The following four criteria are required as part of our reclassification policy and procedures: (1) Assessment of English Language Proficiency, (2) Teacher Evaluations, (3) Parent Consultation, and (4) Basic Skills Relative to English Proficient Students:

Policy for Reclassifying English Learners:

Table 1: Aspire’s RFEP Policy

Criteria	Requirement
Criteria 1: Assessment of English Language Proficiency	Summative ELPAC Overall Performance Level 4 All students with a Summative Alternate ELPAC Level 3 (Fluent English Proficient) are eligible to be considered for reclassification.
Criteria 2: Teacher Evaluation	K-5/6 For EL students in Grades K-5/6 to meet the teacher evaluation criterion for reclassification, the students must receive ELA progress report card composite scores of 2 or above. Grades 6-12 For EL students in Grades 6-12 to meet the teacher evaluation criterion for reclassification, the students must receive grades of C or better in English or English Language Development course. The following courses qualify for reclassification: - Grade-level English Academic ELD (UC approved) ELD Course Offerings If a student does not have a grade of 2/'C' or better, the student's instructional or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team should identify a core class, a trained teacher, and a secondary trained observer (administrator, another classroom teacher, School Psychologist, Program Specialist, MLL Coordinator, etc.) to conduct the Observational Protocol for Teachers of English Learners and submit at least 1 observation each through PowerSchool. A student must score a Level 3 or 4 for both receptive and expressive skills according to both trained observers' OPTEL tool in PowerSchool.
Criteria 3: Family Consultation	Families are consulted on the reclassification recommendation. If the student is a student with a disability, this consultation must take place during an IEP meeting and be documented within the IEP notes.
Criteria 4: Basic Skills Assessment	<i>Comparison of student performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students of the same age such that they are "sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English."</i> (EC Section 313(f) English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment requirements are specified in California EC sections 313, 60810, and 60812.) Same age = same grade level Empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students = thresholds identified from assessments taken by all students from within the grade level within the last calendar year mClass (K-2) Requirement: At or above benchmark Rationale: We know students who are reading on or above grade level by 3rd grade are much more likely to be successful in the remainder of their academic career. Aspire prioritizes intervening with all students, including English only students, who are reading below grade level before 3rd grade. iReady Reading (3-11) Requirement: Scoring at or above the average English Only (EO) scale score for their region minus the standard deviation, grouped by grade level and Special Education Indicator (as appropriate) after each iReady testing window Rationale: If students are not yet reading on grade level by 3rd grade, we want to ensure they are reading on par with their English only peers in order to effectively access curriculum the same. Example student:

The average English Only scale score for 7th grade in this region for the End-of-Year (EOY) iReady window was 527.07. Minus the standard deviation of 10.6 for 7th grade, the RFEP threshold for English Learners students is 516.47. The student's EOY iReady scale score of 525 meets the RFEP threshold of 516.47.

iReady Threshold Met?	Region	School	Student Name	Grade Level	ELAS	22-23 Summ ELPAC Overall PL	Average EOY iReady Scale Score	RFEP Threshold for EOY iReady (Avg EO - Standard Deviation)	EOY iReady Date	Student EOY iReady Scale Score
Met				7	EL	4	527.07	516.47	2/26/2024	525

- Standard deviations by grade level below:

Reading								
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10.0	10.1	10.3	10.5	10.6	10.7	10.7	10.8	10.9

SBAC ELA (3-8, 11)

- Requirement:** Score of 2 (Standard Nearly Met) or above
- Rationale:** According to [Surveying the Landscape of California's English Learner Reclassification Policy](#), "Most districts assess English Language Arts (ELA) skills in grades 3–11 through the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC). Slightly more than half of districts reclassify with a performance level of "nearly met." While this might sound as if we expect too little of ELs, over 50 percent of students who speak only English at home do not meet the standard on the SBAC."

iReady (12th grade)

- Requirement:**
 - Early on grade level placement or above as determined by the threshold score below for 12th grade.
- Rationale:** Our 12th grade students are not required to take the iReady assessments; therefore, we do not have English Only (EO) scale scores to compare against for this grade level. We are then going with [iReady's third recommendation](#) of percentile. Early On Grade Level Placement.

For Students with IEPs on Alternate Curriculum:

California Alternate Assessments (CAA) for ELA (3-8, 11):

- Requirement:** Level 2 or above
- Rationale:** According to the [CDE](#), "Students at this level demonstrate foundational understanding of core subject matter in the content area when provided with frequent prompts and supports. They are actively working with adapted grade-level content that focuses on the essential knowledge and skills and may frequently need supports to complete tasks and activities."

or

Brigance for students on Alternate Curriculum (all grades):

- Requirement:** Composite Score=85+/Percentile Score=16+ in the following areas: Overall Language Development (Expressive), Overall Language Development (Receptive), Overall Academic Cognitive (Literacy and Mathematics) [\(Reference\)](#)
- Rationale:** Using the norm-referenced assessments to benchmark or to pretest and post test is useful for seeing gains a student has made over the duration of a full academic year. But because performance is represented in normative scores, gains shown are relative to those of same-age peers.

*All RFEP letters should be distributed to families, stored in the student's file, and uploaded as a document the student's PowerSchool profile

Structured English Immersion (SEI) Program

Aspire Public Schools offers a Structured English Immersion Program. The Structured Immersion Program is a language acquisition program for English learners in which nearly all classroom instruction is provided in English, but with curriculum and a presentation designed for pupils who are learning English. At minimum, students are offered Designated and Integrated ELD and access to grade level academic subject matter content.

Although schools have an obligation to serve all EL students, parents or guardians of English learners have a right to decline or opt their children out of a school's EL program or out of particular EL services within an EL program. If parents or guardians opt their children out of a school's EL program or specific EL services, the children retain their status as English learners. The school remains obligated to take the affirmative steps required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the appropriate actions required by the Equal Education Opportunity Act of 1974 to provide EL students access to its educational programs [20 U.S.C. sections 1703[f], 6312[e][3][A][viii]].

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7012.4 Aspire English Learner Reclassification Criteria

Physical Education

The school's physical education programs shall be based on research, consistent with the expectations established in the state's curriculum frameworks and content standards [Education Code § 51222]. Nutrition education shall be provided as part of the health education program in grades 6-12 and, as appropriate, shall be integrated into other academic subjects in the regular educational program [Education Code §§ 49500-49505, 49510-49520].

Opportunities for physical activity shall be provided through physical education, athletic programs, and other structured and unstructured activities.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8004 Wellness Policy

Independent Study

Independent Study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate and is designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. Independent Study may be requested if a student will be absent from school for an extended period of time, or due to excused or warranted circumstances (see section on Excused Absences in this handbook). Written requests for independent study should be directed to the Principal at least two weeks before the desired start date of the Independent Study program.

Permission to grant Independent Study is in the sole discretion of the Principal, though no student may be placed in Independent Study without the parent/guardian's written consent. In addition, individual Aspire schools and regions may elect not to offer an Independent

Study program at all, or to restrict such offerings to “short-term” Independent Study only (i.e., Independent Study of 15 days or less in a school year). If a student does not meet the expectations of the Independent Study program, including the conditions outlined in the student’s Independent Study Agreement, the Principal or the Principal’s designee may conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study. If the student has been on Independent Study before and has not completed the work as assigned, it is up to the Principal as to whether the student should be allowed to participate in the program again. The maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work shall be (5) school days, unless otherwise extended in writing by the supervising teacher.

The Charter School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully. The Charter School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards that is substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high school grade levels this shall include access to all courses offered by the Charter School for graduation and approved by the UC or CSU as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria. An individual with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code Section 56026 may participate in independent study if their individualized education program (IEP) specifically provides for that participation. If a parent or guardian of an individual with exceptional needs requests independent study, the student’s IEP team shall make an individualized determination as to whether the student can receive a free appropriate public education in an independent study placement.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7004.1 Independent Study

Work Permit

Upon obtaining an offer of employment and prior to accepting employment, minor students shall obtain work permits from the Principal or designated school administrator in accordance with law, regardless of whether the employment will occur when school is in session and/or not in session [Education Code §§ 49110–49119]. The request for a work permit shall be submitted to the registrar or regional designee. Students granted work permits must demonstrate and maintain a 2.0 cumulative and previous term GPA, and satisfactory school attendance.

Beginning August 1, 2024, any minor seeking the signature of a Principal verifying authority on a Statement of Intent to Employ a Minor and Request for a Work Permit-Certificate of Age will be issued, before or at the time of receiving the signature of the verifying authority, a document clearly explaining basic labor rights extended to workers. An infographic explaining these rights is available at: [Know Your Rights at Work: Information for New Workers in California](#)

The week of each year that includes April 28 shall be known as “Workplace Readiness Week.” All Aspire high schools will annually observe that week by providing information to students on their rights as workers.

Expanded Learning/Afterschool Programs

Aspire Public Schools’ expanded learning programs operate during afterschool hours and select intersessional days, provides our students with additional academic supports and access to enrichment activities such as music, art, sports, and other club extracurricular activities. Academic supports focus on English Language Arts and Math intervention for students performing below grade level, as well as daily homework assistance and college readiness support for older students. Enrichment activities are designed to foster creativity, teamwork and physical activity, while reinforcing key academic skills and giving students opportunities to explore their interests and talents—and have fun. If you have questions about your school’s afterschool program, please contact the school office. Further information can be found in the Expanded Learning student and family handbook.

Elementary and Middle School Retention (Grades K-8)

As early as possible in the school year, the Superintendent or designee shall identify students who should be retained and who are at risk of being retained in accordance with law, Board policy, administrative regulation, and the practice below.

Students shall be identified on the basis of the assessment results on the state’s Standardized Testing and Reporting Program and the minimum levels of proficiency recommended by the State Board of Education and, in addition, local assessments and grades.

Retention, according to Aspire Public Schools, is intended to be an intervention that further supports the student’s academic growth and career to ensure college and career access and success. Making the decision to retain a student (holding a student back to repeat a grade) is an important decision that will not be taken lightly.

A school and parent/guardian can determine if the student is showing lack of progress as early as 6 weeks into the school year if the student had previously attended that school the year before and as early as 12 weeks if the student is new to the school. The school must assemble a team to review data and communicate progress or lack thereof to the parent/guardian at least four (4) times throughout the year. The school must communicate an intervention plan and resources/support to parents. If progress has not been made after consistent intervention and support and consistent attendance from students, then the school team will communicate to parents at least six (6) weeks before the end of the school year. The decision must be made in the best interest of the student’s academic and social-emotional development, with the approval of the parent/guardian.

Below is the practice Aspire Public Schools will adhere to when implementing the potential retention of a student:

- The pupil's grades have been consistently below grade level throughout the academic year on grade-level assignments and assessments compared to their peers and academic standard of that grade level AND
- The student's reading and math proficiency is far below grade level as measured by academic assessments, including mCLASS (K-2 ELA) and iReady (K-8 Math & 3-8 ELA) AND
- The pupil had access to a fully credentialed permanent teacher(s) throughout the year AND
- The site team consisted of child's classroom teacher(s), administrator, school counselor, education specialist or intervention teacher and the child's parent/guardian, AND
- The school team has a record of the meetings, data presented, and interventions/supports implemented AND
- The school implemented at least 2 documented SST's with supports for the student with at least two cycles of revisiting, revising and continuing to implement the plan with fidelity. These meetings need to be at least six (6) weeks apart and communicated with the parent at least four (4) times throughout the year AND
- If the student has an IEP, that team must convene (and there should be no SST meeting held for those students as it is duplicative) to discuss what adjustments may be required for the student's IEP to ensure appropriate progress based on their disability. If retention is being considered, the IEP team must discuss and make a recommendation to the appropriate administrator for final determination. The decision to retain is not considered an IEP placement decision, final determination is made by a school administrator in consultation with the parent(s). If the school determines retention appropriate, a follow-up IEP meeting may be necessary to discuss progress towards grade level goals and any additional support and services that could be necessarily associated with the change in grade level.
- The parent/guardian has received 35 day notice that the school team has made the recommendation to retain and give parent/guardian the option to meet with the team to consult AND
- Superintendent approval once parent/guardian signs and approves

If the school meets all of the above criteria, they must also provide:

- The school must send a written notice to the family and schedule a call with parent/guardian to confirm receipt of notice
- The school must communicate the parent/guardians right to appeal and timeline
- The parent/guardian has the right to appeal verbally or in writing to the team the decision to retain within 7 school days of the date of written notice
- If parent/guardian appeals, then the school must provide a meeting and hearing for parent/guardian to publicly appeal with the classroom teacher, an administrator and a regional support teammate
- For kindergarten students, retention is only an option if the above criteria are met AND both parent/guardian and the school must agree that the student may continue in kindergarten no more than one additional school year. Additionally, the school must complete a [Kindergarten Continuance Form](#). We do not offer retention within our TK program and all students completing TK will move into kindergarten the following year.

*If the parent/guardian requests retention of the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to an SST meeting to discuss their concerns, review data, and discuss possible interventions. If the school determines that the student is demonstrating a lack of progress, the school will communicate an intervention plan and resources/support to parents and proceed with the retention procedures set forth above. If the school decides against retention of the student, the parent/guardian may appeal the school's decision in accordance with the appeal procedures set forth above.

Secondary Academics

Graduation Requirements

California Education Code § 51225.3 specifies that students must pass a minimum set of requirements to graduate from high school. Students wishing to earn a high school diploma from an Aspire school shall successfully complete coursework within a course of study in alignment with the UC/CSU A-G program and earn the designated number of A-G credits outlined below with a C- or above. In some cases, such as UC validation, college credits, etc., Aspire graduation requirements exceed the UC/CSU A-G program, so that students are competitive for private college admissions and scholarships.

Central Valley and Los Angeles Region Requirements

Subject	Credits	Requirement
History/Social Sciences	20	1 year of World History, 1 year of US History
English	40	Emphasis in Literature & Composition.
Mathematics	30	Courses must be taken in grades 9-12 Recommended sequence: Integrated Math 1, Integrated Math 2, and Integrated Math 3. UC validation rules are in effect but 30 credits must still be earned. 4 years recommended.
Laboratory Science	20	In at least two areas: physical, environmental and biological/life sciences; biology/life sciences is required. 3 years recommended.
World Languages	20	Courses must be taken in grades 9-12. Twenty credits must be earned in the same language. UC validation rules are in effect but 20 credits must still be earned.
Visual & Performing Art	10	The 10 credits must be in the same UC A-G art discipline (music, dance, theater, visual art, interdisciplinary art)
Electives	40	Courses can be additional credits in any of the UC courses listed above, or in courses approved for the UC G elective category.

US Government and Economics	10	1 semester each of US Government & Economics. US Government and Economics are CA State requirements and do not need to be UC A-G approved courses.
Ethnic Studies	5	1 semester of Ethnic Studies, (a course based on the model curriculum developed pursuant to Section 51226.7; an existing ethnic studies course; an ethnic studies course taught as part of a course that has been approved as meeting the A–G requirements). (Note: This requirement is effective for the graduating class of 2026)
Advisory	20	Students must enroll in and pass advisory every semester, every year. Schools will vary in offering half or full courses; credits taken beyond the required credits will count for electives. Advisory credit can be earned for such courses as College Success Seminar and Senior Mentorship and Leadership taught by an Aspire teacher.
Total	minimum 210	All students must earn a C-or better for credit. Credit is earned for grades of C-or higher only with the exception of any Ds received during the window of time that Aspire offered credit for Ds (SY 19-20 to 22-23). Courses that offer credit in multiple areas (i.e., tech and UC elective) do not count more than once toward the 210 credit requirement.

Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 240 instructional minutes per school day [Education Code §§ 46144, 46146]. 11/12th graders concurrently enrolled in a UC/CSU/CC have a daily minute requirement of 180 minutes per day [Education Code § 46146].

Please note: Commencing with the 2027–28 school year, OCCA will offer a separate, stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance, that will not be combined with any other course and all students graduating in 2031 who completes the separate, stand-alone one-semester course in personal finance, that is not combined with any other course, may elect to be exempt from the requirement to complete a one-semester course in economics. The requirements are the minimum requirements for admission into the California State University (“CSU”) or University of California (“UC”) system.

Students wishing to earn a high school diploma from an Aspire school, in addition to the prescribed course of study as detailed above, must also complete the following:

Exhibitions	Students must successfully complete an exhibition in each grade level: 9, 10, 11 and 12. 12th Grade Exhibition must be a Post-Secondary Success Plan (PSSP).
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College Units	Students must take at least 3 college courses, for a total of at least 9 college Units, which translates to at least 30 high school credits with a passing grade of D-or better. Students who receive a D-, D, or D+ in a college course will not receive credit toward A-G course requirements but may receive college credit from the attending institution, and consequently, the Aspire college credit requirement.
College Entrance Exams	Students must apply for and take at least one of the prescribed college entrance examinations.
College Applications	Students who are UC- or CSU-eligible must apply to three 4-year colleges. Students who are not UC- or CSU-eligible must apply to one 4-year college to learn the application process.
College Financial Aid	Students must complete the FAFSA, Dream Act or HS credit application or Financial Aid Opt Out Form.
Grade Point Average	Students must maintain a grade-point average of 2.0 or higher.

Bay Area Region Requirements

All requirements listed above for the Central Valley and Los Angeles apply to the Bay Area region with the exception of the variations to the specific requirements below.

Requirement	Updated Policy
World Languages	20 credits in the same world language, taken in grades 9–12 unless UC/CSU validation applies: a higher-level course with C- or better may validate lower-level prerequisites OR a demonstrated proficiency in a world language through alternative means, such as proficiency exams, which may include AP exam scores.
College Units	Students must complete a minimum of 2 college-level courses with D- or better. 3 courses encouraged. CSU/UC transferable courses preferred.
College Entrance Exams	Removed. Students are no longer required to take college entrance exams (SAT, ACT).
Post Secondary and College Applications	Students must apply to at least one post-secondary institution (2-year, 4-year, CTE, or accredited program) to learn the application process.

Ethnic Studies

Students must take a one-semester Ethnic Studies course Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, this will be a graduation requirement.

Exempting Homeless, Foster, Adjudicated, Military, Migrant, Immigrant, and Newcomer Students from Coursework

Aspire Public Schools shall exempt a foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, or migrant student who transfers between schools after the second year of high school, or a student participating in a newcomer program for newly immigrant students in grades 11-12, from any graduation requirements established by the charter school that exceed state requirements, unless the school determines that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements by the end of the fourth year of high school [Education Code §§ 51225.1, 51225.2]. If a student is found eligible for an exemption to Aspire's graduation requirements, Aspire will notify the student and the student's parent/guardian/educational rights holder ("ERH") if any of the requirements that are waived will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution and shall provide information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. An identified student and/or their ERH have the ultimate right to decide if the student will pursue a high school diploma pursuant to the California minimum requirements or Aspire will not require a student to graduate before the completion of their fourth year.

Graduation Waiver

Graduation requirements are established with the expectation that all students will complete them as listed. It is recognized, however, that in special cases individual students may have reason to request a waiver of one or more requirements that exceed state requirements in order to accomplish specific academic goals not possible within the required program [Education Code §§ 60851, 60859].

Early Graduation

Aspire Public Schools handles early graduation case-by-case, and must be brought to school administration in the Fall of 11th grade. In the situation where a student's early graduation case is accepted, the 11th grade SBAC assessment must still be administered.

Retroactive Diplomas

The governing board of Aspire Public Schools has the authorization to retroactively grant a high school diploma to a pupil who has departed California against his/her/their will, and, at the time of their departure, was enrolled in grade 12 and in good academic standing at the time of his/her/their departure or meet the following conditions:

1. The student was in their senior year of high school during the 2019–20 school year;
2. in good academic standing and on track to graduate at the end of the 2019–20 school year, as of March 1, 2020; and
3. unable to complete the statewide graduation requirements as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

[Education Code § 51430].

Diploma Pathways for Students With Disabilities

Equity for Students with Disabilities: Pathways to graduation are individualized based on consideration of student needs. The following guide the decision making regarding individualization:

- Least Restrictive Environment: ensure students are receiving access to the full educational program to the greatest extent possible.
- Student agency: student voice should drive the development of their individualized transition plan

Aspire exempts any student with exceptional needs who entered ninth (9) grade in the 2022-23 school year and later, from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the Aspire governing board that are additional to the statewide graduation requirements, if the student's IEP provides for the following:

- (1) The student is required to take the alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards in grade 11, as described in subdivision (k) of Section 60640.
- (2) The pupil is required to complete state standards-aligned coursework to meet the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3.

A student who meets the above criteria shall be awarded a diploma of graduation from high school that conforms with minimal state graduation requirements pursuant to Education Code Section 51225.3 (CA State Minimum Requirements Diploma). The award of a CA State Minimum Requirements Diploma does not change Charter School's obligation to provide a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") or otherwise constitute a change in placement.

Before a student with exceptional needs begins grade 10, the student's IEP team shall determine and notify the parent or guardian of the student of whether the student may be eligible to graduate with the CA State Minimum Requirements Diploma.

Any student who meets the criteria as stated above for a CA State Minimum Requirements Diploma shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which a student of similar age would be eligible to participate. Participation in graduation activities shall not be construed as termination of the provision of free appropriate public education.[Federal Special Education law (IDEA) states that Individual Transition Plan development must begin for students no later than age 15. At Aspire, the expectation based on best practice is that the ITP development begins for every student by 9th grade, even if they are not yet 15. ITP development may begin in the 8th grade year as determined by the IEP team.

(Note that for Aspire Public School schools in LAUSD, the district requires transition plans to be developed no later than age 14.) Aspire IEP teams will include discussion, decisions and

documentation in Individual Transition plans that describe the student's requirements to obtain a diploma starting in 9th grade, and at every IEP meeting, at least annually.

The requirements will be reviewed and updated as needed each year which will include a review of the student's graduation progress, their individual needs and area of impact of their disability. The team may consider whether it is appropriate and necessary to eliminate/alter an Aspire graduation requirement if it is an area that is directly impacted by the student's disability. California state requirements for obtaining a diploma cannot be eliminated. Students with disabilities are eligible to continue to receive IDEA services in a high school program until age 22 or until they receive a diploma—whichever comes first. Should a student with an IEP require additional courses and/or additional time to meet their post-secondary goals and objectives, they have an option to participate on a differentiated graduation pathway and earn their diploma after the completion of their senior year, through age 22.

Administrative Regulation 6145.4 describes the process that the team must follow for preparation, discussion and documentation. Please note: Driven by the guidelines of the Least Restrictive Environment as well as equity and access for students with disabilities; the alteration or elimination of graduation requirements should be used with high discretion and in rare circumstances.

Certificate of Completion

The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall award a certificate of completion instead of a high school diploma, if a student with exceptional needs has minimally met one (1) of the following requirements:

1. Satisfactorily completed a prescribed alternative course of study approved by the Charter School Governing Board which has jurisdiction over the student as identified in the IEP.
2. Satisfactorily met the student's IEP goals and objectives during high school as determined by the IEP team.
3. Satisfactorily attended high school, participated in the instruction as prescribed in the student's IEP, and met the objectives of the statement of transition services.

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure a student with disabilities who meets any of the criteria specified above shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any Charter School activity related to graduation in which a graduating student of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate. In addition, the Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the student will continue to have access to special education related supports and services until the student meets the Charter School's criteria to receive a high school diploma or until age 22.

Whether a student receives a certificate of completion or a diploma is confidential. Aspire does not inform other students whether their peers are receiving a certificate or a diploma, and all students will participate equally in graduation ceremonies and activities.

There are many reasons this may happen:

- To honor a student's completion of their ITP and IEP requirements with their same aged peers— The student participates in graduation activities, including receiving their Certificate of Completion. They continue to have the option to remain an Aspire student and work towards their post-secondary goals through the age of 22.
- A student may opt to leave Aspire after earning their Certificate of Completion and matriculate into a post-secondary program- The student does not have to stay in high school until age 22, and they can enroll in many post-secondary programs with a COC, including 2-year colleges, some specialized programs at 4 years, job training, etc.).

These paths are individualized based on the student's transition plan and what is best for them.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7003

High School Commencement

Earning a Diploma

A student can only earn a diploma from an Aspire school once the student has done the following:

- Completed all graduation requirements with regard to classes and credits.

Any student who has not met all credit requirements by the date of graduation must complete all units by June 26th of the student's graduation year in order to earn a diploma from an Aspire school. Otherwise, the student must either earn the diploma the following year or take alternate routes to receive a diploma from a non-Aspire school.

Commencement Ceremony Participation Requirements

A student may participate in their school's commencement ceremony if one of the following is true:

1. The student has met or is on track to meet all of the school's graduation requirements with regards to classes and credits, and met all of the school's commencement ceremony requirements [Education Code § 51228]; or

2. The student is deficient 10 or less credits, has met all of the school's commencement ceremony requirements), and has signed up to make up the credits the summer immediately following graduation

A student may be prohibited from participating in the commencement ceremony for academic, behavioral, or other reasons at the school Principal's discretion and with the approval of the Regional Executive Director or designee [Education Code § 48904].

Per Education Code § 35183.1, Aspire students may wear traditional tribal regalia or recognized objects of religious or cultural significance (as determined by the student and the student's family) as an adornment, as defined , at school graduation ceremony or related school events.

Charter School will adhere to the following:

1. Charter School shall not require a pre-approval process for a student to exercise their right to wear an adornment as described above.
2. Any such adornment may be worn *in addition to* (not instead of), the traditional cap and gown. However, a student will not be required to wear a graduation cap if the cap is incompatible with the adornment.

Any accessory, object, or adornment that is likely to cause a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, the graduation ceremony will not be permitted.

Any graduating student who has completed basic training and is an active member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces may, at their option, wear their military dress uniform at the ceremony.

CalKIDS Program Notice

California Kids Investment and Development Savings Program (CalKIDS) is a program established by the State of California that funds up to \$1,500 in free money for eligible low-income public school students to save for college and career training. Visit CalKIDS.org for more information about your child's eligibility and to you claim your child's account. Cal Grant Program for College

The Charter School is required by state law to submit the Grade Point Average ("GPA") of all high school seniors by Oct. 1 of each year, unless the student (if the student is 18 years of age or older) or parent/guardian (for those under 18 years of age) opt-out. Students currently in eleventh (11th) grade will be deemed a Cal Grant applicant, unless the student (or parent/guardian, if the student is under 18 years of age) has opted out by or before February 1. Please see your College Academic Counselor or a school site administrator for a copy of the Cal Grant Opt-Out Form

Cal Grants are for students who are pursuing an undergraduate degree or vocational or career training, and do not have to be repaid [Education Code § 69432.9]. To qualify, a student must meet the eligibility and financial requirements as well as any minimum grade point average (GPA) requirements. Cal Grants can be used at any University of California, California State University or California Community College. Some independent/private and career colleges or technical schools in California also take Cal Grants.

Students must complete and submit either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or CA Dream Act Application (CADAA) to apply for financial aid. In order to assist students to apply for financial aid, all grade 12 students are automatically considered a Cal Grant applicant and each grade 12 student's GPA will be submitted to the California Student Aid Commission ("CSAC") electronically by an Aspire official unless the parent or the student opts out.

Information Regarding Financial Aid

The Charter School shall ensure that each of its students receives information on how to properly complete and submit the 1) Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or 2) the California Dream Act Application as appropriate, at least once before the student enters 12th grade. The Charter School will provide a paper copy of the FAFSA or the California Dream Act Application upon request.

- The FAFSA form and information regarding the FAFSA are available at:
 - <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>
- The California Dream Act Application and information regarding the California Dream Act is available at:
 - <https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/resources-california-dream-act-application>

The Charter School shall confirm that each of its students in grade 12 completes and submits a FAFSA to the United States Department of Education, or if the student is exempt from paying nonresident tuition pursuant to Education Code section 68130.5, a California Dream Act Application to the Student Aid Commission. Students who are exempt or whose parent/guardian (if the student is a minor) have opted-out will not be required to comply.

Availability of Prospectus

Upon request, the Charter School will make available to any parent or legal guardian, a school prospectus, which shall include the curriculum, including titles, descriptions, and instructional aims of every course offered. Please note that, pursuant to law, the Charter School may charge for the prospectus in an amount not to exceed the cost of duplication.

College Preparatory Course Offerings / Concurrent Enrollment

Aspire offers high school students the opportunity to obtain dual credit (high school/college) during the regular school day for selected high school courses [Education Code § 48800]. Students are dually enrolled at the college and Aspire, thereby earning both high school and college credits. A list of approved Concurrent Enrollment courses and the community college or university is provided at individual school sites.

At the school site's discretion, students who enroll in a college class for the purpose of dual enrollment and fail the class without notifying the school of any difficulty in the class may not be afforded the opportunity to repeat the college class at the school's cost. Similarly, students who are removed from the college class due to behavioral issues may not be allowed to repeat the college class during the school day and/or at the school's cost. In these cases, a regular high school class will be offered as a means of meeting the graduation requirement. The student may choose to repeat the college class at their own expense.

PREEMPTIVE NOTICE: POTENTIAL DUAL ENROLLMENT PARTICIPATION (AB 1796 Compliance)

In alignment with California Assembly Bill 1796, Aspire Public Schools is providing this notice to all families of students in grades 7 through 12 regarding potential participation in Dual Enrollment opportunities.

Dual Enrollment allows eligible middle and high school students to enroll in college-level courses through a partnering community college or university while still enrolled in Aspire Public Schools. These courses may be taken during or outside of the regular school day and can earn students both high school and college credit.

While not all students will participate, we are informing you now in case your student becomes eligible or chooses to pursue this academic option. Participation typically depends on academic readiness, course availability, and completion of the required application and enrollment steps. Please note: While AB 1796 requires us to notify all families of students in grades 7 – 12, Aspire Public Schools's dual enrollment program is only available to students in grades 9 – 12.

If your student becomes eligible for and elects to participate in Dual Enrollment, you will receive additional information and consent forms prior to enrollment.

Dual enrollment is a powerful opportunity that comes with serious responsibilities. Students must pass their courses and stay engaged, as their performance will follow them into higher education. Aspire Public Schools encourages students to take ownership of their educational journey, and offers guidance and support every step of the way.

FINANCIAL AID IMPLICATIONS AND ACADEMIC IMPACT OF DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSES

There are many benefits to taking college courses while in high school through dual enrollment. One major advantage is that it can reduce the number of courses a student needs to take in college, shortening the time spent at a higher education institution and ultimately lowering the overall cost of earning a degree. However, it's equally important to understand the academic and financial responsibilities that come with dual enrollment:

ACADEMIC AND FINANCIAL AID CONSIDERATIONS

Failed (F) grades and unsatisfactory grades (W, FW, EW, I) count as attempted units and negatively impact a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), even though they may not count as completed units.

Military Withdrawals (MW) do not impact GPA or attempted units.

Repeated courses are counted every time they are taken in the financial aid GPA.

The Financial Aid GPA differs from the Admissions & Records GPA—Academic Renewal is not considered by financial aid evaluations.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

To qualify for financial aid such as grants, federal work-study, and loans, students must meet three SAP standards:

- Cumulative GPA
- Course Completion Rate
- Maximum Timeframe to complete their program

Failure to meet these standards can result in SAP probation or even loss of financial aid before the student officially begins their higher education career. This means a student may start college already on warning or probation status due to performance in high school dual enrollment.

ACADEMIC STANDING

Academic standing reflects a student's overall college performance. Poor performance may lead to changes in status from "good standing" to academic warning, probation, or disqualification. Dual enrollment participation can affect this status before a student even officially begins their college journey.

For more information, please contact your child's Academic Counseling Department.

Granting Credit from Non-Aspire Schools

Aspire will grant credit from other high schools and institutions in alignment with its policies. No credit will be awarded for grades below C- from an external school with the exception of any D they may have received during the window of time that Aspire offered credit for Ds (SY 19-20 to 22-23). When transferring credits from a school using a different credit system, Aspire will evaluate the course and transfer the courses and credits into the appropriate format. (i.e., quarter to semester, trimester to semester). Please speak with the site administrator(s) and the school's academic counselor(s) to understand which credits will transfer and meet Aspire's graduation requirements.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7015 Reciprocity of Academic Credit

Secondary Grading

Grading Vision

Aspire Public Schools supports scholars to fully actuate their potential. We believe that it is our responsibility to create the most optimal learning conditions for scholars to arrive at that unique genius. We understand that we live in a society laden with inequities and we are consciously working at interrupting those inequities in order to create transformative experiences for our young people. Our Aspire value statement of *agency and self determination specifies that each person has unique dreams. At Aspire, we set a foundation for our scholars to gain knowledge, skills and power to access and make choices for their families and post secondary lives.* Our secondary grading policy and practices strive to embody these tenets in alignment with our values, mission and vision. Aspire has set forth the guiding principles for grading below, adapted from Grading for Equity (Feldman, 2019):

- Grades should be accurate: grade calculations should be mathematically accurate and sound, easy to understand, and made based on clear descriptions of a student's level of academic performance.
- Grades should be bias-resistant: There are multiple opportunities to provide feedback to students, and grades are but one of them. Grades should be representations of an individual student's progress towards mastery or how effectively they have met the standards for academic performance. Grades should not be punitive or incorporate potentially biased, situational and/or culturally-influenced perceptions of behaviors (such as timeliness of assignment submission, how quickly students master a topic, effort, personality, participation, etc.).
- Grades should be motivational: Grading should allow multiple attempts at mastery and, therefore, represent where the student is at the time of grading, using the most recent data as an indicator. Teachers will consider how to balance providing time for mastery with the time constraints of the course.

Gradebook Entries

Aspire-wide Expectations

Aspire teachers will only record standards-aligned assignments in the gradebook. Assignments aligned to high priority standards will be entered into the gradebook for formative and summative grades. Life skills and daily homework assignments will not be entered into the gradebook as an academic grade.

Criteria for Grades	
Grade	Criteria
A+	Exceeding the grade-level standards
A	
A-	
B+	Meeting the grade-level standards
B	
B-	
C+	Approaching the grade-level standards (Student has key gaps in their understanding of the standard)
C	
C-	
D+	Not yet met the standards (Student is unable to demonstrate B or C levels without assistance)
D	
D-	
F	Insufficient evidence to assess grade level standard mastery

School Site Discretion

Aspire Teachers shall determine which non high priority standards should be entered into the gradebook. Students should have multiple at-bats to demonstrate mastery of the standards. Teachers should determine the appropriate time to allow for the at-bats.

Aspire site leaders should determine school site expectations on a minimum number of gradebook entries, weighting of assignments, and replacing previous grades with more

current grades on the same content. Site leaders have two options for adhering to only standards aligned grades, the school can implement standards based grading or ensure all graded assignments are aligned to grade level standards. Regions have flexibility to implement a mastery-based grading approach, in which summative grades on standards replace formative grades.

Term Weights and Grading periods

Aspire-wide Expectations

Aspire schools select one of the two options for term weighting, grade storage, and report cards/progress reports for all teachers within their school. When students are not demonstrating progress towards mastery and at risk of not passing, the school is responsible for communicating with families in a proactive manner, per [CA Ed Code 49067](#).

School Site Discretion

Aspire site leaders should create a system for communicating with families when students are at risk of not passing. This can include meetings with teacher(s), admin and school site counselors to set up a support plan for the student.

Reassessments

Aspire-wide Expectations

All scholars will be given access to reassessments. Scholars who score below mastery will be given the opportunity to take reassessments to improve their grade. The higher test score will be recorded in the gradebook. Assignments that assess mastery will be eligible for reassessment.

School Site Discretion

Certain assessments may be excluded from the reassessment policy, through a joint decision of the teacher and site leadership team (i.e., final exams). Teachers will determine when opportunities exist for scholars to retest and should provide multiple options for students. Scholars may be required to attend tutorials, complete test corrections, or perform other tasks prior to retesting. The reassessment must cover the same material, or objectives, as the original assessment. However, the test or assignment may be in a different format or have new questions.

Late work

Aspire-wide Expectations

Aspire scholars are allowed to turn in any assignment included in the gradebook without penalty.

School Site Discretion

Teachers in partnership with the site leadership team should determine the appropriate cut-off date for late work submissions (i.e., date of unit summative assessment, a week before the end of the grading term). This cut-off date should allow teachers ample time to grade the assignments prior to the end of term. Teachers and site leaders should consider

student grade level, type of assignment, and individual student needs when determining cut-off date.

Extra Credit

Aspire-wide Expectations

Aspire teachers will refrain from creating extra credit activities or assignments.

Students with an IEP or 504 Plan

For students with an IEP or 504 Plan, teachers must work in collaboration with the student's case manager. IEPs and 504 plans are legal documents and take precedence over any differences in policies regarding grading, reassessments, submissions for late work, etc.

Multi-Language Learners

For newcomers in particular, teachers should be fully aware of a student's [Individualized Newcomer Plan](#) which would name particular supports such as having the opportunity to turn in assignments in home language and access assessments in home language, for a given period of time.

Retention and Acceleration

Secondary Retention

APS believes that students should have an opportunity to continue to earn their High School diploma and advance to their Post Secondary Plans beyond APS. In order to achieve this opportunity we believe that some scholars would benefit from a 5th year in our program. We believe this is aligned to our equity commitments and value of self-determination. This policy is in place for students who have extenuating circumstances and is not intended to be normalized.

Retention is intended to be an intervention that further supports the student's academic growth and career to ensure college and career access and success. Making the decision to retain a student (holding a student back to repeat a grade) is an important decision that will not be taken lightly. However, in the case of a high school Aspire Public Schools has created a policy in alignment with age considerations in high school and credit to grade level ratio.

High school students progress through each grade level in high school (9th-12th) by earning credits to get them to the next grade level. Each year/semester, students will be offered either directly on site or in partnership with local programs, the following: night classes, community classes, Saturday school or summer school to make up credits, should they be off track for graduation. Aspire's practice is to be proactive by supporting and documenting interventions for students throughout their high school career. Intervention if necessary, should begin in advance of a student's senior year. Once a student accrues the specified amount of credits, then they are deemed to be in appropriate credit standing for the grade level. Our total credit requirement for graduation is 210, 54 credits a year deems a student

on track to graduate. If a student gets to their 4th year of high school, Aspire Public Schools offers a 5th year to students who are credit-deficient and meet the age requirements.

In the Fall of an academic school year, the Principal and admin team shall identify students who are not meeting credit expectations. Schools will be expected to communicate the status to the student and their parent/guardian, with a support plan to recover and/or make-up credits. The school must present options for classes and credit recovery.

A school and parent/guardian can determine if the student is showing lack of progress as early as 10 weeks into the school year. The school must assemble a team to look at data and communicate progress or lack thereof to the parent/guardian at least four (4) times throughout the year. The school must communicate an intervention plan and resources/support to parents annually. If progress has not been made after consistent intervention and support and consistent attendance from students, then the school team will communicate to parents at least 8 weeks before the end of the academic year to prepare for summer credit recovery. The decision must be made in the best interest of the student's academic and social-emotional development, with the approval of the parent/guardian.

Below is the Standard Practices for considerations of a 5th year student:

- In accordance with California Ed Code 56026, a student with an IEP is eligible for special education services until the age of 22. Aspire Public Schools offers differentiated graduation pathways that are individualized for each student with an IEP per their Individualized Transition Plan that is reviewed by their IEP team annually.
- The pupil does not have 210 units to meet the Aspire Graduation requirements.
- The student has historic challenges with both academic and social emotional skills and would benefit from more support as a 5th year student
- The site team consisted of child's classroom teacher(s), administrator, school counselor, education specialist or intervention teacher and the student's parent/guardian, AND
- The school team has a record of the meetings, data presented and interventions/supports implemented AND
- The school implemented at least two (2) documented Student Success Teams with supports for the student with at least two cycles of revisiting, revising and continuing to implement the plan with fidelity AND
- Students and families must be notified of 5th year enrollment by the end of fall semester of their senior year.

- The parent has received 50 business day notice that the school team has made the recommendation to retain the student for a 5th year and give parent/guardian the option to meet with the team to consult AND
- Superintendent approval once parent signs and approves
- For students who are over the age of 18, please see the section titled “Special Enrollment Considerations: Over-Age Students”

If the school meets all of the above criteria, they must also provide:

- The school must send a written notice to the family and schedule a call with parent/guardian to confirm receipt of notice
- The school must communicate the parent/guardians right to appeal and timeline
- The parent/guardian has the right to appeal verbally or in writing to the team the decision to support a 5th year of instruction within seven (7) school days of the date of written notice
- If parent/guardian appeals, then the school must provide a meeting and hearing for parent/guardian to publicly appeal with the classroom teacher, an administrator and a regional support teammate

*If the parent/guardian requests retention of the student, then the school team must meet with the parent/guardian and present and evaluate the data requested above.

Acceleration

When high academic achievement is evident, the school team may recommend a student for acceleration into a higher grade level to the Regional Executive Director or designee. The student’s maturity level shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

Promotion

Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade level standards of expected student achievement.

Secondary Grading and Transcripts

Students/families may request to withdraw/drop courses or College Academic Counselors may identify a need for withdrawal within the first two (2) weeks of the course only for the following three reasons:

- The student has taken and received credit for the same class previously.
- The student needs to take a required class in lieu of course.

- The course is not required to meet the Aspire graduation requirements.

Re-taking a Class for which a Passing Grade Was Earned

In alignment with UC/CSU policy, a course that was passed with a grade of C- or better cannot be re-taken. If this is done (for example, by error), the original grade is the grade of record, and credit is not earned for the second taking.

Re-taking a Class for which a Passing Grade Was NOT Earned

For cases where a student fails a course, the following are ways for a student to gain credit for a failed course in the preferred order :

1. The student retakes the exact and entire course at your school using an (R) section and completing the live full course with a teacher either during the school year or over the summer.
2. The student takes the entirety of the most similar course through an outside provider that provides a grade report (not an official transcript) such as Edgenuity or Cyber High. On the transcript, it will show as for example, English 10B (Edgenuity), but only the new grade will be included in the CSU GPA calculation.
3. The student takes the entirety of the most similar course through a provider, which could be another school, that provides an official transcript. Both grades will be included in the CSU GPA calculation.

A student must recover credits one of the ways listed above. Grade changes will not be accepted to recover credits. The decision for which course of action (from the list above) a school takes to recover credits for a student is at the discretion of the Principal and Regional Executive Director or designee.

Please note, students must recover the exact same course in order to earn the missing credits and have the failing grade replaced by the passing grade in their GPA.

Special Enrollment Circumstances: Over-Age Students

A pupil who is over the age of 19 years may generate attendance for apportionment reasons only if both of the following conditions are met:

1. the pupil was enrolled in a public school in pursuit of a high school diploma (or, if a student in special education, an IEP) while 19 years of age and, without a break in

public school enrollment since that time, is enrolled and is making satisfactory progress towards award of a high school diploma (or, if a student in special education, satisfactory progress in keeping with an IEP) consistent with the definition of satisfactory progress set forth in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations section 11965 [(5 CCR 11960 (c)(1)(A)(B)); and

2. the pupil is not over the 22 years of age on the date of enrollment.

Aspire encourages all students who are at least eighteen years of age and over to be knowledgeable about any legal consequences that may occur based upon their decisions and actions. For more information on changes to a student's legal status and obligations upon reaching the age of 18, please download a copy of "When You Become 18, A Survival Guide for Teenagers", which is available at www.calbar.ca.gov/portals/0/documents/publications/turn-18.pdf.

In addition, Aspire would like to specifically make all students, and especially students over the age 18, aware of California Penal Code Section 261.5(a), which provides: "Unlawful sexual intercourse is an act of sexual intercourse accomplished with a person who is not the spouse of the perpetrator, if the person is a minor. For the purposes of this section, a minor is a person under the age of 18 years and an adult is a person who is at least 18 years of age."

State Seal of Biliteracy

An Aspire secondary school may choose to participate in the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB) program. An Aspire school that participates in this program must work with the Director of Multi-Language Learner Supports to maintain appropriate records of their identification of qualifying students, who will submit the online Insignia Request Form on behalf of the school. The Insignia Request Form may be submitted at any time; however, it is recommended that requests be submitted far enough in advance to allow time for the California Department of Education (CDE) to process the requests and for insignias to be affixed to diplomas or transcripts. Participation is voluntary and no fee may be charged to the student.

Student Rights And Responsibilities

Notice for Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 5 business days after the day the Charter School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Charter School Executive Director or designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Charter School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Charter School to amend a record should write the Charter School’s Executive Director or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the Charter School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Charter School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. If the Charter School decides to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Executive Director must order the correction or the removal and destruction of the information and inform the parent or eligible student of the amendment in writing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the Charter School discloses personally identifiable information (“PII”) from the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to Charter School officials with legitimate educational interests. A Charter School official is a person employed by the Charter School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the Charter School’s Board of Directors. A Charter School official also may include a volunteer, consultant, vendor, or contractor outside of the Charter School who performs an institutional service or function for which the Charter School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and

maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or contracted provider of digital educational platforms and/or services; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another Charter School official in performing their tasks. A Charter School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.

Upon request, the Charter School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

Note that Charter School will not release information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Charter School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

5. The right to request that the Charter School not release student names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from a student's education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to Charter School officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the Charter School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A Charter School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student to the following parties:

1. Charter School officials who have a legitimate educational interest as defined by 34 C.F.R. Part 99;
2. Other schools to which a student seeks or intends to enroll so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer. When a student transfers schools, the Charter School will mail the original or a copy of a student's cumulative file to the receiving district or private school within ten (10) school days following the date the request is received from the public school or

private school where the student intends to enroll. The Charter School will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the request for records at the parent's or eligible student's last known address, unless the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student. Additionally, the Charter School will give the parent or eligible student, upon request, a copy of the record that was disclosed and give the parent or eligible student, upon request, an opportunity for a hearing;

3. Certain government officials listed in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1) in order to carry out lawful functions;
4. Appropriate parties in connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid if it is necessary to determine eligibility, amount of aid, conditions for aid or enforcing the terms and conditions of the aid;
5. Organizations conducting certain studies for the Charter School in accordance with 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(F);
6. Accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting functions;
7. Parents of a dependent student as defined in section [152 of the Internal Revenue Code](#) of 1986;
8. Individuals or entities, in compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. Subject to the exceptions found in 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(9)(i), reasonable effort must be made to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance, so that the parent or eligible student may seek a protective order;
9. Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies;
10. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law;
11. A foster family agency with jurisdiction over a currently enrolled or former student, a short-term residential treatment program staff responsible for the education or case management of a student, and a caregiver (regardless of whether the caregiver has been appointed as the student's educational rights holder) who has direct responsibility for the care of the student, including a certified or licensed foster parent, an approved relative or nonrelated extended family member, or a resource family, may access the current or most recent records of grades, transcripts, attendance, discipline, and online communication on platforms established by the Charter School for students and parents, and any individualized education program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan that may have been developed or maintained by the Charter School; and/or

12. A victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense. The disclosure may only include the final results of the disciplinary proceedings conducted by the Charter School with respect to that alleged crime or offense. The Charter School discloses the final results of the disciplinary proceeding regardless of whether the Charter School concluded a violation was committed.

“Directory Information” is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The Charter School may disclose the personally identifiable information that it has designated as directory information without a parent’s or eligible student’s prior written consent. The Charter School has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student’s full name
2. Grade enrolled
3. Degrees, honors and awards received
4. Club participation
5. Sports participation, including athlete’s height and/or weight
6. Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student’s social security number, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)
7. Dates of attendance

If you do not want the Charter School to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Charter School in writing at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment.

Please notify the Executive Director. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

Charter School shall not release directory information regarding a student identified as a homeless child or youth under the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act in the absence of parent, guardian, or eligible student’s written consent, except as follows:

- a. When the directory information is released for the purposes of facilitating the student’s access to an oral assessment or eye examination required by Charter School, unless the parent/guardian opts out of the examination.

Please note that data collected and reported by Charter School to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (“CALPADS”²) pursuant to state law, will be automatically shared with the California College Guidance Initiative (“CCGI”³) and will:

- 1) Be used to provide pupils and families with direct access to online tools and resources.
- 2) Enable a pupil to transmit information shared with the CCGI to both of the following:
 - a. Postsecondary educational institutions for purposes of admissions and academic placement.
 - b. The Student Aid Commission for purposes of determining eligibility for, and increasing uptake of, student financial aid.

Please visit the CCGI website at CaliforniaColleges.edu to access resources that help students and their families learn about college admissions requirements.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8009 & 8042 Student Records; Collecting and Retaining Student Records

Student Fees

No student shall be required to pay a fee, deposit, or other charge for their participation in an educational activity which constitutes an integral fundamental part of Aspire’s educational program [Education Code §§ 49010–49013]. This general prohibition against student fees, unless authorized by law, shall not restrict Aspire from soliciting for voluntary donations, participating in fundraising activities, and providing prizes or other recognition for participants in such activities and events. However, Aspire shall not offer or award to a student any course credit or privileges related to educational activities in exchange for voluntary donations or participation in fundraising activities by or on behalf of the student and shall not remove, or threaten to remove, from a student any course credit or privileges related to educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against the student, due to a lack of voluntary donations or participation in fundraising activities by or on behalf of the student. For more information on pupil fees, please see the Uniform Complaint Procedures Notice in the Handbook.

² CALPADS is a database maintained by the CDE which consists of pupil data from elementary and secondary schools relating to, among other things, demographic, program participation, enrollment, and statewide assessments data.

³ CCGI is an authorized provider of an institutional service to all California local educational agencies and part of the state’s efforts to make college-going a more streamlined experience for students. The CCGI currently receives enrollment data for all public-school students enrolled in grades six through twelve from the California Department of Education (“CDE”).

Married, Pregnant, Or Parenting Teens

Pregnant or parenting students, regardless of their marital status, have the right to attend Aspire Public Schools and to participate in any program or activity for which they would otherwise qualify in an environment free from discrimination or harassment [Education Code § 222]. Classes, programs and materials offered to pregnant and parenting students must be equal to those offered to other students and students must be provided access to those classes needed to complete their course of study.

Pregnant and parenting students have a right to full participation in school classes, programs, and activities and the opportunity to succeed academically while protecting their health and the health of their children. It is the school's responsibility to make reasonable accommodations to keep pregnant students safe on campus and facilitate their continued participation. Such accommodations may include, but are not limited to: additional time for use of facilities and class changes and home schooling during absences due to pregnancy related illness or recovery. Students should not be checked out from a school based on their pregnancy or parenting status. Pursuant to AB 2289, a pregnant or parenting pupil is entitled to 8 weeks of parental leave and during this leave, or more if deemed medically necessary by the student's physician, which the student may take before the birth of the student's infant if there is a medical necessity and after childbirth during the school year in which the birth takes place, inclusive of any mandatory summer instruction, in order to protect the health of the student who gives or expects to give birth and the infant, and to allow the pregnant or parenting student to care for and bond with the infant. Absences will be marked as excused.

Upon return to school after taking parental leave, a pregnant or parenting student will be able to make up work missed during the pregnant or parenting student's leave, including, but not limited to, makeup work plans and re-enrollment in courses. Notwithstanding any other law, a pregnant or parenting student may remain enrolled for a fifth year of instruction in their school if it is necessary in order for the student to be able to complete any graduation requirements, unless the school determines that the student is reasonably able to complete the graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pregnant or parenting students may be filed under the Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") of Aspire Public Schools. The complaint may be filed in writing with the compliance officer:

Regional Director of Student Services, Bay Area Region
1009 66th Avenue
Oakland, CA 94621
510-567-9631
Pamela.Saberton@aspirepublicschools.org

Regional Director of Student Services, Central Valley Region

4202 Coronado Ave
Stockton, CA 95204
209-647-3047
Hugo.Vazquez@aspirepublicschools.org

Superintendent of Culturally Responsive Leadership Development, Los Angeles Region
5901 E. Slauson Avenue
Commerce, CA 90040
323-277-2901
Joel.Ramirez@aspirepublicschools.org

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8023: Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students Policy

Professional Boundaries: Adult/Student Interaction Policy

This policy applies to all Aspire School employees, volunteers, contractors, and governing board (“Board”) members⁴ (collectively referred to as “adults” herein).

Professional Boundaries and Conduct

Aspire Public Schools recognizes its responsibility to make and enforce all rules and regulations governing student and adult behavior to bring about the safest and most learning-conducive environment possible.

Corporal Punishment

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 property.

For clarification purposes, the following examples are offered for direction and guidance of School employees, volunteers, contractors, and Board members:

Examples of Permitted Actions (Not Corporal Punishment):

1. Stopping a student from fighting with another student.

⁴ This policy does not apply to student board members under Education Code 47604.2, or otherwise.

2. Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism.
3. Defending oneself from physical injury or assault by a student.
4. Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object.
5. Requiring a student on an athletic team to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition team members or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills;
6. Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities.

Examples of Prohibited Actions (Corporal Punishment):

1. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control.
2. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment.
3. Paddling, swatting, slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain.

This policy is intended to guide adults in conducting themselves in a way that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of them and to specify the boundaries between adults and students.

Although this policy gives specific, clear direction, it is each adult's obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents/guardians, students, colleagues, or School leaders. One viable standard that can be quickly applied, when you are unsure if certain conduct is acceptable, is to ask yourself, "Would I be engaged in this conduct if my family or colleagues were standing next to me?"

For the purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by an adult while interacting with a student, whether during school hours or outside of school hours, including through social media platforms, text messaging, and other forms of communication that do not otherwise include a student's parent/guardian. Trespassing the boundaries of a student/adult relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Professional boundaries apply not only between students and staff, volunteers, and contractors, and Board members, but also among and between students, and among and between adults employed, volunteering, or under contract with the School. All members of the School community are expected to maintain professional conduct that models appropriate behavior and fosters a safe and respectful learning environment. Additionally, all facilities/areas under School control shall be effectively supervised to promote a safe environment for students and individuals performing services on behalf of the School.

Some activities may seem innocent from an adult's perspective, but can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from a student or parent/guardian point of view. The

objective of the following lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between adults and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived as, sexual misconduct.

Adults must understand their own responsibility for ensuring that they do not cross the boundaries as written in this policy. Disagreeing with the wording or intent of the established boundaries will be considered irrelevant for disciplinary purposes. Thus, it is crucial that all adults learn this policy thoroughly and apply the lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors to their daily activities. Although sincere, competent interaction with students certainly fosters learning, student/adult interactions must have boundaries surrounding potential activities, locations, and intentions.

Duty to Report Suspected Misconduct

When any employee reasonably suspects or believes that another staff member may have crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, they must immediately report the matter to a School administrator. All reports shall be as confidential as possible under the circumstances. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse, child abuse, or neglect.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Staff/Student Behavior

Aspire Public Schools is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment. The following guidelines outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviors to maintain appropriate boundaries between staff and students. This policy is intended to inform students and families about the high standards of behavior and professionalism expected from school staff.

Examples of Specific Behaviors

The following examples are not an exhaustive list:**Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors:**

- Giving personal and intimate gifts to students.
- Kissing of any kind
- Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student
- Being alone with a student away from school grounds without parental permission.
- Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments, jokes, or stories.
- Seeking emotional involvement with a student or discussing personal troubles or intimate issues with a student.

- Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities without parental permission and formal approval.
- Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior.
- Being alone in a room with a student at School with the door closed.
- Allowing students in your home.
- Communication with students via an employee's personal accounts, such as email and/or social media.
- Remarks about the physical attributes or development of anyone.
- Excessive attention toward a particular student. Any use of racial slurs, even when quoting language used by other individuals.

Acceptable Staff/Student Behaviors:

- Obtaining parents' written consent for any off site of after-school activity and obtaining formal approval to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions.
- Professional Emails, texts, phone and instant messages to students pertaining to school activities or classes (communication shall be limited to school technology)
- Giving students praise and recognition without touching them, and keeping after-class discussions with students professional and brief.
- Keeping the door open when alone with a student.
- Keeping reasonable space between you and your students.
Stopping and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries.
- Keeping parents/guardians informed when a significant issue develops about a student.
- Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief.
- Asking for advice from fellow staff or administrators if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries.
- Involving your supervisor if conflict arises with the student.
- Informing the Principal about situations that have the potential to become more severe.
- Making detailed notes about an incident that could evolve into a more serious situation later.
- Recognizing the responsibility to stop unacceptable behavior of students or coworkers.
- Asking another staff member to be present if you will be alone with any student with special needs.
- Asking another staff member to be present when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours.
- Giving students praise and recognition without touching them.
- High fives, fist bumps, and handshakes are acceptable.
- Keeping your professional conduct a high priority.
- Asking yourself if your actions are worth your job and career.

If any student or parent suspects that a staff member has crossed professional boundaries, they should immediately report the matter to a school administrator. All reports will be kept as confidential as possible and will be appropriately investigated.

Section 504 Plan

The Charter School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity, including, but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodations by the Charter School. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for accommodations under Section 504 may make a referral for an evaluation to the Principal. A copy of the Charter School's Section 504 policies and procedures is available upon request at the main office.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8041 Identification And Education Under Section 504

Special Education

Aspire Public Schools serves all students, regardless of their disability. The Charter School provides special education instruction and related services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEA"), Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and procedures of each Charter School's SELPA. These services are available for special education students enrolled at the Charter School. Schools are obligated to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Referral for special education eligibility and services may come from teachers, parents, agencies, appropriate professional persons, and from other members of the public. Special Education referrals will be coordinated with school site procedures for students with needs that cannot be met with modifications of the regular instructional program, including referrals from student intervention teams, such as the Student Study Team (SST). . (For more information on the Special Education referral process, see the section [Child Find and Special Education Notification](#))

Parent's Procedural Safeguards:

Procedural safeguards refer to the educational rights of students with disabilities ages three through 21 and their parents, legal guardians, or surrogate parents under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the California Education Code. Adult students with disabilities who have reached the age of 18, referred to as the age of majority, are also entitled to these rights unless deemed unable to make their own educational decisions under California law. In addition to the requirement to provide notice of procedural safeguards at least once per year, a copy must also be provided to parents [34 CFR §300.504; EDC §56301(d)(2); EDC § 56321; and EDC § 56341.1(g)(1)]: (a) Upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation. (b) When sending out an Assessment Plan and/or Prior

Written Notice. (c) Upon receipt of the first state complaint in the school year. (d) Upon receipt of the first due process complaint in the school year. (e) In accordance with disciplinary procedures. (f) Upon parental request.

REFERENCE: El Dorado County Charter SELPA Procedural Guide

Child Find and Special Education Notification

If a student is eligible for Special Education, the programs and services are provided at no cost to you. Programs and services are individualized based on the needs identified for the student and may include specialized academic instruction, behavioral intervention services, speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, and other special education related services. Developmental screening and/or comprehensive assessments for children who are suspected of having a disability which could adversely affect their educational development are provided at no cost to you.

A student must be evaluated and identified as having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to be eligible for special education programs and related services. Assessment is the process to determine a student's needs and eligibility for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs. Assessments must address all areas related to the suspected disability and be conducted by a multidisciplinary team, including the parent. The evaluation will result in a written report consistent with Education Code § 56327.

Whenever a parent provides a request for assessment, the LEA has 15 days (tolled for school breaks in excess of 5 days) to review the request and respond in writing. If the LEA determines that assessment is appropriate, an assessment plan will be developed and a copy given to the parents/guardians. Parents/guardians have 15 days to respond to the proposed assessment plan. The assessment will begin upon receipt of the parent's written consent to the Individual Assessment Plan. The assessment must be completed and the IEP meeting held within 60 days of receipt (tolled for school breaks in excess of 5 days) of parent's written consent.

If any Aspire Public Schools family has questions or concerns with regard to an enrolled student receiving special education services, you have the right to request assistance in addition to copies of policies, procedures, evaluations, plans and reports by contacting the Aspire Regional Special Education office. Appointments or further information can be obtained by contacting the Aspire Regional Special Education office or by requesting information from your local school principal.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8041 Identification And Education Under Section 504

Education of Homeless Children and Youth (McKinney-Vento Reauthorization of 2002)

The term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. It includes children and youths who (42 U.S.C. § 11434a):

1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
2. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
3. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and/or
4. Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition of “homeless.”

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parent or guardian. In the case of unaccompanied youth, status is determined by the McKinney-Vento Liaison at each school site. The contact information for this liaison can be obtained from the school's main website.

The liaison shall ensure that (42 U.S.C § 11432(g)(6)):

1. Homeless students are identified by Aspire personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies and through the annual housing questionnaire administered by Aspire.
2. Homeless students enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at Aspire.
3. Homeless students and families receive educational services for which they are eligible, including services through Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs) under the Head Start Act, early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, any other preschool programs administered by Aspire, if any, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.

4. Parents/guardians are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated at places frequented by parents or guardians of such youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, and in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless youth and unaccompanied youth.
6. Enrollment/admissions disputes are mediated in accordance with law, the School's charter, and Board policy.
7. Parents/guardians and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, as applicable.
8. Aspire personnel providing services receive professional development and other support.
9. The Liaison collaborates with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.
10. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school; have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth; and are informed of their status as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and that the youths may obtain assistance from the Liaison to receive verification of such status for the purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of the Act.

The California Department of Education publishes a list of the contact information for the Homeless Education Liaisons in the state, which is available at:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/>

Housing Questionnaire: Aspire shall administer a housing questionnaire for purposes of identifying homeless children and youth. Aspire shall ensure that the housing questionnaire is based on the best practices developed by the CDE. Aspire shall annually provide the housing questionnaire to all parents/guardians of students and to all unaccompanied youths at Aspire. The housing questionnaire shall include an explanation of the rights and protections a student has as a homeless child or youth or as an unaccompanied youth. The housing questionnaire shall be available in paper form. The housing questionnaire shall be available in English, and if fifteen (15) percent or more of the students enrolled Aspire speak a single primary language other than English, it shall also be written in the primary language. The questionnaire shall be translated into other languages upon request of a student's parent/guardian or an unaccompanied youth. Aspire shall collect the completed housing questionnaires and annually report to the CDE the number of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths enrolled. (Education Code Section 48851.)

School Stability: Aspire will work with homeless students and their parent/guardian to ensure that each student is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has

access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all students, including, but not necessarily limited to, interscholastic sports. All decisions regarding a homeless student's education and placement will be based on the best interest of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin if it is in their best interest. Aspire will immediately enroll a homeless student seeking re enrollment in the School as the student's school of origin (subject to the School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the School's charter and Board policy). Aspire will also immediately enroll any homeless student seeking to transfer to the School (subject to the School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the School's charter and Board policy) regardless of the student's ability to meet normal enrollment documentation or uniform requirements (e.g., producing medical records or academic records from a previous school).

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin following the termination of the child's status as a homeless student as follows:

1. For students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, inclusive, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year in which the student's status changed.
2. For students enrolled in high school, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through graduation.

If the School operates an intersession program, the School shall grant priority access to homeless students. Notwithstanding any other law, if the homeless student will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's parent, guardian, educational rights holder, Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, or, if none of the preceding are applicable, an accompanied homeless student themselves shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable. "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by the School on non school days, including, but not limited to, summer school. "Indian custodian" is as the term is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

High School Graduation Requirements: Homeless students who transfer to the School any time after the completion of their second year of high school shall be exempt from any of the School's graduation requirements that are in excess of the California minimum graduation requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 ("additional graduation requirements") unless the School makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the School's graduation requirements by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

To determine whether a homeless student is in their third or fourth year of high school, either the number of credits the student has earned to the date of transfer, the length of the student's school enrollment, or, for pupils with significant gaps in school attendance, the pupil's age as compared to the average age of pupils in the third or fourth year of high school may be used, whichever will qualify the student for the exemption.

Within **thirty (30) calendar days** of the date that a student who may qualify for exemption under the above requirements transfers into the School, the School shall notify the student, the student's educational rights holder ("ERH"), and the School Liaison of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for an exemption.

The School shall notify and consult with students who are exempted from the School's additional graduation requirements and the student's ERH. The consultation shall include all of the following:

1. Discussion regarding how any of the requirements that are waived may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
2. Discussion and information about other options available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, a fifth year of high school, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
3. Consideration of the pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed⁵ decision on whether to accept the exemption.

The School shall not require any student who would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the School to accept the exemption from the School's additional graduation requirements or deny the student enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which the student is otherwise eligible. The School shall not revoke an exemption and shall grant an eligible student's request for the exemption at any time if the student qualifies, regardless of whether the student previously declined the exemption.

If a homeless student who was eligible for an exemption and 1) was not properly notified of the availability of the exemption, or 2) previously declined the exemption pursuant to this Policy, the School shall exempt the student within thirty (30) days of the exemption request, if an exemption is requested by the student or the student's ERH and the student at one time qualified for the exemption, even if the student is no longer homeless.

An eligible student's exemption from the School's additional graduation requirements will continue to apply while the student is enrolled in the School or if the student transfers to another school even after the student no longer meets the definition of a homeless child.

⁵ [1] "Indian custodian" means any Indian person who has legal custody of an Indian child under tribal law or custom or under State law or to whom temporary physical care, custody, and control has been transferred by the parent of such child. *Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code*

The School shall not require or request that a student transfer schools in order to qualify the student for the exemption. Nor shall a student, a student's parent/guardian or educational rights holder, or a student's social worker or probation officer request a transfer solely to qualify for an exemption from the School's additional graduation requirements.

If a student who is exempted from the School's additional graduation requirements completes the California minimum coursework requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 before the end of the student's fourth year of high school and would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the School, the School shall not require or request that the student graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

If the School determines the student is reasonably able to complete the School's additional graduation requirements by the end of the student's fifth year of high school, the School shall do the following:

1. Consult with the student and the student's ERH regarding the student's option to remain at the School for a fifth year to complete the School's graduation requirements, consistent with the laws regarding continuous enrollment and satisfactory progress for School students over age 19.
2. Consult with the student, and the ERH for the student, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the School's graduation requirements will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
3. Consult with and provide information to the student and the student's ERH about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. Permit the student to stay at the School for a fifth year to complete the School's graduation requirements upon agreement with the student, if the student is 18 years of age or older, or, if the student is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the student's ERH.
5. Consult with the student, and the student's ERH, regarding the student's option to remain in the school of origin.

Through January 1, 2028, upon making a finding that a homeless student is not reasonably able to complete the School's additional graduation requirements but is reasonably able to complete state coursework requirements specified in Education Code Section 51225.3 within the student's fifth year of high school, the Principal or designee shall exempt the pupil from School's graduation requirements and provide pupil the option of remaining in school for a fifth (5th) year to complete the statewide coursework requirements. The School shall consult with the homeless student and the student's ERH regarding all of the following:

1. The pupil's option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.
2. How waiving the local educational requirements and remaining in school for a fifth year may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to a institution of higher education.

3. Whether any other options are available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. The pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption and option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.

If a homeless student is not eligible for an exemption in the year in which the pupil transfers between schools, because School makes a finding that the pupil is reasonably able to complete School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, then the School shall do the following:

1. Within the first 30 calendar days of the following academic year, the School shall reevaluate eligibility;
2. Provide written notice to the pupil, the ERH, and the pupil's social worker or probation officer, if applicable, whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption upon reevaluation, based on the course completion status of the pupil at the time of reevaluation, to determine if the pupil continues to be reasonably able to complete the School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school.
3. If, given their course completion status at that time the reevaluation is conducted, the pupil is not reasonably able to complete the School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, the School shall provide written notice to the pupil and the ERH of the pupil's options to:
 - i. Receive an exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the governing board body of School that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3, or
 - ii. Upon agreement with the ERH, stay in school for a fifth year to complete the School's additional graduation requirements.

The pupil (if not a minor) or the ERH shall have sole discretion whether to accept the exemption, based on the pupil's best educational interests.

Reporting Requirements: Aspire shall report to the California Department of Education ("CDE") annually on the number of pupils who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from the School's graduation requirements that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements. This data shall be reported for pupils graduating in the fourth year and fifth year cohorts, and shall be disaggregated by cohort, pupil category, race, and disability status. The CDE shall make this data publicly available on an annual basis aligned with other reporting timelines for the California dashboard graduation data.

Acceptance of Course Work: Aspire will accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at any public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency by a homeless student.

Aspire will provide homeless students credit for the partial completion of courses taken while attending a public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the student did not complete the entire course, the School shall not require the student to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the student, finds that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the homeless student shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire course. These students shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet California State University or the University of California admission eligibility requirements.

Complaints of Noncompliance: A complaint of noncompliance with any of the requirements outlined above may be filed through the Aspire Uniform Complaint Procedures. A copy of the Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures is available upon request at the main office.

Availability of Complete Policy: For any homeless student who enrolls at the Charter School, a copy of the Charter School's complete policy shall be provided at the time of enrollment. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.**REFERENCE:** Board Policy 8028 Education for Homeless Students

Education of Foster and Mobile Children and Youth

Definitions: For the purposes of this annual notice the terms are defined as follows:

- “Foster youth” means any of the following:
 1. A child who has been removed from their home pursuant to Section **309** of the California Welfare and Institutions Code (“WIC”).
 2. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to WIC section 300 or 602 (whether or not the child has been removed from the child's home by juvenile court).
 3. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to WIC section 602, has been removed from the child's home by the juvenile court, and is in foster care.
 4. A nonminor under the transition jurisdiction of the juvenile court, as described in WIC section 450, who satisfies all of the following criteria:

- a. The nonminor has attained 18 years of age while under an order of foster care placement by the juvenile court.
 - b. The nonminor is in foster care under the placement and care responsibility of the county welfare department, county probation department, Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization.
 - c. The nonminor is participating in a transitional independent living case plan.
- 5. A dependent child of the court of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization who is the subject of a petition filed in the tribal court.⁶
- 6. A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in WIC section 11400.
- “*Former juvenile court school student*” means a student who, upon completion of the student’s second year of high school, transfers from a juvenile court school to the Charter School.
- “*Child of a military family*” refers to a student who resides in the household of an active duty military member.
- “*Currently Migratory Child*” refers to a child who, within the last 12-months, has moved with a parent, guardian, or other person having custody to the Charter School from another Local Educational Agency (“LEA”), either within California or from another state, so that the child or a member of the child’s immediate family might secure temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity, and whose parents or guardians have been informed of the child’s eligibility for migrant education services. This includes a child who, without the parent/guardian, has continued to migrate annually to secure temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity.
- “*Newcomer pupil*” is a person aged 3 to 21 years, who was not born in any of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, for more than three (3) full academic years. This also includes a “pupil participating in a newcomer program,” as defined in Education Code section 51225.2, as that section read on January 1, 2023, who was enrolled in the Charter School before January 1, 2024. The Charter School may, in its discretion, also extend the rights in Education Code sections 51225.1 and 51225.2 to a “pupil participating in a newcomer program,” as defined in Education Code section 51225.2, as that section read on January 1, 2023.

⁶ The Charter School shall not require an Indian tribe or tribal court representative to certify that any student is a dependent of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization.

- *“Educational Rights Holder” (“ERH”)* means a parent, guardian, or responsible adult appointed by a court to make educational decisions for a minor pursuant to WIC sections 319, 361 or 726, or a person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student pursuant to Education Code section 56055.
- *“School of origin”* means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster youth was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the student was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the Charter School liaison for foster youth, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the ERH for the youth, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster youth, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin. For a foster youth who is an individual with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code section 56026, “school” as used in the definition of “school of origin” includes a placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school as defined in Education Code section 56034, subject to the requirements of Education Code section 56325.
- *“Best interests”* means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational program and the foster youth’s access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all Charter School students.
- *“Partial coursework satisfactorily completed”* includes any portion of an individual course, even if the student did not complete the entire course.

Within this notice, foster youth, former juvenile court school students, a child of a military family, a currently migratory child, and a newcomer pupil will be collectively referred to as “Foster and Mobile Youth.” Within this notice, a parent, guardian, or other person holding the educational rights for a Foster and Mobile Youth will be referred to as a “parent/guardian” or “ERH.”

Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison: The contact information for this liaison can be obtained from the school's main website.

The Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison’s responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

1. Ensuring and facilitating the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children.
2. Assisting foster children when transferring from one school to another school in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records and grades.

School Stability: The Charter School will work with foster youth and their parent/guardian to ensure that each student is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all students, including, but not necessarily limited to, interscholastic sports. All decisions regarding a foster youth's education and placement will be based on the best interest of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

Foster youth, currently migratory children and children of military families have the right to remain in their school of origin if it is in their best interest. The Charter School will immediately enroll a foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family seeking reenrollment in the Charter School as the student's school of origin (subject to the Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy). If a dispute arises regarding a foster youth's request to remain in the Charter School as the school of origin, the foster youth has the right to remain in the Charter School pending the resolution of the dispute. The Charter School will also immediately enroll any foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family seeking to transfer to the Charter School (subject to the Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy) regardless of the student's ability to meet normal enrollment documentation or uniform requirements (e.g., producing medical records or academic records from a previous school).

Foster youth, currently migratory children, and children of military families have the right to remain in their school of origin following the termination of the child's status as a foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family, as follows:

1. For students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, inclusive, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year in which the student's status changed.
2. For students enrolled in high school, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through graduation.

If the Charter School operates an intersession program, Charter School shall grant priority access to foster youths. Notwithstanding any other law, if the foster youth will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's educational rights holder, or Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable. "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by the Charter School on nonschooldays, including, but not limited to, summer school. "Indian custodian" is as the term is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

High School Graduation Requirements: Foster and Mobile Youth who transfer to the Charter School any time after the completion of their second year of high school, and newcomer pupils who are in their third or fourth year of high school, shall be exempt from any of the

Charter School's graduation requirements that are in excess of the California minimum graduation requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 ("additional graduation requirements") unless the Charter School makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

To determine whether a Foster and Mobile Youth is in their third or fourth year of high school, either the number of credits the student has earned to the date of transfer, the length of the student's school enrollment, or, for students with significant gaps in school attendance, the student's age as compared to the average age of students in the third or fourth year of high school, may be used, whichever will qualify the student for the exemption. For a newcomer pupil, enrollment in grade 11 or 12, based on the average age of students in the third or fourth year of high school, may be used to determine whether the student is in their third or fourth year of high school.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date that a student who may qualify for exemption under the above requirements transfers into the Charter School, the Charter School shall notify the student, the parent/guardian, and where applicable, the student's social worker or probation officer, of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for an exemption.

The Charter School shall notify and consult with students who are exempted from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements and the student's ERH. The consultation shall include all of the following:

1. Discussion regarding how any of the requirements that are waived may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
2. Discussion and information about other options available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, a fifth year of high school, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
3. Consideration of the pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption.

The Charter School shall not require any student who would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the Charter School to accept the exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements or deny the student enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which the student is otherwise eligible. The Charter School shall not revoke an exemption and shall grant an eligible student's request for the exemption at any time if the student qualifies, regardless of whether the student previously declined the exemption.

If a Foster and Mobile Youth who was eligible for an exemption and 1) was not properly notified of the availability of the exemption, or 2) previously declined the exemption pursuant to this Policy, the Charter School shall exempt the student within thirty (30) days of the exemption request, if an exemption is requested by the student or the student's ERH and the student at one time qualified for the exemption, even if the student is no longer a Foster and Mobile Youth or the court's jurisdiction of the pupil has terminated.

An eligible student's exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements will continue to apply while the student is enrolled in the Charter School or if the student transfers to another school even after the court's jurisdiction terminates or the student no longer meets the definition of Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School shall not require or request that a student transfer schools in order to qualify the student for the exemption. Nor shall a student, a student's parent/guardian or educational rights holder, or a student's social worker or probation officer request a transfer solely to qualify for an exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements.

If a student who is exempted from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements completes the California minimum coursework requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 before the end of the student's fourth year of high school and would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the Charter School, the Charter School shall not require or request that the student graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

If the Charter School determines the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements by the end of the student's fifth year of high school, the Charter School shall do the following:

1. Consult with the student and the student's ERH regarding the student's option to remain at the Charter School for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements, consistent with the laws regarding continuous enrollment and satisfactory progress for Charter School students over age 19.
2. Consult with the student, and the ERH for the student, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
3. Consult with and provide information to the student and the student's ERH about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. Permit the student to stay at the Charter School for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements upon agreement with the student, if the

student is 18 years of age or older, or, if the student is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the student's ERH.

5. For a student identified as a foster youth, consult with the student, and the student's ERH, regarding the student's option to remain in the school of origin.

Through January 1, 2028, upon making a finding that a Foster and Mobile Youth **is not reasonably able to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements but is reasonably able to complete state coursework requirements specified in Education Code Section 51225.3** within the student's fifth year of high school, the Executive Director or designee shall exempt the pupil from Charter School's graduation requirements and provide pupil the option of remaining in school for a fifth (5th) year to complete the statewide coursework requirements. Charter School shall consult with the Foster and Mobile Youth and their ERH regarding all of the following:

1. The pupil's option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.
2. How waiving the local educational requirements and remaining in school for a fifth year may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to an institution of higher education.
3. Whether any other options are available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. The pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption and option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.

If a Foster and Mobile Youth is not eligible for an exemption in the year in which the pupil transfers between schools, or for a newcomer pupil, is not eligible for an exemption in the student's third year of high school, because Charter School makes a finding that the pupil is reasonably able to complete Charter School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, then Charter School shall do the following:

1. Within the first 30 calendar days of the **following** academic year, Charter School shall reevaluate eligibility;
2. Provide written notice to the pupil, the pupil's ERH, and the pupil's social worker or probation officer, if applicable, whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption upon reevaluation, based on the course completion status of the pupil at the time of reevaluation, to determine if the pupil continues to be reasonably able to complete Charter School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school.

3. If, given their course completion status at that time the reevaluation is conducted, the pupil is not reasonably able to complete Charter School additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, the Charter School shall provide written notice to the pupil and the pupil's ERH of the pupil's options to:
 - i. Receive an exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the governing board body of Charter School that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3, or
 - ii. Upon agreement with the pupil's ERH, stay in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements.

The pupil (if not a minor) or the pupil's ERH shall have sole discretion whether to accept the exemption, based on the pupil's best educational interests.

Reporting Requirements: Charter School shall report to the California Department of Education ("CDE") annually on the number of pupils who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from the Charter School's graduation requirements that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements. This data shall be reported for pupils graduating in the fourth year and fifth year cohorts, and shall be disaggregated by cohort, pupil category, race, and disability status. The CDE shall make this data publicly available on an annual basis aligned with other reporting timelines for the California dashboard graduation data. For purposes of this notice, "pupil category" means the categories of pupils identified in the "Definitions" section of this Policy, above.

Acceptance of Course Work: The Charter School will accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at any public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency by a Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School will provide Foster and Mobile Youth credit for the partial completion of courses taken while attending a public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the student did not complete the entire course, the Charter School shall not require the student to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the Charter School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the student, finds that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the Foster and Mobile Youth shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire course. These students shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet California State University or the University of California admission eligibility requirements.

Student Records: When the Charter School receives a transfer request and/or student records request for the educational information and records of a foster youth from a new local educational agency (“LEA”), the Charter School shall provide these student records within two (2) business days. The Charter School shall compile the complete educational record of the student, including but not limited to a determination of seat time, full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization and other records, and, if applicable, a copy of the student’s special education records including assessments, IEPs, and/or 504 plans. All requests for student records will be shared with the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison, who shall be aware of the specific educational recordkeeping needs of Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School shall not lower a foster youth’s grades as a result of the student’s absence due to a verified court appearance, related court ordered activity, or a change the placement of the student made by a county or placing agency. If a foster youth is absent from school due to a decision to change the placement of the student made by a county or placing agency, the grades and credits of the pupil will be calculated as of the date the student left the Charter School.

In accordance with the Charter School’s educational records and student information Policy, under limited circumstances, the Charter School may disclose student records or personally identifiable information contained in those records to certain requesting parties including but not limited to a foster family agency and state and local authorities within a juvenile justice system, without parent/guardian consent. Students who are 16 years of age or older or have finished 10th grade may access their own school records.

Discipline Determinations: If the Charter School intends to extend the suspension of any foster youth pending a recommendation for expulsion, the Charter School will invite the student’s attorney and an appropriate representative from the relevant county agency to participate in the meeting at which the extension of the suspension will be discussed.

If the Charter School intends to suspend for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expel a student with a disability who is also a foster youth due to an act for which the recommendation for expulsion is discretionary, the Charter School will invite the student’s attorney and an appropriate representative from the relevant county agency to participate in the Manifestation Determination Review meeting.

Complaints of Noncompliance: A complaint of noncompliance with any of the requirements outlined above may be filed through the Charter School’s Uniform Complaint Procedures. A copy of the Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures is available upon request at the main office.

Availability of Complete Policy: For any Foster and Mobile Youth who enrolls at the Charter School, a copy of the Charter School's complete foster youth policy shall be provided at the time of enrollment. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8040 Education For Foster Youth

Social-Emotional School Counseling Programs

This section provides general information about the counseling services at Aspire schools. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the particular requirements for mental health services at a specific school nor do all Aspire schools have the capacity to provide counseling services. Please contact the school's main office to determine specific protocols at this school site.

School-based, social-emotional counseling is available on a limited basis through our school counseling department. However, the scope of practice for a school based Mental Health Therapist is much more limited than that of an outside therapy agency or provider. School based Mental Health Therapists work with students focused on issues that are present during the school day, specifically working to ameliorate presenting problems' impact on a student's educational achievement. **Counseling in the school setting is not meant to replace therapeutic interventions or treatment from outside agencies or providers for mental health concerns.** Parents should not expect the level of counseling at a school site to be sufficient to support the needs of students with significant mental health issues. Additionally, school based counseling services are only available during regular school days and times.

Counseling services are not guaranteed for students. Students referred for services may be placed on a waiting list until such time as the counseling staff has an opening. Students may be moved on the wait-list based on school discretion and applicable State and Federal laws. As stated above, however, school counseling resources are limited and counseling services are not guaranteed for every referral received.

For information about resources available in your community, please contact your school's front office to speak with a staff member. The following are resources available nationally:

Resources available nationally:

- National Suicide Prevention Hotline - This organization provides confidential support for adults and youth in distress, including prevention and crisis resources. Available 24 hours at 1-800-273-8255.

- The Trevor Project - This organization provides suicide prevention and crisis intervention for LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13 and 24. Available at 1-866-488-7386 or visit <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>.
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America – This organization is a community- based mentorship program. Community-specific program information can be found online at <https://www.bbbs.org> or by calling (813) 720-8778.

Extra-curricular Involvement

Student Organizations Policy

Aspire believes that encouraging students to organize according to a wide variety of interests is part of accomplishing its mission statement. No student organization shall be denied based solely on its topic or subject. However, no student organization shall be formed that, through its bylaws or practices, excludes or harms any member of the student body on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code § 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, immigration status, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics) and Education Code § 221.5, or that in philosophy or practice does not comply with the mission, expectations, and rules of Aspire or the school.

Student Expression And Media Policy

All students are entitled to enjoy the rights protected by the Federal and State constitution and laws for persons of their age and maturity in a school setting [Education Code §§ 48907, 48950]. Students should exercise these rights reasonably and avoid disrupting school activities or violating the rights of others. For example, protected freedom of expression does not include acts or threats of violence, harassment or hate speech. Students who violate the rights of others or violate school policies or rules may be subject to disciplinary measures, as the circumstances warrant.

Freedom of expression shall include the right to present a point of view; the right to dissent; and the right to silence and privacy. Student freedom of expression shall be limited only as allowed by law in order to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights, health, and safety of all members of the school community.

Please see the Student Freedom of Speech and Expression Policy on the website for more information.

Clubs and Activities

Students must maintain an overall grade point average (G.P.A) of at least 2.0 in all course work attempted and/or be passing all classes in order to participate in any extra or

co-curricular activity. Activity & Athletic eligibility are discussed fully in Aspire Board Policies and Administrative Regulations. A co-curricular activity is defined as a program that may be associated with the curriculum in a regular classroom that meets one of the following criteria:

- The program is supervised by an Aspire employee.
- The program's finances are overseen by the school.
- Students participating in the program represent the school.
- The program includes both preparation for and performance before an audience or spectators.
- In essence, for a student to be eligible for activities:
- The student is currently enrolled in **at least** 30 semester credits of academic school work, **AND**
- The student has accrued the equivalent of at least 25 semester credits of academic work at the completion of the most recent grading period, **AND**
- The student is maintaining minimum progress toward meeting the high school graduation requirements as prescribed by Aspire's Board of Directors; **AND**
- The student has maintained, during the previous quarter at least a 2.0 GPA (on a 4.0 GPA scale—inclusive of any Community College Credits) in all enrolled courses [Education Code §§ 35179, 48930-48938].

Athletics

In addition to the policy above, Aspire Public Schools follows the guidelines established by the CIF Blue Book.

1. Athletes must meet the Aspire Eligibility requirements.
2. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 for the previous grading period to remain eligible. In accordance with CIF, students who fall below 2.0 may be placed on probation for one quarter. Additionally, athletes must meet the Aspire eligibility requirements
3. Students must exhibit satisfactory citizenship and conduct on and off the field.
4. Students must observe all regulations outlined in the current edition of the CIF Blue Book.
5. Students must pass a physical examination given by a medical doctor.

6. Students may provide evidence of their own personal insurance, but are not required to have personal insurance. The Aspire Public Schools liability insurance provides limited coverage so that all students may participate in athletic programs.

Student Behavior and Discipline

Notice of Regulations

The Aspire school's administration shall ensure that students and their parents/ guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies, rules and procedures. This handbook satisfies this requirement by describing expectations for student behavior, plans for managing student behavior and consequences for not adhering to expectations.

Positive Behavior Support Systems

Aspire Public Schools is committed to supporting all students through the implementation of systems that build a positive school culture. This includes both overarching intervention frameworks as well as specific culture and positive behavior building programs. Some specific systems we use include:

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS):

- MTSS is the next evolution of Response to Intervention, which focuses much more on the whole child and creates a tiered system of support that takes into account not just academic or behavioral needs, but also the impact of the environment on these needs.
- Trauma-Informed Practices: We recognize the real impact trauma has on individual students and our broader community. Aspire Public Schools strives to use trauma-informed practices, including creating classrooms that are predictable and consistent, so that our students' environment is a safe space for learning.
- Restorative Practices (RP): RP promotes positive relationships and community building while providing meaningful opportunities for members of the school community to share the responsibility for making our schools a safe and nurturing environment. Restorative Practices are used throughout all tiers of support and intervention to create positive school culture, alternative discipline and change.
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Our approach to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is to create a positive school climate and culture and foster the social and emotional growth of our scholars and teammates through adopting an intentional focus on the integration of SEL throughout our entire instructional pyramid and beyond. Aspire will be moving forward with an Aspire-wide TK-12 adoption and roll out of SEL principles

and programming. Our Social and Emotional Learning Program is a key element in advancing our Equity efforts at Aspire, by ensuring each scholar is receiving the types and appropriate level of support they need to reach their potential.

Aspire is committed to supporting our students' social and emotional development to be caring and productive citizens. We engage in culturally responsive and equitable practices in our communities of students, families, and teammates to cultivate the following lifelong skills in each Aspire scholar and educator:

- Managing emotions and behaviors
- Feeling and expressing empathy and compassion for others
- Making responsible decisions
- Setting and achieving positive goals

Aspire Public Schools utilizes proven SEL programs and other techniques to include SEL in our regular day program. This program is in addition to the many other culture and skill building opportunities occurring at your child's school.

Behavior Management Cycle

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. These rules and procedures will clearly describe the Aspire School's discipline expectations, and it will be printed and distributed as part of the annual notifications that are sent to each student at the beginning of the school year.

Discipline includes, but is not limited to, advising and conferring with students, conferring with parents/ guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

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 these regulations, 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.

Alternative Means of Correction

For a student facing discipline for a discretionary offense listed below, the Executive Director 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.

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 school's attendance expectations shall be addressed in accordance with Charter School Attendance and Truancy 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 Executive Director 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 racist bullying, harassment, or intimidation, Charter School may require both the victim and perpetrator to engage in restorative justice practices. Charter School may also require perpetrators to engage in culturally sensitive programs that promote racial justice and equity to combat racism and ignorance.

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.

At the discretion of an administrator, a student can complete any combination of (but not limited to) the following alternatives to suspension listed below:

- Research Project
- Presentation
- Campus Beautification
- Family Meeting or Shadow
- Community Service
- Check-In/Check-Out

The alternative to suspension must be completed during the time frame determined by the administrator.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Aspire's Board of Directors desires to provide all Aspire scholars access to educational opportunities in an orderly school environment that protects their safety and security, ensures their welfare and well-being, and promotes their learning and development. The Board shall develop rules and regulations setting the standards of behavior expected of district students and the disciplinary processes and procedures for addressing violations of those standards, including suspension and/or expulsion. Aspire's Board of Directors believes that behavior communicates need; as such, we use logical consequences, alternatives to suspension, MTSS interventions, and Restorative Practices whenever possible.

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 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("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. The Charter School 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 or for whom the Charter School 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 the Charter School for any reason unless the parent/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/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. If a student's parent/guardian requests a hearing, the Charter School 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 the Charter School 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. Students may be involuntarily removed for reasons including, but not limited to, failure to comply with the terms of the student's independent study written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g).

Notice of Regulations

At the beginning of each school year, the principal of each school shall ensure that all students and parents/guardians⁷ are notified in writing of all school rules related to discipline, including suspension and expulsion.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion

The grounds for suspension and expulsion and the procedures for considering, recommending, and/or implementing suspension and expulsion shall be only those specified in law, in this policy, and in the accompanying administrative regulation.

1. 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: While on school grounds
2. While going to or coming from school
3. During the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus
4. During, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity

Aspire's staff shall enforce the rules concerning suspension and expulsion of students fairly, consistently, equally, and in accordance with Aspire's nondiscrimination policies.

Enumerated Offenses

1. **Discretionary Suspension and Expulsion Offenses:** Students may be suspended and/or recommended for expulsion when the Executive Director 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

⁷ 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.

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 support 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 Section 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 preinitiation 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 12, 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 provision shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 12, 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 12, inclusive.
- t) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - 1) “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:

- i. 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.
 - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on their physical or mental health.
 - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their academic performance.
 - iv. 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.
- 2) "Electronic Act" means the creation or 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:
- i. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. 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.

3) 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 on another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion. However, if a juvenile court adjudicates the student to have committed a crime of physical violence as an aider or 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 Executive Director 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:

- a) 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 student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee’s concurrence.
- b) Brandished a knife at another person.
- c) Unlawfully sold a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, et seq.
- d) 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 the expulsion hearing entity determines 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 will use the following definitions:

- 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.
- 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.

Suspension from Class by a Teacher

A teacher may suspend a student, including a grade K-3 student, from class for the remainder of the day and the following day for any of the enumerated offenses listed above. When suspending a student from class, the teacher shall immediately report this action to the principal or designee and send the student to the principal or designee for appropriate action. If that action requires the continuing presence of the student at school, he/she shall be appropriately supervised during the class periods from which he/she has been suspended.

As soon as possible after the teacher decides to suspend the student, he/she shall ask the student's parent/guardian to attend a parent-teacher conference regarding the suspension. A counselor or psychologist may attend the conference if it is practicable, and a school administrator shall attend if either the parent/guardian or teacher so requests.

A student suspended from class shall not be returned to class during the period of the suspension without the approval of the teacher of the class and the principal or designee.

A student suspended from class shall not be placed in another regular class during the period of suspension. However, a student assigned to more than one class per day may continue to attend other regular classes except those held at the same time as the class from which he/she was suspended.

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the removal.

Suspension by Executive Director, Principal or Principal's Designee

To implement disciplinary procedures at a school site, the principal may, in writing, designate as the principal's designee another administrator or, if the principal is the only administrator at the school site, a certificated employee. As necessary, the principal may, in writing, also designate another administrator or certificated employee as the secondary designee to assist with disciplinary procedures when the principal and the principal's primary designee are absent from the school site.

The Executive Director, principal, or designee may impose a suspension for a first offense based on the severity of the conduct and the circumstances.

However, for most offenses, a student will generally be suspended only when the Executive Director or principal has determined that other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct in the student. Other means of correction include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A conference between school personnel, the pupil's parent or guardian, and the pupil.
- Referrals to the school counselor, psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, mental health therapist or other school support service personnel for case management and counseling.
- Study teams, guidance teams, resource panel teams, or other intervention-related teams that assess the behavior, and develop and implement individualized plans to address the behavior in partnership with the pupil and his or her parents.
- Referral for a comprehensive psychosocial or psychoeducational assessment, including for purposes of creating an individualized education program, or a plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. SEC. 794(a)).
- Enrollment in a program for teaching prosocial behavior or anger management.
- Participation in a restorative justice program.
- A positive behavior support approach with tiered interventions that occur during the school day on campus.

- After-school programs that address specific behavioral issues or expose pupils to positive activities and behaviors, including, but not limited to, those operated in collaboration with local parent and community groups.
- Any other of the alternatives deemed appropriate by the principal or Executive Director.

Due Process Procedures for Suspension

Suspensions shall be imposed in accordance with the following procedures:

Informal Conference:

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the Executive Director, principal, or designee with the student and, whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor, or school employee who referred the student to the principal. At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action, presented with the available evidence against him/her, and given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in support of his/her defense.

This conference may be omitted if the Executive Director, principal, or designee determines that an emergency situation exists involving a clear and present danger to the lives, safety, or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of the conference and the conference shall be held within two school days, unless the student waives his/her right to it or is physically unable to attend for any reason. In such a case, the conference shall be held as soon as the student is physically able to return to school.

However, no penalties may be imposed on the student for the failure of the parent/guardian to attend such a conference. **The student may not be denied reinstatement solely because the parent/guardian failed to attend the conference.**

- Administrative Actions: All requests for student suspension are to be processed by the principal or designee. A school employee shall report the suspension, including the name of the student and the cause for the suspension, to the Executive Director or designee. This is accomplished by entering this information into Aspire's electronic student information system.

Notice to Parents/Guardians:

At the time of the suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall also be notified in writing of the suspension.

This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student.

In addition, the notice should state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials request to meet with the parent/guardian, the notice may state that the law requires the parent/guardian to respond to such requests without delay.

Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

The Executive Director, principal, or designee may suspend a student from school for not more than five consecutive school days, unless the suspension notice is accompanied by a recommendation for expulsion. .

A student may be suspended from school for not more than 20 school days in any school year. However, if a student enrolls in or is transferred to another regular school, an opportunity school, or continuation school or class for the purpose of adjustment, he/she may be suspended for not more than 30 school days in a school year. Aspire may count suspensions that occur while a student is enrolled in another school district toward the maximum number of days for which the student may be suspended in any school year [Education Code §§ 48903, 48911, 48912].

These restrictions on the number of days of suspension shall not apply when the suspension is extended pending an expulsion.

In such instances when the Charter School 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 parent/guardian, unless the student and the student's parent/guardian fail to attend the conference.

This determination will be made by the Executive Director or designee upon either of the following: 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.

The extension of the original period of suspension will be preceded by written notice of such extension with an offer to hold a conference concerning the extension, giving the student an opportunity to be heard.

If the student involved is a foster youth, the Executive Director or designee shall notify Aspire's liaison for foster youth of the need to invite the student's attorney and a representative of the appropriate county child welfare agency to attend the meeting.

If the student involved is a homeless child or youth, the Executive Director or designee shall notify Aspire's liaison for homeless students.

In lieu of or in addition to recommending expulsion, the Executive Director, principal, or designee may provide services or require the student to participate in an alternative disciplinary program designed to correct his/her behavior and keep him/her in school.

Homework Assignments During 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.

Suspension Appeals Process

A student or the student's parents or guardians may appeal a suspension imposed upon a student. The family may appeal first in writing at the school level as directed to the principal. The principal or principal's designee will attempt to resolve the appeal and provide a written response within ten (10) school days.

If further appeal is desired, the appeal should be made to the Aspire Regional Office and should be directed to the Executive Director designee (Regional Director of Student Services) for resolution with a written response within fifteen (15) school days. Based on the information submitted or requested, the RDSS may make one of the following decisions regarding the suspension:

- A. Uphold the suspension
- B. Determine that the suspension was not within school guidelines, overturn the suspension, and order that all records and documents regarding the disciplinary proceeding be expunged.

After appeal at this administrative level, if further review is desired, the appeal may be forwarded to the Aspire Executive and Compensation Committee for resolution with a written response within twenty (20) school days.

For any appeal that is denied, the parent/guardian may place a written rebuttal to the action in the student file.

In-School Suspension

A student for whom an expulsion action has not been initiated and who poses no imminent danger or threat to the school, students, or staff may be assigned to in-school suspension in a separate classroom, building, or site for the entire period of suspension. The following conditions shall apply:

- The in-campus suspension classroom shall be supervised.
- The student shall be given:
 - An appropriate educational program/assignments based on grade-level standards
 - Access to voluntary, available counseling services.
 - Access to existing services, such as mental health or special education services
- If an on-campus suspension classroom is used, it shall promote completion of schoolwork and tests missed by the student during the suspension.
- The student shall be responsible for contacting his/her teacher(s) to receive assignments to be completed during on-campus suspension. The teacher(s) shall provide all assignments and tests that the student will miss while suspended. If no such work is assigned, the person supervising the suspension shall assign schoolwork.

Executive Director or Principal's Authority to Recommend Expulsion

As required by Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)(iii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer (“hearing entity”) to determine whether the student should be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing, as required by law.

A student may be expelled following a hearing before either a neutral Hearing Officer or Expulsion Panel (“Panel”), appointed by the Executive Director.

An Expulsion 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 the Charter School Board of Directors. The Expulsion Panel shall be presided over by a designated neutral hearing chairperson.

The Hearing Officer or Panel shall make a recommendation regarding the expulsion of any student, subject to review and final decision by the Board of Directors.

Student's Right to Expulsion Hearing

Any student recommended for expulsion shall be entitled to a hearing to determine whether he/she should be expelled. The hearing shall be held within 30 school days after the Executive Director, principal, or designee determines the student has committed an expellable offense and recommends expulsion.

If postponed for good cause, the expulsion hearing may be extended an additional thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the original hearing, unless otherwise agreed upon in writing by the Executive Director and student's parents/guardians.

The Executive Director or designee shall either select a Hearing Officer or appoint an Administrative Panel to hear and consider the recommendation for expulsion. The hearing shall be held in a confidential setting (complying with all student confidentiality rules under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act "FERPA").

Written Notice of the Expulsion Hearing

Written notice of the expulsion hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least 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. The opportunity for the student and/or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor.
6. 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.

An explanation of the opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

Stipulated Expulsion

After a determination that a student has committed an expellable offense, the Executive Director or Regional Director of Student Services may offer the student and his/her parent/guardian the option to waive a hearing and stipulate to the expulsion or to a

suspension of the expulsion under certain conditions. The offer shall be made only after the student or his/her parent/guardian has been given written notice of the expulsion hearing.

The stipulation agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by the student and his/her parent/guardian. The stipulation agreement shall include notice of all the rights that the student is waiving, including the waiving of his/her right to have a full hearing and to consult legal counsel.

A stipulated expulsion agreed to by the student and his/her parent/guardian shall be effective upon approval by the Board. The Board reserves the right to accept, reject or alter a stipulated expulsion agreement.

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.

Presentation of Evidence

Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to the expulsion hearing, but relevant 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 Hearing Officer or Panel to expel, or the decision of the Board to expel, shall 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. Although no finding shall be based solely on hearsay, sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony .

Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

The Hearing Officer or Panel 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 that shall be examined only by the Hearing Officer or Panel. 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 (5) days' notice of their scheduled testimony; (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; and (c) elect to have hearing close while testifying.

2. The Charter School 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 Hearing Officer or Panel, 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 Hearing Officer or Panel may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The Hearing Officer or Panel 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 must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the Hearing Officer or Panel from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The Hearing Officer or Panel 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, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The Hearing Officer or Panel 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 shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the Hearing Officer or Panel 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, if the hearing is to be conducted in public at the request of the student being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have their testimony heard in a confidential setting when testifying at a public hearing would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped testimony 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 entity conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances 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.

Expulsion Decision

The determination of the Hearing Officer or Expulsion Panel shall be in the form of a written findings of fact and written recommendation provided to the Board of Directors within three (3) school days of the hearing. The Board of Directors shall make the final determination regarding the expulsion within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Board of Directors is final.

If the Hearing Officer or Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, or the Board of Directors ultimately decides not to expel, the student shall immediately be returned to their previous educational program.

The Board of Directors 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 previous educational program under a probationary status and rehabilitation plan to be determined by the Board. During the period of the suspension of the expulsion order, the student is deemed to be on probationary status. The Board of Directors may revoke the suspension of an expulsion order under this section 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 Board revokes the suspension of an expulsion order, the student may be expelled under the terms of the original expulsion order. The Board of Directors shall apply the criteria for suspending the enforcement of the expulsion order equally to all students, including individuals with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code Section 56026. The Board of Directors shall further comply with the provisions set forth under Education Code Section 48917, except as otherwise expressly set forth herein. When deciding whether to suspend the enforcement of an expulsion order, the Board shall take into account the following criteria:

- The student's pattern of behavior
- The seriousness of the misconduct

- The student's attitude toward the misconduct and his/her willingness to follow a rehabilitation program

Written Notice to Expel

Following the Board's decision, The Executive Director or designee shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's adopted findings of fact to the student and parent/guardian. This notice shall include the following:

- The specific offense committed by the student, and
- 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 expelled status with Aspire

Disciplinary Records

Expulsion records of any student shall be maintained in the student's mandatory interim record and sent to any school in which the student subsequently enrolls upon written request by that school. Such records shall be made available to the chartering authority upon request.

No Right to Appeal

The student shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Charter School Board of Directors' decision to expel shall be final.

Expelled Students/Alternative Education

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

Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board of Directors 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 the Charter School for readmission.

Readmission or Admission of Previously Expelled Student

The decision to readmit a student after 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 of Directors following a meeting with the Executive Director 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 the school environment. The Executive Director or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board of Directors following the meeting regarding the Executive Director's 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 out any action taken during closed session consistent with the requirements of the Brown Act. The student's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission or admission to the Charter School.

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.

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 Charter School's Board adopted Attendance Policy for truancy and only after the Charter School follows the requirements of the Attendance Policy and only in accordance with the policy described above which requires notice and an opportunity for a parent, guardian, 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.

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

1. Notification of SELPA

The Charter School shall immediately notify the SELPA and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA of the discipline of any student with a disability or student that the Charter School 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/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/Manifestation Determination

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, the Charter School, the parent, 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 the Charter School, 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 the Charter School, the parent, 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 the Charter School 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 the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, 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 Plan, then the Charter School 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.

5. Special Circumstances

Charter School 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 Executive Director 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.

6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

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

7. 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 the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The Charter School 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 Charter School 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 Charter School supervisory personnel.

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

The Charter School 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.

Safety Policies

Closed Campus

Each school is a closed campus. All students are required to remain on school grounds during the regularly scheduled school day, including lunch period. It is unlawful for anyone to take a student away from school during the regular school day without parent and/or guardian permission and notification of the School Office. Students released early from

school must be signed out on the school's early release log by a parent/guardian or an individual listed as an authorized emergency contact in the student's records.

Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying Policy

Aspire Public Schools is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any kind. Harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, intimidation, or bullying of any student by another student, employee, or teacher is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. 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 this policy, discrimination, 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), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status, nationality (including national origin, country of origin, and citizenship), race or ethnicity (including ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, ethnic background, and traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locs, and twists), religion (including agnosticism and atheism), religious affiliation, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age, or any combination of those characteristics, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any combination of those characteristics, or based on any other characteristic protected under applicable state or federal law or local ordinance. Hereafter, such actions are referred to as "misconduct prohibited by this Policy."

To the extent possible, Aspire 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. Aspire school staff who witness acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.

This policy applies to incidents occurring on the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities regardless of the location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means, whether perpetrated by a student, employee, parent/guardian, volunteer, independent contractor, or other person with whom Aspire does business, and all acts of Aspire's Board of Directors ("Board") in enacting policies and procedures that govern Aspire.

Aspire 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.

Definitions

Harassment means conduct based upon one or more of the protected characteristics listed above that is severe or pervasive, which unreasonably disrupts an individual's educational or work environment or that creates a hostile educational or work environment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes, comments or slurs.
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work or school based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment.
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.

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 or group of students that may constitute 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:

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

"Reasonable student" is defined as a student, including, but not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill and judgment in conduct for a person of the student's age, or for a person of the student's age with the student's exceptional needs.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, video 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 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:

- A message, text, sound, video, or image.
- A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - 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.
 - Creating a credible impersonation of another actual student 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 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.
 - 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 student or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual student other than the student who created the false profile.
- An act of “Cyber sexual bullying” including, but not limited to:
 - 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 the 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.
 - “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.

- 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.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

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

Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

Aspire advises students:

- To never share passwords, personal data, or private photos online.
- To think about what they are doing carefully before posting and by emphasizing that comments cannot be retracted once they are posted.
- 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.
- To consider how it would feel receiving such comments before making comments about others online.

Aspire informs its employees, students, and parents/guardians of Aspire’s policies regarding the use of technology in and out of the classroom. Aspire encourages parents/guardians to discuss these policies with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with such policies.

Education

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

Aspire 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.

Aspire’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.

Aspire informs Aspire 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.

Professional Development

Aspire 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 Aspire employees who have regular interaction with students.

Aspire 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

Aspire also informs certificated employees about the groups of students determined by Aspire and available research to be at elevated risk for bullying and provides its certificated employees with information on existing school and community resources related to the support of these groups. 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.

Aspire encourages its employees to demonstrate effective problem-solving, anger management, and self-confidence skills for Aspire’s students.

Complaint Procedures

Scope of the Complaint Procedures

Aspire 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:

- Are written and signed;
- Filed by an individual who alleges that they have 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 based on a protected characteristic, or by a duly authorized representative who alleges that an individual student has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and
- Submitted to the Aspire 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.

Aspire will comply with its Title IX Policy when investigating and responding to complaints alleging sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, in its education program or activity, as applicable.

The following procedures shall be utilized for complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy that do not fall within the scope of Aspire’s Title IX Policy or comply with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements of the UCP. A copy of Aspire’s Title IX Policy and UCP is available in this handbook.

Submitting a Report or Complaint

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 when 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.

Reports and complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy shall be submitted to the Principal (or the Executive Director or designee if the complaint is against the Principal) as soon as possible after the incidents giving rise to the report or complaint.

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, and Aspire will investigate and respond to all oral and written reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report. 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 and other verbal or physical abuses. Any student who feels they are a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the Principal, a staff person or a family member so that the student can get assistance in resolving the issue in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.

Aspire acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. All reports and complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible. This includes keeping the identity of the reporter and/or complainant confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to comply with applicable law, carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by Aspire on a case-by-case basis.

Aspire 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.

Investigation and Response

Upon receipt of a report or complaint of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, the Principal or designee will promptly initiate an investigation. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than twenty-five (25) school days.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Principal or designee will, to the extent possible with respect to confidentiality laws, provide the complainant with information about the investigation and resolution of the incident/situation. However, the Principal or designee will not reveal confidential information related to other students or employees.

If the complaint is against the Principal, the Executive Director will conduct a fact-finding investigation and provide the complainant with information about the investigation and resolution of the incident/situation. If the complaint is against the Executive Director, a non-employee Board member who is not the Board Chair or a parent/guardian of a student at Aspire will conduct a fact-finding investigation and provide the complainant with information about the investigation and resolution of the incident/situation.

Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from Aspire or termination of employment.

Right of Appeal

Should a complainant find Aspire's resolution unsatisfactory, for complaints within the scope of this Policy, the complainant may, within five (5) business days of notice of Aspire's decision or resolution, submit a written appeal to the Chief Executive Officer, who will serve as the decision maker for the appeal or designate a decisionmaker for the appeal. The decisionmaker for the appeal will notify the complainant of the final decision.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8018 Anti-discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, And Bullying

Title IX Policy Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sex

Aspire Public Schools ("Charter School") is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, in Charter School's education programs and activities.

This Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures for Sexual Harassment ("Policy") details Charter School's commitment to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment and provides a grievance process for allegations of sexual harassment as defined under Title IX. Any individual can report sexual harassment at Charter School to school staff (e.g., administrators, teachers, etc.) and Charter School will take appropriate action in accordance with the law and this Policy.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination in that it constitutes differential treatment on the basis of sex, and, for that reason, is a violation of state and federal laws and a violation of this Policy. Charter School considers sexual harassment to be a major offense which can result in discipline of students and termination of employees.

Definition of Sexual Harassment Under California Law

California Education Code section 212.5 defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the work or educational setting, under the following conditions:

- Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress.
- Submission to, or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment or academic decisions affecting the individual.

- 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.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decisions affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the educational institution.

Sexual harassment under California law may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome verbal conduct such as suggestive, derogatory comments, sexual innuendoes, slurs, or unwanted sexual advances, invitations, or comments; pestering for dates; making threats; or spreading rumors about or rating others as to sexual activity or performance.
- Unwelcome visual conduct such as displays of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, posters, written material, cartoons, or drawings; graffiti of a sexual nature; or use of obscene gestures.
- Unwelcome physical conduct such as unwanted touching, pinching, kissing, patting, hugging, blocking of normal movement, assault; or interference with work or study directed at an individual because of the individual's sex, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Threats and demands or pressure to submit to sexual requests in order to keep a job or academic standing or to avoid other loss, and offers of benefits in return for sexual favors.

Under Education Code section 230, harassment and other discrimination on the basis of sex include, but are not limited to, the following: exclusion of a person or persons from participation in, denial of the benefits of, or subjection to harassment or other discrimination in, any academic, extracurricular, research, occupational training, or other program or activity; and exclusion from participation in, or denial of equivalent opportunity in, athletic programs. The full definition of discrimination and harassment based on sex from Education Code section 230 can be found here: http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC§ionNum=230.

The definition of sexual harassment under California law and the definition of Sexual Harassment under Title IX overlap in some areas. Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying based on gender, sex, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation are eligible to be investigated pursuant to Charter School's Uniform Complaint Procedures under California law. However, if any complaints alleging sexual harassment constitute Sexual Harassment as defined under federal law in Title IX (see below), the complaints shall be investigated under the Title IX Grievance Procedures for Sexual Harassment. Charter School prohibits retaliatory behavior against anyone who files a sexual harassment complaint or any participant in the complaint investigation process.

Sex Equity in Education Act Statement

Students have all the rights set forth in Education Code section 221.8 (as applicable to Charter School's programs). This includes the right to fair and equitable treatment, the right to a school environment without discrimination on the basis of sex, and the right to be provided with an equitable opportunity to participate in all academic extracurricular

activities. The description of all rights set forth in Education Code section 221.8 can be found here:
http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC§ionNum=221.8.

For more information about Gender Equity/Title IX, please visit the following CDE website:
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/di/eo/genequitytitleix.asp>.

Title IX Grievance Procedures for Sexual Harassment

I. Scope and Jurisdiction

This Policy's Title IX grievance procedures apply only to conduct that falls within the definition of "Sexual Harassment" under Title IX. Charter School employees or students may submit formal complaints of Sexual Harassment for investigation under this Policy. Sexual Harassment under Title IX means conduct on the basis of sex that falls within one or more of the following categories:

1. A Charter School employee conditioning the provision of a school aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to Charter School's education program or activity.
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as those terms are defined in 34 CFR section 106.30(a)(3)).

II. Title IX Personnel

Charter School has designated the following individual as its Title IX Coordinators to coordinate the investigation and resolution of Sexual Harassment formal complaints as outlined in this Policy:

- **Bay Area** – Regional Director of Student Services
1009 66th Ave, Oakland, CA 94621
Phone: 510-434-5000
Email: BA_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org
- **Central Valley** – Regional Director of Student Services
4202 Coronado Ave, Stockton, CA 95204
Phone: 209-647-3047
Email: CV_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org
- **Los Angeles** – Superintendent of Culturally Responsive Leadership Development
5901 E. Slauson Avenue, Commerce, CA 90040
Phone: 323-837-9920
Email: LA_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org
- **Home Office** – Director of Employee Relations
1001 22nd Avenue, Oakland, CA 94606
Phone: 510-434-5000
Email: HO_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org

The Title IX Coordinator may designate other individual(s) to fulfill all or part of their duties.

In addition to the Title IX Coordinator, the following Title IX Personnel are involved in the grievance process to address formal complaints:

- Investigator: The individual responsible for gathering all evidence related to the formal complaint. This individual will create an “Investigation Report” which will summarize the relevant evidence.
- Decision-Maker: The individual responsible for evaluating evidence in order to make a determination regarding the formal complaint. The Decision-Maker submits a written determination of findings to the parties. The Decision-Maker cannot be a Title IX Coordinator, the Investigator, or any individual involved in the investigation of the formal complaint.
- Title IX Appeals Officer: If applicable, this individual is responsible for evaluating an appeal of the final determination. The Title IX Appeals Officer cannot be a Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, Decision-Maker, or any individual involved in the investigation of the formal complaint.

All Title IX Personnel (i.e., Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), Decision-Maker(s), Appeals Officer(s), and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process) will receive training in accordance with Title IX requirements. The Title IX Coordinator must ensure individuals responsible for investigating a formal complaint are neutral.

III. Reporting Allegations of Sexual Harassment

Any individual (e.g., a student or employee who is alleged to be a victim of Sexual Harassment or a parent/guardian of a student who is alleged to be a victim of Sexual Harassment), may report Sexual Harassment directly to the Charter School Title IX Coordinator, or to any other available Charter School employee who shall immediately inform the Title IX Coordinator. Reports of Sexual Harassment can be made in-person, by mail, by telephone, by electronic mail, or by any other means that result in a Title IX Coordinator receiving the person’s verbal or written report.

IV. Charter School’s Initial Response to a Report of Sexual Harassment

Upon receipt of any report of Sexual Harassment, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will take the following steps. These steps are offered regardless of whether the complainant submits a formal written complaint:

1. Contact Complainant and Determine Need for Supportive Measures: The Title IX Coordinator will contact the complainant and respondent to discuss the availability of supportive measures to stop the harassment, protect students, and ensure access to the educational program. If a formal complaint was not filed, the Title IX Coordinator shall explain to the complainant the right to file a formal complaint and the process for filing a formal complaint. A formal complaint is one that contains the complainant’s physical or digital signature, and it may be filed at any time with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by email. A complainant may use the attached Title IX form to submit a formal complaint to the Title IX Coordinator.

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive and shall be available at any point during the Title IX investigation. Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to: wellness check-ins, counseling services, extension of deadlines or course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, changes in work locations, or leaves of absences. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for implementing the supportive measures.

2. Determine Need for Emergency Removal: The Title IX Coordinator will review the facts to determine whether the respondent (either student or staff) may need to be removed from the educational program or activity to prevent any further sexual harassment and/or maintain the safety of students and staff.

Charter School may determine that removal from the educational program or activity is justified due to an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations. Charter School will conduct an individualized safety and risk analysis before the removal. Charter School shall provide the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

If the respondent is a student, Charter School is subject to applicable laws and school policies regarding involuntary removals, suspensions, and expulsions.

If the respondent is an employee, the employee may be placed on administrative leave during the formal complaint investigation.

V. Initial Review of Formal Complaint

If a formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will review the complaint and make an initial determination as to whether it raises allegations that fall within the definition of Sexual Harassment under Title IX as described above. Charter School may consolidate multiple formal complaints where the allegations of Sexual Harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

If it does, the Title IX Coordinator will follow this Policy's grievance procedures for formal complaints. If it does not, the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether the complaint should be dismissed (as explained below) and/or investigated pursuant to another applicable Charter School policy (e.g., Uniform Complaint Procedures).

At any time after a formal complaint has been filed, but before reaching a determination regarding the allegation, Charter School may offer an informal resolution process (such as restorative justice or mediation) to the complainant and respondent. However, the informal resolution process is not available where the complainant alleges that an employee sexually harassed a student. Participation in informal resolution is voluntary.

VI. Mandatory or Permissive Dismissal of Formal Complaint

Under certain circumstances, a complaint must or should be dismissed by the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will endeavor to make this determination no more than **fifteen (15) calendar days** from the date they receive the formal complaint.

1. Mandatory Dismissal: The Title IX Coordinator must dismiss the formal complaint if they determine any of the following:
 - a. The alleged conduct would not constitute Sexual Harassment as defined under Title IX even if proved;
 - b. The alleged conduct did not occur in Charter School's education program or activity; or
 - c. The alleged conduct did not occur against an individual in the United States.

2. Permissive Dismissal: The Title IX Coordinator may dismiss a formal complaint if they determine any of the following:
 - a. The complainant has notified Charter School, in writing, that they would like to withdraw the complaint or any allegations in the complaint;
 - b. The respondent is no longer enrolled in, or employed by, Charter School; or
 - c. Specific circumstances prevent Charter School from gathering evidence to reach a determination with regard to the complaint.

Written Notice of Dismissal: If the Title IX Coordinator dismisses the complaint, they must send written notice of the dismissal simultaneously to both parties (complainant and respondent) as follows:

- The written notice should state the reason(s) for the dismissal and inform the parties of their right to appeal in accordance with the procedures described in the “Appeals” section below.
- If the Title IX Coordinator determines another Charter School grievance procedure (e.g., Uniform Complaint Procedures) is the appropriate grievance procedure for the complainant’s allegation(s), the written notice shall inform the parties (complainant and respondent) of Charter School’s intent to investigate the complaint through that grievance procedure.

VII. Title IX Grievance Procedures

If the Title IX Coordinator does not dismiss the formal complaint, Charter School will initiate the following Title IX Grievance Procedures and issue a Written Decision. Charter School will endeavor to complete its investigation and issue a Written Decision within **ninety (90) calendar days of receipt of the formal complaint**.

1. Send Written Notice of Formal Complaint

The Title IX Coordinator must provide the parties (complainant and respondent) with a Notice of Formal Complaint. The Title IX Coordinator will endeavor to provide this Notice within **thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the formal complaint**. The notice shall include: (1) a copy of this Policy; (2) a description of the allegations potentially constituting Sexual Harassment with sufficient details known at the time; (3) a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process; (4) a statement informing the parties of the opportunity to have an advisor of their choice throughout the grievance process and the ability to inspect and review evidence; and (5) a statement informing the parties that they must not knowingly make false statements or submit false information.

2. Investigator Conducts Investigation

The Investigator will gather and review evidence related to the allegations. This can include, but is not limited to, interviewing parties or witnesses, as well as reviewing relevant evidence. The Investigator will not require, request, or rely upon any information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived it.

Written notice of all investigative interviews or other meetings must be provided to any individual whose participation is invited or expected to be provided with sufficient time for the individual to prepare to participate. Notice must include the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the meeting. Attendees of such meetings will have the right to be accompanied by an advisor of their choice.

3. Investigator Provides Parties Equal Opportunity to Review Gathered Evidence

The Investigator will provide both the complainant and respondent with an equal opportunity to review the evidence that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint. The parties will have a period of at least **ten (10) calendar days** before the Investigative Report is provided to the parties to review the evidence, ask the Investigator additional questions, and provide or suggest additional evidence to be considered by the Investigator.

4. Investigator Prepares and Shares Investigative Report

The Investigator will prepare an Investigative Report summarizing the relevant evidence. The Investigative Report is not Charter School's final Written Decision. The Investigator will send the Investigative Report to the parties and their advisors, if any, for their review and written response at least **ten (10) calendar days** before issuance of the Written Decision. Charter School will inform the parties in writing that they may submit to the Decision-Maker written, relevant questions that the parties want asked of any party or witness. The Decision-Maker is responsible for providing the responses (if any) to these questions to both parties.

5. Decision-Maker Issues Written Decision

The Decision-Maker will endeavor to issue the Written Decision within **ninety (90) calendar days from the receipt of the formal complaint**. The Decision-Maker will issue a Written Decision to both parties simultaneously. The Decision-Maker uses the "preponderance of evidence" standard (i.e., it is more likely than not that the respondent committed the alleged conduct). The Written Decision will include all of the following:

- a. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting Sexual Harassment.
- b. A description of the procedural steps taken by Charter School during the investigation process (e.g., notifications to the parties, interviews with the parties and witnesses, site visits, or methods used to gather other evidence).
- c. Findings of fact supporting the determination.
- d. Conclusions regarding the application of Charter School's policies to the facts.
- e. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a decision regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions Charter School imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to Charter School's educational program will be provided by Charter School to the complainant.
- f. Charter School's procedures and permissible bases for either party to appeal the decision.

6. Remedies

If Charter School determines that the respondent engaged in Sexual Harassment, Charter School will provide remedies to the complainant, as appropriate. This may include supportive measures. Remedies may also include: transfer from a class; parent/student conference(s); positive behavior support; warnings; detention; and/or formal discipline, such as suspension and expulsion. When an employee is found to have committed Sexual Harassment, Charter School will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in accordance with Charter School's policies and as permitted by law.

VIII. Appeals

Either party may appeal Charter School's Written Decision, or its dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegation in the complaint, within **five (5) calendar days of the decision**. An appeal may be made on any of the following grounds:

1. A procedural irregularity affected the outcome.
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made that could affect the outcome of the matter.
3. The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, or Decision-Maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

Upon receipt of an appeal, Charter School will provide a written notification to the other party about the appeal that gives both parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of/challenging the appeal.

The Title IX Appeals Officer (not Decision-Maker, Title IX Coordinator, or Investigator) shall issue a written decision of an appeal, including the rationale for the result, to both parties simultaneously. The Title IX Appeals Officer will endeavor to issue their decision within **forty-five (45) calendar days from the receipt of the appeal**.

IX. Record Keeping

Charter School will maintain for a period of seven (7) years records pertaining to Title IX Sexual Harassment allegations in accordance with 34 CFR section 106.45(b)(10), as well as all materials used to train Title IX Personnel.

X. Updates

The CEO, Executive Director, General Counsel, or designee may update, modify, or implement this policy in a manner to comply with applicable law.

Title IX Sex Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Form

Instructions: This form can be completed by any individual who has knowledge of sex discrimination or harassment conduct occurring within an education program or activity of Aspire Public Schools (“Aspire”). Please complete the information below. Should you need additional space or would like to provide documentation to support the allegations in the complaint, you can attach those to this complaint form. If you have any questions, please contact one of Aspire’s Title IX Coordinators listed below.

Contact Information and Complainant’s (Victim) Information

Full Name of Person Filing the Complaint:

Address:

____ Phone: Email:

School Name:

Complainant’s (Victim) Full Name (if different from above):

Respondent’s (Accused) Information

Respondent’s Full Name:

Is the accused an Aspire student? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, what is the student’s grade and relation to complainant:

Is the accused an Aspire staff member? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, what is the staff member’s relation to the complainant (e.g., teacher)?

If no, what is the accused’s affiliation to Aspire?

Details of Complaint

Date of the Alleged Incident(s): Location of Alleged Incident(s):

Please describe the facts underlying your complaint. Provide details such as the names of those involved, the dates of the incident(s), whether witnesses were present and the names of any witnesses, etc. Please provide any details which you feel might be helpful to a complaint investigator.

Did the incident(s) occur at Aspire or during an Aspire activity? If so, please describe:

Did this incident interfere with your ability to access or participate in Aspire programs or activities? If so, please describe:

List the individuals involved in the relevant incident(s):

List any witnesses to the incident(s):

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Acknowledgements

By submitting this form to an Aspire Title IX Coordinator, I wish to initiate Aspire's formal Title IX Grievance Procedures.

Signature of Complainant Date

Once you have completed this form, please submit it to the Title IX Coordinator for your school's region:

Bay Area schools:

Title: Regional Director of Student Services, Bay Area Region

Address: 1009 66th Avenue
Oakland, CA 94621

Phone: 510-434-5000

Email: BA_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org

Central Valley schools:

Title: Regional Director of Student Services, Central Valley Region

Address: 3311 E. Morada Lane
Stockton, CA 95212

Phone: 209-647-3047

Email: CV_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org

Los Angeles schools:

Title: Regional Director of Student Services, Los Angeles Region

Address: 5901 E. Slauson Avenue
Commerce, CA 90040

Phone: 323-837-9920

Email: LA_TitleIX@aspirepublicschools.org

Transgender Harassment

In accordance with Education Code § 221.5, Aspire Public Schools ensures that transgender youth receive protection from harassment including

- The right to privacy in that no school staff will share a student's personal information with other students.
- The right to openly discuss and express their gender identity and expression, and to decide when, with whom, and how much information to share.
- All official school records must maintain the student's name and gender assigned at birth unless a legal court document is provided to the school.

- Students will be referred to by their name of preference in unofficial records and upon completion of the Gender Equity Form (available upon request). Parents may request students be enrolled under their preferred name and gender
- Staff and students will strive to properly address students with their preferred name and appropriate gender-based pronoun in all communication. Persistent failure to consistently refer to the student using appropriate name and gender-based pronoun will be interpreted as denial of a student's gender identity and a form of harassment.
- All students may use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity at school. Any student may use a gender neutral bathroom as well.
- If classes are gender specific, students will be placed in the section that corresponds to their gender identity.
- Participation in athletics will be governed by the rules and policies set forth in sponsoring organizations.
- Participation in all clubs and activities will be open to all students.
- Dress code is gender-neutral and transgender students may dress in accordance with their gender identity.

Bullying related to transgender identity will be quickly addressed and is considered a violation of Education Code § 48900(r) described above.

Gender Diverse Student Supports

Aspire is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students and ensuring that all students have equal access to Aspire's educational programs and activities. Aspire requires that all schools and all personnel promote acceptance and respect among students and staff. Aspire is a place where each student's gender identity is accepted and valued as an important part of the whole child. If you are interested in discussing specific supports for your child, please contact your school's main office.

Visitor Policy

Guests are welcome. Any visitor entering the school grounds must register in the Office, identify themselves and the nature of their business, and receive a Visitor's Pass. Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit school sites and classrooms to observe and support the work of the schools. This is one of the essential vehicles for a school-parent partnership.

All visitors to a school site must report to the office when entering and receive authorization to visit elsewhere in the school site. A principal or designee may direct a visitor to leave the school and not return for a designated time if it is determined that the visitor has interfered

with the good order or peaceful conduct of the school. Additionally, no electronic listening or recording devices may be used in the classroom without the prior consent of the teacher and principal of the school.

Unauthorized persons will not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals or designees are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering buildings and from loitering on grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, including but not limited to, Education Code § 32211.

Visitor Guidelines

All campus visitors must have the consent and approval of the principal/designee. Permission to visit must be given at the time requested if at all possible or within a reasonable period of time following the request. Children who are not enrolled at the school are not to be on the campus unless prior approval of the principal has been obtained.

Visitors may not interfere with, disrupt or cause substantial disorder in any classroom or school activity, including, but not limited to, lunch, recess or after-school.

Visitors are expected to:

- Follow the established school policy in requesting a classroom visitation
- Present a valid ID
- Complete a visitor's permit upon arrival at the site
- Enter and leave the classroom as quietly as possible
- Not converse with the students, teacher and/or instructional aides during the visitation unless permission is granted by the Principal.
- Not interfere with any school activity
- Keep the length and frequency of classroom visits reasonable
- Follow the school's established procedures for meeting with the teacher and/or principal after the visit, if needed
- Learn and follow the school-wide behavioral expectations
- Return the visitor's permit to the point of origin before leaving the campus.

Any individual who disrupts a school site or fails to follow school rules and/or procedures is subject to removal from the school site and may be further restricted from visiting the school.

Searches

Campus Search and Seizure

The Charter School recognizes and has determined that the occurrence of incidents which may include the possession of firearms, weapons, alcohol, controlled substances, or other items of contraband prohibited by law or Charter School rules and regulations, jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of students and Charter School employees.

The California Constitution requires that all students and staff of public schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure, and peaceful. As such, Charter School has adopted a Policy outlining the reasonable search of students and their property, student use areas, and/or student lockers and the seizure of illegal, unsafe, unauthorized or contraband items and materials through a search based upon reasonable suspicion.

Student lockers, including P.E. lockers, are school property and remain at all times under the control of the Charter School. Students shall assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. Student lockers may not be used to store illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials. The acceptance and use of locker facilities on school campus by any student shall constitute consent by the student to the search of such locker facilities by authorized school personnel and/or law enforcement. Inspections of lockers may be conducted by school personnel and/or law enforcement through the use of trained dogs.

A student's personal cell phone, smartphone, or other personal electronic device shall not be searched by school officials without a warrant, the student's consent, or a legitimate emergency, unless the device is lost or abandoned. An emergency is any *situation involving danger of death or serious physical injury to any person, that requires access to the information located or reasonably believed to be located on the electronic device*. If the Charter School has a good faith belief that the device is lost, stolen, or abandoned, the Charter School may only access electronic device information in order to attempt to identify, verify, or contact the owner of the device.

The Charter School is not prohibited from seizing/confiscating a student's personal electronic device, without searching its contents, if the student's use or possession of the private electronic device is in violation of Charter School rules or regulations

School Jurisdiction: Agency and Police Interrogation

Protection of student rights shall be balanced with Aspire Public Schools' responsibility to cooperate with local police and agency officials in the investigation of unlawful activities. Inherent in the process of cooperation is recognition of the function of the schools and respect for the civil and constitutional rights of students [Education Code §§ 48902, 48906].

When appropriate, school personnel will attempt to call parents/guardians to notify them of interrogation in advance.

In matters involving threats to the safety of the students or staff, law enforcement officers specifically summoned by administrators or asked to remain on school premises by administrators are authorized to act as agents of the school, unless such authority is explicitly and specifically withdrawn. When acting on behalf of Aspire, the officers will have the full scope of authority in dealing with students that the Principal would have in such situations.

Prohibited items and banned substances

Possession of Weapons or Dangerous Objects

It is a violation of state law and Aspire Public School policies and regulations for any person to carry a firearm, weapon, or other dangerous object on school premises, school provided transportation or areas of other facilities being used for school activities [Education Code § 48902; Penal Code 245, 626.9, 626.10; 20 USC 7151].

Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Free Schools Policy

Aspire schools are 100% drug, alcohol, and tobacco [Education Code §§ 48901, 48909] free campuses. Aspire's Drug/Alcohol Policy ensures a drug and alcohol free campus while enabling students who are struggling with drug and/or alcohol abuse to receive the treatment they need. The school-site administrator has the discretion to recommend expulsion for students involved with drugs/alcohol or enter such students into a disciplinary probation period. It is recommended that expulsion not be a school's recommendation for a first time offense of possession of marijuana (except in cases of quantities that make it reasonable to conclude possession with intent to distribute).

REFERENCE: Board Policy 8025 Smoke-Free Policy

Other Prohibited Items

Students are not allowed to bring any games, toys, or trading cards to school for use during class. MP3 players, personal handheld devices, and dice are also subject to being taken away. Prohibited items will be returned only to a parent and/or guardian after the first offense. Repeated offenses will result in items being taken away and not returned until the end of the school year

Cell Phones, Smartphones, Pagers & Other Electronic Signaling Devices Policy

The Aspire Public Schools ("Aspire") Board of Directors recognizes the potential for cell phones, smartphones, pagers, and electronic signaling devices (hereinafter collectively referred to as "private devices") to disrupt the learning environment and impact student mental health and well-being. The Board adopts this Policy to implement a "Smartphone-Free School Day" as required by [AB3216](#) and to permit students to possess,

but not use, private devices while on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or under the supervision of Charter School employees, except as otherwise provided in this Policy.

For the purposes of this policy, "Private Devices" refers to cellular smartphones, pagers, and ancillary devices that provide similar functionality, including, but not limited to, smartwatches (e.g., Apple Watch), earbuds, wireless headphones, and smart glasses (e.g., Meta Glasses).

General Policy & Storage Guidelines

In accordance with the Smartphone-Free School Day initiative, strict adherence to storage protocols is required to maintain a safe and focused learning environment.

- Students who possess any Private Device must always keep it turned off and stored in the student's backpack OR a Designated Storage Product (e.g., lockable pouch, Velcro/magnetic pouch, classroom phone holder), as determined by the School Site Leadership.
- Private Devices must remain out of view and powered off during the entire school day.
- Extracurricular trips and excursions are considered instructional time, meaning Private Devices must remain stored in a Designated Storage Product during these trips unless the Principal or supervising teacher explicitly authorizes use.

Permitted Use and Exceptions

Private Devices may only be used off-campus before or after school. They may also be used before or after any Aspire-sponsored activity occurring before or after the regular school day.

An exception to this policy may be granted by the site administrator for specific purposes, which must be documented and approved by the Principal:

- **Emergencies:** In the case of an emergency or in response to a perceived threat of danger, unless explicitly addressed in a comprehensive school safety plan.
- **Medical Necessity:** When a licensed physician and surgeon determines that the possession or use of a private device is necessary for the health or well-being of the student.
- **IEP/Section 504:** When the possession or use of a private device is required in a student's Individualized Education Program ("IEP") or Section 504 Plan to support the student's unique needs.
- **English Learners:** For English Learners at Level 1 or 2 to assist with translation, restricted to specific class activities as defined by the teacher.
- **Foster Youth:** For students in foster care who utilize Third Party Transportation services (e.g., HopSkipDrive, EverDriven), strictly limited to communicating with drivers at dismissal or contacting caregivers regarding cancellations.

- **Educational/Instructional Use:** When an Aspire teacher or administrator grants permission to a student, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that staff member.

Mental Health Supports

To assist students in transitioning to a smartphone-free environment, Aspire will provide mental health and social supports.

- Structured, engaging activities will be offered during nutrition and lunch to encourage peer interaction.
- Students will have access to school mental health providers and counseling staff.
- Students will have access to Wellness Rooms (where available) with engagement activities.
- Aspire will support student groups and school clubs to foster connection without devices.

Implementation & Disciplinary Guidelines

Support for students will align with Aspire's discipline policies and utilize Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) and Restorative Practices (RP). Enforcement shall focus on correcting behavior and supporting student well-being rather than punitive measures alone. Possession of Private Devices is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this Policy.

- Staff shall issue verbal reminders to students to turn off and store devices.
- Continued use may result in a referral to the administrator designee for a conversation regarding this policy and student needs.
- Staff may contact the parent/guardian to review the policy with the student.
- Repeated violations will require an in-person meeting with the parent/guardian.
- If a private device is heard ringing, beeping, or buzzing (or seen in use) from inside a jacket, purse, backpack, or other similar article, an Aspire employee may remove and confiscate the private device.
- All confiscated devices will be securely stored in a safe, locked location.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up any confiscated private devices at the end of the regular school day or at the conclusion of a Charter School-sponsored activity.
- In addition to this Policy, all other applicable student discipline policies and rules shall apply to any student who fails to comply.

Liability

Students who possess any Private Device(s) shall assume sole responsibility for the maintenance and care of any such private device(s). An employee acting within the scope of their duties to enforce this policy is not responsible for the replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged private devices. At no time shall Aspire, its employees, Board Members, or

volunteers be responsible for preventing theft, loss, or damage to any Private Devices brought onto campus or at Aspire-sponsored activities.

Personal Responsibility for Items

Students are responsible for maintaining personal items. Aspire is not responsible for the loss or breakage of student's personal items at school unless said items are in the possession of an Aspire staff member at the time they are lost, stolen or broken.

Emergency Preparedness at Aspire Public Schools

Aspire Public Schools is committed to maintaining safe and secure campuses for our students and staff. We work diligently to make sure that students and staff are prepared for emergencies]. To that end, every school has a school safety plan that covers Aspire's policies and expectations regarding the practices of each school in maintaining the security of the in campus, responding appropriately to emergencies, increasing the safety and protection of students and staff, and creating a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning. Every school conducts regular emergency drills that at a minimum, meets the state mandated requirements. These drills include: Fire, Earthquake, and Lockdown/Secure Campus/Shelter in Place.

Parents/guardians are asked to make sure that their students actively participate and take emergency drills seriously. These drills help make sure students are well prepared in the event of an emergency. Each school also stocks emergency supplies to sustain students and staff. These supplies include the following: water, food, first aid supplies, search and rescue supplies, and sanitation items. These supplies are checked regularly by school staff.

Parents/guardians should be familiar with the school's emergency procedures and update contact information whenever it changes. Keep your cell phone with you to receive recorded updates on the emergency. Knowing where to go to pick up your child will save time and reduce anxiety. Parents/guardians should remember that schools have emergency procedures in place to protect all the students and that schools will follow these procedures during an emergency.

Asbestos Management Plan

Each Aspire school is expected to have an Asbestos Management Plan, which is available upon request at the school's main office. At least once each school year, you will be notified of any asbestos-related activities such as inspections, response actions, and post-response action activities, including periodic reinspection and surveillance activities, that are planned or in progress at the school.

School Bus and Passenger Safety

All students who are transported in a school bus or school student activity bus shall receive instruction in school bus emergency procedures and passenger safety. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

Child Abuse Reporting

Any teacher, or other staff member, who knows or reasonably suspects that a student has been subjected to physical injuries, neglect, sexual abuse or emotional maltreatment, is mandated by the Child Abuse Reporting Law to notify the proper authorities [Education Code §§ 33308.1, 44691, 44807]. For additional information about California's child abuse reporting requirements for teachers and other school staff, please contact the front office.

Safe Storage of Firearms

The purpose of this notice is to inform and to remind parents and legal guardians of all students at Aspire Public Schools of their responsibilities for keeping firearms out of the hands of children as required by California law. There have been many news reports of children bringing firearms to school. In many instances, the child obtained the firearm(s) from his or her home. These incidents can be prevented by storing firearms in a safe and secure manner, including keeping them locked up when not in use and storing them separately from ammunition.

To help everyone understand their legal responsibilities, this notice spells out California law regarding the storage of firearms. Please take some time to review this notice and evaluate your own personal practices to assure that you and your family are in compliance with California law:

- With very limited exceptions, California makes a person criminally liable for keeping any firearm, loaded or unloaded, within any premises that are under their custody and control where that person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, and the child obtains access to the firearm and thereby (1) causes death or injury to the child or any other person; (2) carries the firearm off the premises or to a public place, including to any preschool or school grades kindergarten through twelfth grade, or to any school-sponsored event, activity, or performance; or (3) unlawfully brandishes the firearm to others.
- The criminal penalty may be significantly greater if someone dies or suffers great bodily injury as a result of the child gaining access to the firearm.
- With very limited exceptions, California also makes it a crime for a person to negligently store or leave any firearm, loaded or unloaded, on their premises in a location where the person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to it without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, unless

reasonable action is taken to secure the firearm against access by the child, even where a minor never actually accesses the firearm.

- In addition to potential fines and terms of imprisonment, as of January 1, 2020, a gun owner found criminally liable under these California laws faces prohibitions from possessing, controlling, owning, receiving, or purchasing a firearm for 10 years.
- Finally, a parent or guardian may also be civilly liable for damages resulting from the discharge of a firearm by that person's child or ward.

The county or city may have additional restrictions regarding the safe storage of firearms. Thank you for helping to keep our children and schools safe. Remember that the easiest and safest way to comply with the law is to keep firearms in a locked container or secured with a locking device that renders the firearm inoperable.

Aspire Family Engagement, Rights and Responsibilities

School-Home communication

At school we depend on our parents and guardians to work as our partners in supporting their children's education. It is always best to first contact your child's teacher to address any concerns which you may have. All staff at Aspire can be reached by email and phone provided by the school site.

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Aspire Public Schools aims to provide all students significant opportunities to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps while abiding by guidelines within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) The Aspire Board of Directors has adopted an organization-wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy, and in addition, each school site develops its own local Parent and Family Engagement Policy and School-Parent Compact annually in partnership with families and the School Site Council. A copy of the specific school-level policy is available on each school's website, provided to all families during the annual registration process, and is available upon request in the school's main office. Staff at each Aspire school recognize that a partnership with families is essential to meet our goals, and these policies are designed to leverage and promote active involvement of all families as partners to ensure student success.

Family Engagement Activities

Children learn best when their parents are engaged every step of the way, creating a bridge of learning from the classroom to the home. Below are some examples of what Aspire does to help parents and guardians become great coaches for their children. According to Education Code section 47605.6(n), a charter school may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the charter school. Aspire Public Schools highly encourages parent or guardian involvement, however parent involvement is not required for acceptance to an Aspire school site, or continued enrollment at an Aspire school site. Below is a sample of opportunities offered at Aspire school sites for family involvement.

Participation in School Decision-making: Aspire includes parent representatives on the School Site Council and/or Parent Advisory Committee and English Learner Advisory Committee of each school, as well as parent participation on the school's Teacher Hiring Committee. Parents and guardians are also highly encouraged to share feedback on the Aspire Family Survey and share feedback directly with school administrators.

Special Saturday Classes: Scheduled at specific Saturdays during the school year, these half-day sessions allow parents to attend school with their children and get to know the school site better. We believe it's important for them to see, feel, and experience the space that their children spend so much time in.

Workshops: Aspire may provide parents and guardians with information on how to structure reading at home (20+ min per day K-5), provide help with homework, participate in projects, and games that reinforce learning.

Parents' Right to Know Teacher Qualifications

Pursuant to federal law, all parents and guardians of students enrolled in the Charter School have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. Such information shall include, at a minimum, whether the teacher has met state qualifications for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

1. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which the State qualification of licensing criteria have been waived;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
3. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and if so their qualifications.

Aspire Public Schools is committed to providing quality instruction for all students. It does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. Upon request, the Charter School will provide the information to the parents/guardians in a timely manner. Please contact the Aspire Human Resources department at 510-434-5000.

Volunteers

Volunteers help enrich students' education and provide extra assistance for teachers and school staff [Education Code § 35021]. Volunteers are typically on campus for longer periods or with larger amounts of responsibility than standard visitors are. Because of this, there are additional requirements for volunteers beyond those for basic visitors and key volunteer requirements are discussed below, but please review the full Volunteer Handbook for a complete list of requirements.

Potential volunteers are urged to contact the school and work with the Business Manager if they can offer time or services to help with any part of the school program. **Volunteers are placed with teachers or other staff members who have requested volunteer assistance. Schools reserve the right to assign volunteers to classrooms/activities as needed and to decline a volunteer's services at any time.** All visitors, including volunteers, must sign in at the front desk and receive a "Visitor Badge" as identification. They must also sign out when leaving the premises. This is for the safety of the children and staff as well as the visitor in case of an emergency. For the safety of all students, all volunteers must:

- Confirm with the Business Manager the ability to volunteer prior to volunteering. The Business Manager will provide additional information according to the type of volunteer service in accordance with our Volunteer Handbook. In almost all instances a volunteer will be required to have:
 - A negative TB risk assessment or test on file in the school office within 60 days before starting to volunteer with students.
- In almost all instances, a background check, including DOJ and FBI clearance. Volunteers who need to be fingerprinted include anyone who is engaging with a student(s) without supervision or on a consistent basis, in accordance with Aspire Volunteer Handbook. The results of the background check are **confidential** and will not be discussed with other staff members or parents.

Aspire Student Data Privacy Policy

Aspire is committed to protecting the privacy of our student data. As an organization, we believe that data is a powerful tool and utilize data extensively to monitor and improve student outcomes. We recognize that there are risks in the collection and usage of this data and in order to protect the privacy of our students, we have enacted the following policies:

- Aspire limits the collection, usage, and sharing of student data to only those data points which are required by law or useful in improving student outcomes.
- Student data is only made available to parties that have an immediate, legitimate need to access the data.
- Aspire ensures that both our internal systems and the systems of our vendors use proper technological safeguards to protect student data and are legally bound to prevent the use of student data for marketing or sales purposes. For vendors providing Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, Aspire requires contractual assurances that student data is not utilized to train large language models or other AI algorithms without explicit, legally-vetted authorization.
- When Aspire ends our relationship with a student data vendor, we ensure that the data is removed from their systems.
- We abide by all state and federal student data regulatory laws including but not limited to:
 - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 - Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
 - Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).
 - Student Online Personal Information Protection Act (SOPIPA)

For more information about our student data policies, please contact the Aspire Home Office at 510-434-5000.

Public Meeting Notice

The public is invited to attend Aspire Public Schools public meetings. If you require any reasonable accommodation to enable you to attend and or participate, please contact the Aspire Home Office at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Call (510) 434-5000 or info@aspirepublicschools.org with your request.

Know Your Rights

Your Child has the Right to a Free Public Education

- All children in the United States have a Constitutional right to equal access to free public education, regardless of immigration status and regardless of the immigration status of the students’ parents or guardians.

- In California:
 - All children have the right to a free public education.
 - All children ages 6 to 18 years must be enrolled in school.
 - All students and staff have the right to attend safe, secure, and peaceful schools.
 - All students have a right to be in a public school learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, violence, and intimidation.
 - All students have equal opportunity to participate in any program or activity offered by the school, and cannot be discriminated against based on their race, nationality, gender, religion, or immigration status, among other characteristics.
 - **Non-Discrimination:** We prohibit discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on immigration status, nationality, race, ethnicity, citizenship status, religion, national origin, or ancestry. We promptly investigate all complaints and take appropriate action.

Information Required for School Enrollment

- When enrolling a child, schools must accept a variety of documents from the student's parent or guardian to demonstrate proof of the child's age or residency.
- You never have to provide information about citizenship/immigration status to have your child enrolled in school. Also, you never have to provide a Social Security number to have your child enrolled in school.
- **Enrollment:** We do not request citizenship or immigration documentation for enrollment, other than documents we might review but not retain to establish a child's birthdate. We accept various documents to establish residence (utility bills, rental agreements, pay stubs, declarations of residency) and age (birth certificates, baptism certificates, passports, or affidavits). Students experiencing homelessness may enroll even without typical documentation if otherwise eligible.

Family Safety Plans if You Are Detained or Deported

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Emergency Contacts: You have the option to provide your child's school with emergency contact information, including the information of secondary contacts, to identify a trusted adult guardian who can care for your child in the event you are detained or deported.

Caregivers Authorization Affidavit: We encourage families to support relative caregivers in completing a Caregivers Authorization Affidavit. We will rely on a signed, completed Affidavit to allow an authorized caregiver to enroll a student in school and to consent to

school-related medical care. A parent's signature is not required on the Caregiver Authorization Affidavit. This form is available [HERE](#).

Or you may apply for a Petition for Appointment of Temporary Guardian of the Person, which may enable a trusted adult the authority to make educational and medical decisions for your child.

If Parents Are Detained: We release students to emergency contacts or anyone with a Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit. We contact child protective services only if we cannot arrange care through provided contacts.

Family Safety Plans: We encourage families to develop safety plans identifying trusted adults who can care for students and locations of important documents (birth certificates, passports, medical information).

Resources for Detained Family Members:

- **ICE Detainee Locator:** <https://locator.ice.gov/odls#/search>
- **Legal Assistance:** California organizations accredited by Board of Immigration Appeals at <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-accreditation-roster-reports>; Self-Help Centers at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-selfhelpcenters.htm>

Consulates/Embassies: **Contact your country of origin's consulate for assistance.**

Right to File a Complaint

- Your child has the right to report a hate crime or file a complaint to the Charter School if he or she is discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, or bullied on the basis of his or her actual or perceived nationality, ethnicity, or immigration status.

Collecting and Retaining Student Records

The Information Systems Team shall maintain in writing Aspire Public Schools policies and procedures for gathering and handling sensitive student information, and appropriate personnel shall receive training regarding those policies and procedures.

- **Privacy of Information:** We do not collect or maintain information about students' or families' citizenship or immigration status except when required by law for specific education programs. If we do, we collect such information separately from enrollment and do not use it to discriminate or prevent school attendance.
- If Aspire Public Schools possesses information that could indicate immigration status, citizenship status, or national origin information, Aspire Public Schools shall not use the acquired information to discriminate against any students or families or bar children from enrolling in or attending school.

- If parents or guardians choose not to provide information that could indicate their or their children's immigration status, citizenship status, or national origin information, Aspire Public Schools shall not use such actions as a basis to discriminate against any students or families or bar children from enrolling or attending school.
- Aspire Public Schools shall not allow school resources or data to be used to create a registry based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, or national origin

Inquiries About Social Security Numbers or Cards

Aspire Public Schools shall not solicit or collect entire Social Security numbers or cards.

- We do not require Social Security numbers for enrollment. We may request the last four digits of an adult household member's number only to establish eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. Students can still qualify without providing this information if they meet income requirements.
- Aspire Public Schools shall solicit and collect the last four digits of an adult household member's Social Security number only to establish eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. Students can still qualify without providing this information if they meet income requirements. When collecting the last four digits of an adult household member's Social Security number to establish eligibility for a federal benefit program, Aspire Public Schools shall explain the limited purpose for which this information is collected, and clarify that a failure to provide this information will not bar the student from enrolling in or attending the school.
- Aspire Public Schools shall treat all students equitably in the receipt of all school services, including, but not limited to, the gathering of student and family information for the free and reduced lunch program, transportation and educational instruction.

Procedures Regarding Information Sharing

Aspire Public Schools shall avoid the disclosure of information that might indicate a student's or family's citizenship or immigration status if the disclosure is not authorized by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or required by valid court orders, warrants, or subpoenas. We provide parents notice before responding to such requests (except in child abuse cases or when prohibited).

- Aspire Public Schools personnel shall take the following action steps upon receiving an information request related to a student's or family's immigration or citizenship status:
 - Notify a designated Aspire Public Schools official (General Counsel) about the information request.

- Provide students and families with appropriate notice and a description of the immigration officer's request.
- Document any verbal or written request for information by immigration authorities.
- Unless prohibited, provide students and parents/guardians with any documents issued by the immigration-enforcement officer.
- Except for investigations of child abuse, child neglect, or child dependency, or when the subpoena served on the local educational agency prohibits disclosure, Aspire Public Schools shall provide parental or guardian notification of any court orders, warrants, or subpoenas before responding to such requests.
- Aspire Public Schools shall require written parental or guardian consent for release of student information, unless the information is relevant for a legitimate educational interest or includes directory information only. Neither exception permits disclosing information to immigration authorities for immigration-enforcement purposes; no student information shall be disclosed to immigration authorities for immigration enforcement purposes without a court order, judicial warrant or judicial subpoena.
- Aspire Public Schools' request for written or parental or guardian consent for release of student information must include the following information: (1) the signature and date of the parent, guardian, or eligible student providing consent; (2) a description of the records to be disclosed; (3) the reason for release of information; (4) the parties or class of parties receiving the information; and (5) if requested by the parents, guardians or eligible student, a copy of the records to be released. Aspire Public Schools shall permanently keep the consent notice with the record file.
- The parent, guardian, or eligible student is not required to sign the consent form. If the parent, guardian or eligible student refuses to provide written consent for the release of student information that is not otherwise subject to release, Aspire Public Schools shall not release the information.

Responding to the Detention or Deportation of a Student's Family Member

Aspire Public Schools shall encourage that families and students have and know their emergency phone numbers and know where to find important documentation, including birth certificates, passports, Social Security cards, doctors' contact information, medication lists, lists of allergies, etc., which will allow them to be prepared in the event that a family member is detained or deported.

Aspire Public Schools shall permit students and families to update students' emergency contact information as needed throughout the school year, and provide alternative contacts if no parent or guardian is available.

- Aspire Public Schools shall ensure that families may include the information of an identified trusted adult guardian as a secondary emergency contact in case a student's parent or guardian is detained.
- Aspire Public Schools shall communicate to families that information provided within the emergency cards will only be used in response to specified emergency situations, and not for any other purpose.

In the event a student's parent/guardian has been detained or deported by federal immigration authorities, Aspire Public Schools shall use the student's emergency card contact information and release the student to the person(s) designated as emergency contacts. Alternatively, Aspire Public Schools shall release the student into the custody of any individual who presents a Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit on behalf of the student. Aspire Public Schools shall only contact Child Protective Services if Aspire Public Schools personnel are unsuccessful in arranging for the timely care of the child through the emergency contact information that the school has, a Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit, or other information or instructions conveyed by the parent or guardian.

Parental Notification of Immigration—Enforcement Actions

- Aspire Public Schools personnel must receive consent from the student's parent or guardian before a student can be interviewed or searched by any officer seeking to enforce the civil immigration laws at the school, unless the officer presents a valid effective judicial warrant signed by a judge, or presents a valid, effective court order. ICE administrative warrants do not authorize access to nonpublic school areas or student information.
- Aspire Public Schools personnel shall immediately notify the student's parents or guardians if a law-enforcement officer requests or gains access to a student for immigration-enforcement purposes, unless such access was in compliance with a judicial warrant or subpoena that restricts the disclosure of the information to the parent or Guardian.

Responding to On-Campus Immigration Enforcement

- As early as possible, Aspire Public Schools personnel shall notify the Regional Operations Director, Executive Director, and General Counsel or designated administrator of any request by an immigration-enforcement officer for school or student access, or any requests for review of school documents (including for the services of lawful subpoenas, petitions, complaints, warrants, etc.).

- In addition to notifying the above mentioned regional leaders or designated administrator, Aspire Public Schools personnel must take the following action steps in response to an officer present on the school campus specifically for immigration-enforcement purposes:
 - Advise the officer that before proceeding with his or her request, and absent exigent circumstances, school personnel must first receive notification and direction from the appropriate regional leader or designated administrator.
 - Ask to see, and make a copy of or note, the officer's credentials (name and badge number). Also ask for and copy or note the phone number of the officer's supervisor.
 - Ask the officer for his/her reason for being on school grounds and document it.
 - Ask the officer to produce any documentation that authorizes school access (e.g. official court order signed by a judge, judicial warrant).
 - Make a copy of all documents provided by the officer. Retain one copy of the documents for school records.
 - If the officer declares that exigent circumstances exist and demands immediate access to the campus, Aspire Public Schools personnel should comply with the officer's orders and immediately contact the Regional Operations Director, Executive Director, Superintendent, General Counsel or designated administrator.
 - If the officer does not declare that exigent circumstances exist, respond according to the requirements of the officer's documentation. If the immigration-enforcement officer has:
 - an ICE (Immigrations and Customs Enforcement) administrative warrant
 - Aspire Public Schools personnel shall inform the agent that he or she cannot consent to any request without first consulting with the Aspire General Counsel.
 - a federal judicial warrant (search-and-seizure warrant or arrest warrant; see Appendix C & D of the Attorney General's Guidelines)-
 - Prompt compliance with such a warrant is usually legally required. If feasible, consult with the (local educational agency's General Counsel or designated administrator) before providing the agent access to the person or materials specified in the warrant.
 - a subpoena for production of documents or other evidence (see Appendix E & F of the Attorney General's Guidelines)-

- Immediate compliance is not required. Therefore, Aspire Public Schools personnel shall inform Aspire Public Schools' General Counsel or other designated official of the subpoena, and await further instructions on how to proceed.
- While Aspire Public Schools personnel should not consent to access by an immigration-enforcement officer, except as described above, he/she should not attempt to physically impede the officer, even if the officer appears to be exceeding the authorization given under a warrant or other document. If an officer enters the premises without consent, Aspire Public Schools personnel shall document his or her actions while on campus.
 - it is critical to - Ask to see, and make a copy of or note, the officer's credentials (name and badge number). Also ask for and copy or note the phone number of the officer's supervisor.
- After the encounter with the officer, Aspire Public Schools personnel shall promptly take written notes of all interactions with the officer. The notes shall include the following items:
 - List or copy of the officer's credentials and contact information;
 - Identity of all school personnel who communicated with the officer;
 - Details of the officer's request;
 - Whether the officer presented a warrant or subpoena to accompany his/her request, what was requested in the warrant/subpoena, and whether the warrant/subpoena was signed by a judge;
 - Aspire Public Schools personnel's response to the officer's request;
 - Any further action taken by the agent; and
 - Photo or copy of any documents presented by the agent.
- Aspire Public Schools personnel shall provide a copy of those notes, and associated documents collected from the officer, to the Regional Operations Director, General Counsel.
- In turn, the General Counsel shall submit a timely report to Aspire Public Schools' governing board regarding the officer's requests and actions and Aspire Public Schools' response(s).
- E-mail the Bureau of Children's Justice in the California Department of Justice, at BCJ@doj.ca.gov, regarding any attempt by a law-enforcement officer to access a school site or a student for immigration-enforcement purposes

Directory Information Policy

- If Aspire Public Schools decides to release directory information, Aspire Public Schools shall provide an annual notice to parents and guardians, and “eligible students” in attendance, of Aspire Public Schools' directory information policy that includes:
 - The categories of information that Aspire Public Schools has classified as public directory information that may be disclosed without parental consent and which should only include the information specifically identified in Education Code § 49061(c).
 - A statement that directory information does not include citizenship status, immigration status, place of birth, or any other information indicating national origin (except where Aspire Public Schools receives consent as required under state law).
 - The recipients of the directory information.
 - A description of the parent’s or guardian’s abilities to refuse release of the student’s directory information, and how to refuse release.
 - The 30-day deadline in which the parent, guardian or student must notify the school in writing that he or she does not want the information designated as directory information.

Inquiries Regarding Immigration Status, Citizenship Status, and National Origin Information

Aspire Public Schools personnel shall not inquire specifically about a student's citizenship or immigration status or the citizenship or immigration status of a student's parents or guardians; nor shall personnel seek or require, to the exclusion of other permissible documentation or information, documentation or information that may indicate a student’s immigration status, such as a green card, voter registration, a passport, or citizenship papers.

Where any law contemplates submission of national origin related information to satisfy the requirements of a special program, Aspire Public Schools personnel shall solicit that documentation or information separately from the school enrollment process.

- Where permitted by law, the Regional Operations Director will seek approval from the respective Executive Director of Aspire Public Schools with regards to alternative means to establish residency, age, or other eligibility criteria for enrollment or programs, and those alternative means shall include among them documentation or information that are available to persons regardless of immigration status, citizenship

status, or national origin, and that do not reveal information related to citizenship or immigration status.

- Where residency, age, and other eligibility criteria for purposes of enrollment or any program may be established by alternative documents or information permitted by law or this policy, Aspire Public Schools' procedures and forms shall describe to the applicant, and accommodate, all alternatives specified in law and all alternatives authorized under this policy

Monitoring and Receiving Visitors onto Campus

No outsider—which would include immigration-enforcement officers—shall enter or remain on school grounds of Aspire Public Schools during school hours without having registered with the front office, the principal or designee. If there are no exigent circumstances necessitating immediate action, and if the immigration officer does not possess a judicial warrant or court order that provides a basis for the visit, the officer must provide the following information to the principal or designee:

- Name, address, occupation;
- Age, if less than 21;
- Purpose in entering school grounds;
- Proof of identity; and
- Any other information as required by law.

The Principal or designee will determine when a meeting with the individual making the request can be scheduled. The request does not need to be fulfilled on the same day the request is made.

Aspire Public Schools shall adopt measures for responding to outsiders that avoids classroom interruptions, and preserves the peaceful conduct of the school's activities, consistent with local circumstances and practices.

Aspire Public Schools shall post signs at the entrance of its school grounds to notify outsiders of the hours and requirements for registration.

Aspire Public Schools personnel shall report entry by immigration-enforcement officers to any on-site school police or other appropriate administrator as would be required for any unexpected or unscheduled outside visitor coming on campus.

Family Concern Process

If you have concerns at a school site, please see below for the Family Concern Process that should be followed for your site.

Aspire Public Schools encourages students, parents, and staff to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus staff.

Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Step 1- Meeting/discussion with the specific staff member

Step 2- Meeting/discussion with the person's supervisor (if applicable)

Step 3- Meeting/discussion with the Principal

Step 4- Meeting/discussion with the Regional Executive Director or designee

Contact information is available from the school office.

If an informal conference regarding a concern fails to reach an outcome that is satisfactory to the staff member, student, or parent, the individual may initiate the formal process by filing a written complaint. The form is available at the end of this handbook. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

For complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying based on a legally protected characteristic, pupil fees, and Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), please refer to the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) section in this handbook

Athletics Annual Notices

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention

Aspire Public Schools is invested in the health of its athletes, especially their heart health. Sudden cardiac arrest (“SCA”) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. Those wishing to participate in athletics at Aspire Public Schools must review, sign and return the information sheet on sudden cardiac arrest found here::

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/pl/documents/pescaform.pdf> **Location of All Automated External Defibrillator(s) on Campus**

The school’s safety plan will note the location of all AED devices on campus. Additionally, the school’s front office staff will be knowledgeable about the location and use of AED devices.

Concussion/Head Injuries

A concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Because Aspire Public Schools has elected to offer an athletic program, we must immediately remove from a school-sponsored athletic activity for the remainder of the day an athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during that activity. The athlete may not return to that activity until the athlete is evaluated by, and receives written clearance from, a licensed healthcare provider. If the licensed health care provider determines the athlete has a concussion or head injury, the athlete shall also complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than 7 days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet must be signed and returned by the athlete and the athlete’s parent or guardian before the athlete initiates practice or competition. This requirement does not apply to an athlete engaging in an athletic activity during the regular school day or as part of a physical education course.

Opioid Information Sheet

Aspire Public Schools annually provides each athlete with an Opioid Factsheet for Patients published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The athlete and, if the athlete is 17 years of age or younger, the athlete’s parent or guardian shall sign a document acknowledging receipt of the Opioid Factsheet for Patients and return that document to your school before the athlete initiates practice or competition. The fact sheet is available at: <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/49530>

Uniform Complaint Policy (UCP)

Annual Notice

UCP Annual Notice

The Charter School is the local agency primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing educational programs. The Charter School shall investigate and seek to resolve complaints using policies and procedures known as the Uniform Complaint Procedure (“UCP”) adopted by our Governing Board for the following types of complaints:

1. Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group on the basis of the actual or perceived characteristics of age, ancestry, color, mental disability, physical disability, ethnic group identification, immigration status, citizenship, gender expression, gender identity, gender, genetic information, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, medical condition, marital status, sex, or sexual orientation, 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. Unlawful discrimination includes, but is not limited to, noncompliance with Education Code section 243(a) or 244.
2. Complaints alleging a violation of state or federal law or regulation governing the following programs:
 - Accommodations for Pregnant, Parenting or Lactating Students;
 - Adult Education;
 - Career Technical and Technical Education;
 - Career Technical and Technical Training;
 - Child Care and Development Programs;
 - Consolidated Categorical Aid;
 - Education or graduation of Students in Foster Care, Students who are Homeless, former Juvenile Court Students now enrolled in a public school, Migratory Children and Children of Military Families;
 - Every Student Succeeds Act;
 - Migrant Education Programs;
 - Regional Occupational Centers and Programs; and/or
 - State Preschool Programs.
 - Course periods without Educational Content

- Physical Education Instructional Minutes
 - School Safety Plans
 - School Site Councils
 - Textbook and Instructional Materials Discrimination
 - Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil
3. Complaints alleging noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees. A student enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity. A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
- A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory or is for credit.
 - A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment.
 - A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees may be filed with the Executive Director or the Compliance Officer identified below.

4. Complaints alleging noncompliance with the requirements governing the Local Control Funding Formula (“LCFF”) or Local Control and Accountability Plans (“LCAP”) under Education Code sections 47606.5 and 47607.3, as applicable. If the Charter School adopts a School Plan for Student Achievement (“SPSA”) in addition to its LCAP, complaints of noncompliance with the requirements of the SPSA under Education Code sections 64000, 64001, 65000, and 65001 shall also fall under the UCP.

Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding child nutrition programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 49490-49590 are governed by Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (“C.F.R.”) sections 210.19(a)(4), 215.1(a), 220.13(c), 225.11(b), 226.6(n), and 250.15(d) and Title 5, California Code of Regulations (“C.C.R.”) sections 15580 - 15584.

Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding special education programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 56000-56865 and 59000-59300 are governed by the procedures set forth in 5 C.C.R. sections 3200-3205 and 34 C.F.R. sections 300.151-300.153.

Complaints within the scope of the UCP are to be filed with the person responsible for processing complaints:

Regional Director of Student Services, Bay Area Region
 1009 66th Avenue
 Oakland, CA 94621
 510-434-5000
Pamela.Saberton@aspirepublicschools.org

Regional Director of Student Services, Central Valley Region
 4202 Coronado Ave

Stockton, CA 95204
209-647-3047
Hugo.Vazquez@aspirepublicschools.org

Superintendent of Culturally Responsive Leadership Development, Los Angeles Region
5901 E. Slauson Avenue
Commerce, CA 90040
323-277-2901
Joel.Ramirez@aspirepublicschools.org

Only complaints regarding pupil fees, LCAP, or noncompliance with Education Code section 243 or 244 may be filed anonymously and only if the anonymous complainant provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with the respective applicable laws.

Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, must be filed within six (6) months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, occurred or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. All other complaints under the UCP shall be filed not later than one (1) year from the date the alleged violation occurred. For complaints relating to the LCAP, the date of the alleged violation is the date on which the Charter School's Board of Directors approved the LCAP or the annual update was adopted by the Charter School.

The Compliance Officer responsible for investigating the complaint shall conduct and complete the investigation in accordance with California regulations and the Charter School's UCP Policy. The Compliance Officer shall provide the complainant with a final written investigation report ("Decision") within sixty (60) calendar days from the Charter School's receipt of the complaint. This sixty (60) calendar day time period may be extended by written agreement of the complainant.

The complainant has a right to appeal the Charter School's Decision to the California Department of Education ("CDE") by filing a written appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the Charter School's written Decision, except if the Charter School has used its UCP to address a complaint that is not subject to the UCP requirements. The appeal must include a copy of the complaint filed with the Charter School, a copy of the Charter School's Decision, and the complainant must specify and explain the basis for the appeal of the Decision, including at least one of the following:

1. The Charter School failed to follow its complaint procedures.
2. Relative to the allegations of the complaint, the Charter School's Decision lacks material findings of fact necessary to reach a conclusion of law.
3. The material findings of fact in the Charter School's Decision are not supported by substantial evidence.
4. The legal conclusion in the Charter School's Decision is inconsistent with the law.

5. In a case in which the Charter School's Decision found noncompliance, the corrective actions fail to provide a proper remedy.

A complainant who appeals the Charter School's Decision on a UCP complaint to the CDE shall receive a written appeal decision within sixty (60) calendar days of the CDE's receipt of the appeal, unless extended by written agreement with the complainant or the CDE documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the CDE's appeal Decision pursuant to 5 C.C.R. section 4633(f)(2) or (3), either party may request reconsideration by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction ("SSPI") or the SSPI's designee. The request for reconsideration shall specify and explain the reason(s) for contesting the findings of fact, conclusions of law, or corrective actions in the CDE's appeal Decision.

If Charter School fails to issue an investigation report within the required sixty (60) calendar day timeline, a party to a written complaint of prohibited discrimination may appeal directly to the SSPI. The complaint must provide evidence supporting the basis for direct filing and explain why immediate action is necessary.

Complaints alleging noncompliance with Education Code section 243 or 244 may be filed with the SSPI directly, and the SSPI may directly intervene without waiting for an investigation by the Charter School. The complainant shall present the SSPI with evidence that supports the basis for the direct filing and why immediate action is necessary.

If a UCP complaint is filed directly with the CDE and the CDE determines that it merits direct intervention, the CDE shall complete an investigation and provide a written decision to the complainant within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, unless the parties have agreed to extend the timeline or the CDE documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.

If the Charter School finds merit in a UCP complaint, or the CDE finds merit in an appeal, the Charter School shall take corrective actions consistent with the requirements of existing law that will provide a remedy to the affected student and/or parent/guardian as applicable.

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. Complainants alleging a violation of Education Code section 220, 243, 244, 51500, 51501, or 60044, may seek civil remedies after sixty (60) calendar days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE. 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 the complainant's right to file a complaint in accordance with 5 C.C.R. § 4622.

A copy of the UCP is available at [this link](#). For further information on any part of the complaint procedures, including filing a complaint or requesting a copy of the UCP, please contact the Executive Director.

REFERENCE: Board Policy 1015.7 - Uniform Complaint Procedures

Family Concern Documentation Form

Your Name _____ Name of Student _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ (day) _____ (evening)

School Site _____

Description of Concern:

Please describe your desired solution:

Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail, fax or deliver to your school site principal or Regional Office

Aspire Home Office 1001 22nd Avenue, Oakland, CA 94606 (t) (510) 434-5000	Aspire Bay Area 1009 66th Avenue Oakland, CA 94621 (t) (510) 434-5000	Aspire Central Valley 4202 Coronado Ave Stockton, CA 95204 (t) (209) 647-3047	Aspire Los Angeles 5901 E. Slauson Avenue Commerce, CA 90040 (t) (323) 837-9920
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(f) (510) 434-5010			
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Date received by Aspire School or Regional Office _____ Date copy provided to School
Principal: _____