

Parent Student Handbook

2024-2025



“Climbing Toward College & Career Readiness”



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Inspiring Collaboration, Innovation, & Empowerments



Let's work together
to make a difference
for our
students!

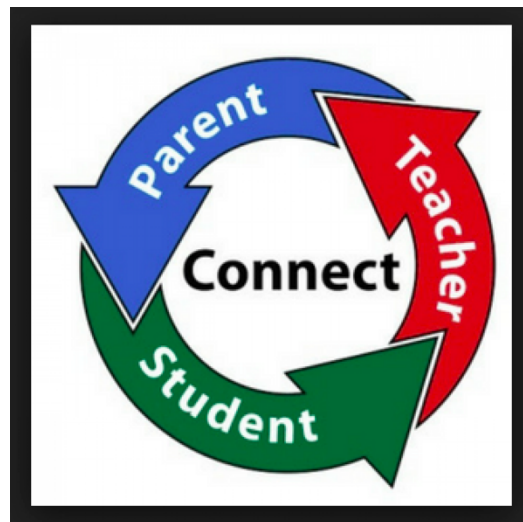


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MESSAGE FROM ARARAT CHARTER SCHOOL

Dear Ararat Charter School Parents and Students,

We would like to welcome back all new and returning Ararat Charter School (“ACS” or the “Charter School”) families! We are looking forward to working together with you to ensure another successful school year. Our efforts will be focused on teaching students the essential 21st century skills needed to be college and career ready. We also understand the importance of teaching students to think critically and teaching students’ problem-solving skills so they are successful at school and life.

The Parent/Student Handbook offers information about school policies and procedures to help parents and students have a successful school year. Our school staff is readily available should you have any questions pertaining to this parent handbook.

Our teachers will continue focusing on teaching students the California state standards with an emphasis on how to apply them in a real-world setting. Students in K-5 will be assessed throughout the school year with our program assessments. Teachers will be using student data to drive instruction to meet the needs of every student. Students in grades 3-5 will take the CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress). This state test assesses students understanding of the California state Standards in ELA and Math. This test is administered online and requires students to have typing skills to respond to questions in ELA and Math. ACS works diligently throughout the year so that students have the necessary skills needed to take the test. More information will be forthcoming on how you can help prepare your child for the test. We would like to continue to collaborate with all ACS families to form strong partnerships with parents and to work together to meet the needs of all students.



Included, are a list of the school’s policies, procedures, and legal mandates that must be followed to comply with District, State, and Federal laws. Please read this handbook carefully as it contains very important information that will answer many of your questions on a variety of topics.

Sincerely,
ACS



GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

- **Ms. Shakeh Avakian** – chairperson@araratcharterschool.com
Board Chairperson, Retired School Psychologist
- **Ms. Rosemarie Shamieh** - rshamieh@araratcharterschool.com
Board Secretary, Associate Professor
- **Dr. Giuliana Velarde** – gvelarde@araratcharterschool.com
Board Member, School Counselor
- **Mr. Karim Merzian** – kmerzian@araratcharterschool.com
Board Treasurer, CFO of Private Schools
- **Mr. Vache Shirvanian** – vshirvanian@araratcharterschool.com
Board Co-Treasurer, Founder, and Managing Partner of a Private Entity
- **Ms. Nayri Horvat** – nhorvat@araratcharterschool.com
Board Member, COO of a TPA Company



ACS Campus 1 (Sylmar)

Regular School Days – 8:00am – 3:10pm
Mindful Mondays – 8:00am – 1:40pm

ACS Campus 2 (Erwin)

Regular School Days - 7:50am – 3:00pm
Mindful Mondays - 7:50am – 1:30pm



The vision of ACS is for all students to be high-achieving, lifelong learners and thinkers, who will become productive, thoughtful, and responsible world citizens with an appreciation for cultural diversity.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN “EDUCATED PERSON” IN THE 21ST CENTURY:

An “educated person” in the 21st century is a lifelong learner who has developed competence, self-motivation, confidence, and responsibility.

The Academic Attributes of an Educated Person in The 21st Century Include:

- Knowledge of and ability to demonstrate solid skills in reading, writing and speaking;
- A core knowledge that includes cultural, mathematical and scientific literacy;
- Understanding of the scientific process;
- Knowledge of history;
- Ability to think critically, creatively, analytically, and logically;
- Ability to use technology as a tool and understanding its uses;
- Ability to gather and organize information;
- Understanding of the mathematical process including application;
- Ability to critically assess data;
- Ability to appreciate, enjoy and respect the visual and performing arts;
- An understanding of the political process.

The Personal Attributes of an Educated Person in the 21st Century Include:

- Concentration, focus, and perseverance;
- Ability to work cooperatively with others;
- Adaptability;
- A strong sense of connection to and responsibility for the community;
- Valuing relationships, respect for others and for authority;
- Ability to honor differences, including cultural, ideological, and philosophical;
- Resourcefulness, confidence, and motivation;
- Enthusiasm, a sense of wonder and curiosity;
- A passion for lifelong learning;
- Ability to communicate with respect and compassion;
- A strong social conscience;
- Celebrates diversity;
- A global perspective;
- Ability to think logically, make informed evaluations, and problem solve



ACS is committed to educating students to their maximum potential in an environment that actively engages students in rigorous and relevant programs, promotes academic excellence, and values cultural and linguistic diversity and creative expression. Developing and nurturing the whole child is the primary objective of all ACS programs.

Our students will...

- Achieve academic excellence in an environment that emphasizes critical thinking, self-inquiry, and collaboration.

- Engage in Fine Arts programs, such as visual and performing arts.
- Acquire literacy in information technology.
- Demonstrate positive attitudes and appreciation of cultural diversity.
- Act with a sense of civic responsibility and demonstrate social consciousness.
- Practice good habits of personal fitness and well-being.



SPECIFIC SKILLS AND ANNUAL MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

(AMO):

ACS (ACS) will have a comprehensive standards-based assessment program. Student achievement will be assessed using formative assessments, Standards based assessments, and SBAC-CAASPP. Based on aggregate of multiple measures, we will use the summative assessment data to codify the level of mastery of students in the four subject areas: Language Arts, math, science and social studies. The data will also be used to make instructional decisions, allocate resources, and plan for acceleration and

interventions.



- Collaboration with all stakeholders of the school community
- Innovation of instructional practices to best meet the needs of all students
- Empowering Students Staff and Parents

ACS's Professional Community has...

- Compelling purpose, shared standards, and academic focus
- Collective efficiency and shared responsibility for students learning
- Collaborative culture
- Communal application of effective teaching practices and de-privatized practice
- Relational trust in one another, in students and parents
- Individual and group learning based on ongoing assessment and feedback

RE-ENROLLMENT OF CURRENT STUDENTS

The official School Intent to Re-enroll forms will be sent home in February or March of each year. **Please ensure that forms are sent back to our office indicating that you are planning to return for the following school year.** In addition, if your child has a sibling who will be attending ACS, please ensure that you indicate this on your School Intent to Return Form. **If you fail to return your School Intent to Enroll Form by the specified due date, your child's space will not be guaranteed and will be subject to space availability and or the Annual Public Lottery result.**

REQUIREMENTS FOR NEWLY ENROLLED STUDENTS



Submit required enrollment documents

Once an offer has been extended, all parents of newly enrolled students are asked to satisfy certain requirements before their child can be formally enrolled in ACS. If you accept an offer of enrollment, you will be asked to submit enrollment paperwork to ACS by the given deadline.

Comply with enrollment requirements by the submission

deadline.

The deadline for providing required documents varies depending on when your child receives his or her enrollment offer. The date will be given to you when the offer to enroll is extended. If we do not receive all required paperwork by the specified deadlines, your child's enrollment will be withdrawn, and their space will be offered to the next student on the waitlist.

Attend the New Parent Orientation Session (Recommended)

This orientation will give you an opportunity to meet school officials as well as members of the school. You will be given an overview of our two campuses and learn about how the school is governed. We will also review key policies, and major school events and provide an opportunity for you to get answers to your questions during a formal Q&A session.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

State Board of Education Policy #89-01

A critical dimension of effective schooling is parent involvement. Research has shown conclusively that parent involvement at home and in their children's education improves student achievement.

Important Facts:

1. Families provide the primary education environment.
2. Parent involvement improves student achievement.
3. Parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, supportive, long-lasting, and well-planned.
4. The benefits of parent involvement are not limited to early childhood or the elementary level; there are continuing positive effects through high school.
5. Involving parents in supporting their children's education at home is not enough. To ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the community, parents must be involved at all levels in the schools. The extent of parent involvement in a child's education is more important to student success than family

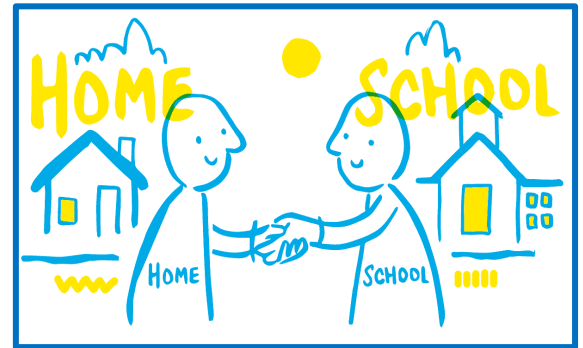
income or education.

6. We cannot look at the school and the home in isolation from one another; families and schools need to collaborate to help children adjust to the school environment.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

ACS has adopted a parent involvement policy and plan.

The Charter School aims to provide all students in our school significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps while abiding by guidelines within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”). The Charter School staff recognizes a partnership with families is essential to meet this goal. Our Parent and Family Engagement Policy leverages and promotes active involvement of all families as partners with schools to ensure student success. A copy of the Charter School’s complete Policy is available upon request in the main office.



This policy and the plan to implement it have been developed jointly and in agreement with and will be distributed to all parents. ACS shall convene an annual meeting at a time that is convenient for parents, to which all parents are invited and encouraged to attend. At this meeting, parents will be informed of the current Parental Involvement Policy and any possible changes that need to be addressed.

- ACS will notify parents of the Parent Involvement Policy, their rights under Title I, and how they could be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of the school plan, Parental Involvement Policy, and the Parent-Teacher-School Compact in the school.
- ACS will be flexible as to meeting times to encourage broad parent involvement.
- ACS will hold monthly School Leadership meetings and Parent Involvement meetings and, through parent surveys, will involve parents in planning reviews and improvement of programs.
- ACS, through regular and consistent communication through newsletters, phone calls, biannual parent conferences, Back-to-School night, and Open House, will provide parents with timely information regarding curriculum, assessments, and expectations for student achievement.
- ACS will review and revise annually the Parent Involvement Policy based on parent survey data.

The complete Policy is available for review in the main office.

COMPACT FOR STUDENTS HIGH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- ACS has developed jointly with parents a school-parent compact that describes the school’s, students’, parents’, and teachers’ shared responsibilities to support student academic achievement. The compact shall be reviewed annually and modified as needed.
- ACS teachers will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that will enable students to meet the State’s academic expectations.
- ACS will include in their compact for parents a promise that they will monitor homework, attendance, and communication with teachers as well as provide a quiet place for schoolwork to be completed.
- ACS will provide two parent-teacher conferences yearly as well as communication throughout the year.
- ACS students will work hard to do their best in school. Students will read, understand, sign, and follow the Parent-Teacher-School Compact. Students will read, understand, sign, and follow the School Code of Conduct.
- Ensuring, to the extent possible, information sent home is in a language and form parents can understand. For parents whose English is a second language, ACS will provide information in their primary language when requested. For parents who are visually impaired, provide information in Braille or in large print

when requested.

- There will be ongoing communication between parents and teachers through parent/teacher conferences, at which time the learning compact will be discussed; progress reports to parents; and reasonable access to staff, observation of classroom activities, and opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class.

Building Capacity for Involvement

- ACS will have periodic meetings to assist parents in understanding topics such as content and achievement standards, state/local assessments, Title I requirements, how to monitor their child's progress, and work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.
- ACS will provide materials and grade level-specific training to help parents work with their children by holding parent workshops covering Literacy, Math, and English Language Development.
- ACS will coordinate and integrate parent involvement activities that encourage and support fully participating in the education of their child by coordinating and integrating, as appropriate, parent involvement programs/activities with public preschool programs.
- ACS will ensure that information and reports are sent to parents in a format and language that parents understand.
- ACS will provide teachers and staff members with strategies and techniques to work together with parents to develop a partnership in education.
- ACS will support parents with activities that foster their involvement in the school by involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators; providing necessary literacy training for parents; training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents; to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education.

ACCESSIBILITY

ACS will, to the extent possible, provide opportunities for participation by parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, parents who qualify for Title I services, parents of traveling students, and migratory parents. This includes providing information and school reports in a format and, when possible, in a language parents understand.

RESTITUTION OF LOST OR DAMAGED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

As part of their education, students are provided with materials and equipment, including textbooks and devices to assist with instruction. In order to ensure the School maintains materials so all students have access, certain procedures are in place. Students should handle instructional materials, library books, devices, and other school property with care. The following are ways to help the student understand this responsibility:

- Model careful handling of instructional materials, library books, devices, and other school property;
- Help students find a safe place to keep books during the borrowing period;
- Inform students that vandalism is not only a crime, but parents/legal guardians may be held financially responsible for the damage.

Parents/legal guardians should report damage to school property to the school as soon as possible. If a student's device is damaged, an investigation will take place to determine the details of the incident. The student will be



provided a replacement upon return of the damaged property to ensure access. If the student willfully damages a device or textbooks by cutting, defacing, or otherwise injuring the school property, under the Civil Code and Education Code as well as the School's policy, parents/legal guardians are liable for damage to school property, including textbooks and/or devices. Civil Code Section 1714.1 provides that any act of willful misconduct of a minor that results in any injury to the property or person of another shall be the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian having custody and control of the minor for all purposes of civil damages and the parent/legal guardian having custody and control shall be jointly and severally liable with the minor for any damages resulting from the willful misconduct not to exceed \$25,000, in addition to liability otherwise imposed by law. California EC Section 48904(a)(1) states that a parent/legal guardian of a minor is liable to a school for all property loaned to and failed to be returned or willfully damaged by a minor. The liability shall not exceed \$20,900 as of January 1, 2020, adjusted annually for inflation per EC Section 48904(a)(2). Upon receiving notification, the parent/legal guardian must pay the outstanding obligation. If the parent/legal guardian does not pay the outstanding debt, a small claims action may be filed by the Charter School against the parent/legal guardian. If the parent/legal guardian is unable to pay the judgment, the parent/legal guardian may request an owner-debtor hearing. This is part of the law because these items are purchased with public funds. However, please see the important points.

The Charter School shall not take negative action against a student or former student because of a debt owed to the school, including but not limited to all of the following in cases that do not involve willful damage or loss:

1. Denying full credit for any assignments for a class;
2. Denying full and equal participation in classroom activity;
3. Denying access to on-campus educational facilities, including, but not limited to, the library;
4. Denying or withholding grades or transcripts;
5. Denying or withholding a diploma;
6. Limiting or barring participation in an extracurricular activity, club, or sport;
7. Limiting or excluding from participation in an educational activity, field trip, or school ceremony.

If the school finds that school property is damaged as a result of willful acts, the school may:

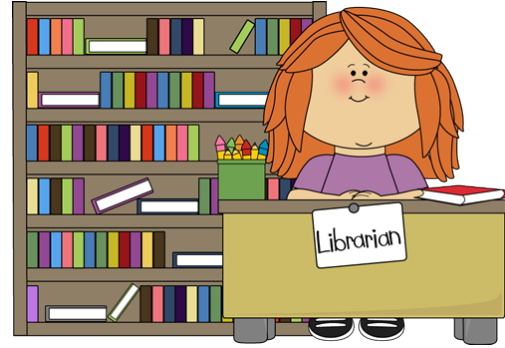
1. Offer the parent/legal guardian and the student alternatives to repayment with money. Alternatives to repayment must be approved by the parent/legal guardian. Any alternatives that include service or work in exchange for repayment shall comply with all provisions of the Labor Code, including those sections relating to youth employment;
2. Provide an itemized invoice for the amount owed by the parent/legal guardian;
3. A payment plan may be established, and a receipt will be provided after each payment.

Examples of service or work in exchange for repayment may include library service, completing a service-learning project, assignment, or research report to name a few.

LIBRARY

For success in reading, students need many opportunities to interact with good books by reading them and by hearing them read aloud both at school and at home. It is for that reason that our school library media center policy permits **ALL** students to take their borrowed books home.

We will discuss the meaning of responsibility with your child. We will need help in making sure that the books are kept in good condition and are returned to the school library media center on time. **Parents will be expected to pay the replacement price for any lost or damaged books. (California Education Code section 48904).**



The following are ways to help your student assume this responsibility:

1. Model careful handling of library books.
2. Help your child to find a safe place to keep books during the borrowing period.
3. Help your child to remember to return the books on time.

While the books are in your home, we hope that you will:

1. Read them aloud to your child.
2. Have your child read aloud to you.
3. Have your child read silently.

Giving all students access to library media resources at school and at home is one way that we hope to improve your child's opportunity for academic success.

TRAFFIC SAFETY RULES



Traffic congestion during morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal can be extremely difficult at times. Please review the following drop-off and pick-up procedures carefully. To continue to provide a safe environment for all students, please note the following guidelines:

- ◆ NO PARKING is allowed in this Loading Zone during drop-off and dismissal times.
- ◆ Have children ready to exit your car with all belongings; please do not have items in the trunk of your car.
- ◆ Please pull all the way forward in front of the gate before allowing your child to exit the car.
- ◆ PLEASE ALWAYS USE the CROSSWALK at the intersections.
- ◆ For your safety and the safety of your child, NEVER "JAY-WALK."
- ◆ PLEASE NEVER double-park in the flow of traffic to allow your child to exit the car and walk between parked cars. This is extremely dangerous and puts the life of your child at risk!
- ◆ Please do not use the Staff Parking Lot or neighbors' driveways as a student drop-off and pick-up area.
- ◆ Please do not make a U-Turn in front of the school to leave or enter the valet lane.

Thank you for obeying our traffic rules. Your cooperation ensures the safety of every child at ACS and helps to make our valet lane a success!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Students should be picked up no later than 3:10 pm for ACS 1 and 3:00 pm for ACS2 unless they are enrolled in the APEX program. If you are unable to arrange pick-up by that time personally, you should make other childcare arrangements.



Instructional Program

ACADEMIC APPROACH

ACS believes that each and every child can be academically successful and that each and every student is unique. ACS believes that learning best occurs in self-contained classrooms led by teachers with the skills and knowledge of a variety of teaching techniques and methods and specialized materials that can meet the instructional needs of every student. ACS also believes in the use of meaningful assessment methods to prescribe the best teaching strategies for each individual student.

Although there is no assurance that each child will master every instructional area, a major effort will be made to ensure maximum understanding and mastery. We believe that the potential for learning best occurs in environments that include meaningful content with choices for learning: adequate time, space, and materials; immediate and meaningful feedback and careful monitoring of progress; enriched environment, and collaborative learning opportunities.

The educational philosophy at ACS synthesizes the constructive approach with elements from the following schools of thought: Developmental Stages as defined by Jean Piaget, Behaviorist orientations to learning, Multiple Intelligence developed by Howard Gardner, Jerome Bruner, Bloom’s Model of critical thinking (Taxonomy), Accelerated School’s model developed by Levin and colleagues at Stanford, and Problem-Based learning.

Constructivism views learning as a process in which the learner actively constructs or builds new ideas or concepts based upon current and past knowledge. Constructivism has two major elements: 1) cognitive constructivism, which is about how the individual learner understands things, is proposed by Jean Piaget. In terms of developmental stages, Piaget claims that learning is dependent on the developmental stages of the individual. Elementary level students, who are at the concrete level of operations, learn by being engaged in hands-on activities and using models. Jean Piaget suggested that through process of accommodation and assimilation, individuals internalize knowledge and construct new knowledge from their experiences: and 2) social constructivism emphasizes how meaning and understanding grow out of social encounters (Vygotsky). A significant basis for constructivism was laid down by Vygotsky in his theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) claiming that students do best when they are working in collaboration with adults.

Benefits of constructive approaches include: 1) children learn more and enjoy learning; 2) education works best when it concentrates on thinking and understanding; 3) constructivist learning is transferable; 4) constructivism gives students ownership of what they are learning; 5) by grouping learning activists in an authentic, real-world context, constructivism stimulates and engages students; and 6) constructivism promotes social and communication skills.



TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

California’s New State-Wide Testing System

The Charter School shall annually administer required state testing to the applicable grades (e.g., the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress [“CAASPP”].) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a parent’s, or guardian’s written request to Charter 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.





ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT FOR CALIFORNIA (ELPAC)

ACS values your child's cultural and language assets and offers appropriate instructional program options that best meets your child's educational needs. To better serve the instructional needs of students who are not fluent English speakers, ACS shall identify students' English proficiency levels. Parents and school staff work together to determine the languages that families and students speak at home using the Home Language Survey. Based on responses on the Home Language Survey, state law requires the public schools to assess the English language proficiency of new enrollees who speak a language other than English using the Initial ELPAC assessment.

This assessment must be administered within the first 30 calendar days of enrollment. Schools will notify you of this requirement with a parent letter.

To measure student progress in learning English, all continuously enrolled English Learners will be administered the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) Summative in the Spring until the reclassification criteria is met.

Additional information can be found at www.elpac.org.

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 assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding English Learners and the rights of students and parents.

PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST

The State Board of Education (SBE) designated the FITNESSGRAM[®] as the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) for students in California public schools. The FITNESSGRAM[®] is a comprehensive, health-related physical fitness battery developed by The Cooper Institute. The primary goal of the FITNESSGRAM[®] is to assist students in establishing lifetime habits of regular physical activity.

Public school students in grades five, seven, and nine are required to take the PFT, whether or not they are enrolled in a physical education class or participate in a block schedule.

The PFT provides information that can be used by (1) students to assess and plan personal fitness programs; (2) teachers to design the curriculum for physical education programs; and (3) parents and guardians to understand their children's fitness levels. This program also provides results that are used to monitor changes in the physical fitness of California students. By law (Education Code Section 60800), all school districts in California are required to administer the PFT annually to all students in grades five, seven, and nine.

The FITNESSGRAM[®] is composed of the following six fitness areas, with several test options provided for most areas:

Aerobic Capacity

- PACER (Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run)

- One-Mile Run
- Walk Test (only for ages 13 or older)

Abdominal Strength and Endurance

- Curl-Up

Upper Body Strength and Endurance

- Push-Up
- Modified Pull-Up
- Flexed-Arm Hang



Body Composition

- Skinfold Measurements
- Body Mass Index
- Bioelectric Impedance Analyzer

Trunk Extensor Strength and Flexibility

- Trunk Lift

Flexibility

- Back-Saver Sit and Reach
- Shoulder Stretch

The FITNESSGRAM® uses objective criteria to evaluate performance for each fitness area (e.g., body composition, abdominal strength, and endurance). The Cooper Institute established these criteria using current research and expert opinions. These criteria represent a level of fitness that offers some protection against the diseases associated with physical inactivity.

SURVEYS ABOUT PERSONAL BELIEFS

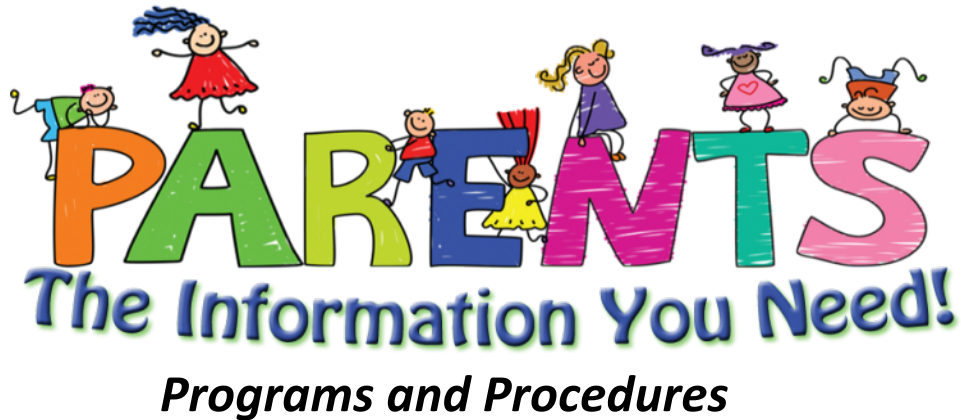
Unless the student’s parent/guardian gives written permission, a student will not be given any test, questionnaire, survey, or examination containing any questions about the student’s or the student’s parents or guardians’ personal beliefs or practices in sex, family life, morality, or religion.

TEACHER QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

As the Charter School receives Title I federal funds through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”), all parents/guardians of students attending the Charter School may request information regarding the professional qualifications of classroom teachers and/or paraprofessionals, including at a minimum:

1. Whether the student’s teacher:
 - a. Has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - b. Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - c. Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Upon request, the Charter School will provide the information to the parents/guardians in a timely manner. Parents/guardians may contact the school by emailing to info@araratcharterschool.com



ATTENDANCE

Every student is expected to attend school for a full day every day, unless there is valid justification for the absence. The goal for all students is to have 96% attendance or higher, which means no more than seven absences all year long.

Absences, excused and unexcused, impact a student's academic achievement. Please send your child to school daily unless the absence is truly unavoidable. Examples of UNEXCUSED absences include:

- Running errands for the family
- Babysitting
- Vacations or trips
- Weather Conditions
- Transportation problems

School attendance is vital to student achievement. Students who develop patterns of good attendance are much more likely to be successful both academically and socially. The school is required to update attendance data and records during the current school year. Corrections and updates to attendance data and records are not allowed after the school year has closed. **It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide documentation to verify an absence within ten (10) days after the student returns to school to prevent absences from being recorded as non-compliant.** Absences include coming to class 30 or more minutes late and missing class periods. Upon learning from a parent/guardian the reason(s) for a student's absence, the following staff may verify the validity of an absence excuse (CA Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 421):

- A school or public health nurse
- A physician
- A principal
- A teacher
- Any other qualified employee of a school assigned to make such verification

School staff authorized to verify absence excuses may, when presented with facts that call into question the authenticity of the excuse, request additional information in support of the absence excuse and/or may refuse to excuse the absence.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as required by law or permitted under this Attendance Policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health.
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments
4. For the purpose of attending the funeral services or grieving the death of either a member of the pupil's immediate family, or of a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than five (5) days per incident. "Immediate family" means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.
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.

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

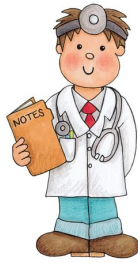
6. Participation in religious instruction or exercises as follows:
 - a. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four (4) school days per month.
7. For the purposes of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.
8. Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent, including absences to care for a sick child. (The school does not require a note from the doctor for this excusal).
9. To permit the student to spend time with an immediate family member who is an active-duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code section 49701, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Charter School.
10. For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Election Code section 12302.
11. Attendance at the student's naturalization ceremony to become a United States 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. Authorized at the discretion of the Principal or designee, based on the facts of the student's circumstances, are deemed to constitute a valid excuse.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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.
17. 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 schoolday-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.
18. For the following justifiable personal reasons for a maximum of five (5) school days per school year, upon advance written request by the student's parent or guardian and approval by the Principal or designee pursuant to uniform standards:
 - a. Appearance in court.
 - b. Observance of a holiday or ceremony of the pupil's religion.
 - c. Attendance at religious retreats (not to exceed one schoolday per semester).
 - d. Attendance at an employment conference.
 - e. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization.

Upon receiving appropriate verification that an absence occurred due to one of the reasons listed above, the school will consider the absence to be excused. A pupil absent from school for the above excused reasons shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can reasonably be provided and, upon satisfactory completion, shall be given full credit. The teacher of any class from which a pupil is absent shall determine what assignments the pupil shall make up and in what period of time the pupil shall complete such assignments. The tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the pupil missed during the absence. Please note that this does not reverse the absence, it changes the otherwise unexcused absence into an excused absence.

Excessive absences may prevent a student from being promoted to the next grade level or from graduating if they fall behind their schoolwork and academic goals. Because of this, we make every effort to encourage daily attendance. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, it is the responsibility of the student to make up all schoolwork they missed. This will include the submissions of any missed daily classwork or homework and other projects as assigned.

Students who accumulate twenty unexcused absences throughout the course of the school year will not receive a passing grade in that class.



**To re-admit a student back into the classroom,
a doctor's note is required if the absence is 3 DAYS/OR LONGER.
Please provide a note for every absence!**



UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence for reasons other than those listed above as excused absences are deemed unexcused. ACS Parents will receive a form or phone call regarding unexplained absences.

TRUANCY PROCESS

Number of <u>Unexcused Absences</u> or <u>Unexcused tardies</u> over 30 minutes	Consequences
1-2	Phone, email, or Class Dojo message home
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is Truant • Phone, email, or Class Dojo message home • Parent/guardian will receive “Truancy Letter #1 – Truancy Classification Notice” from the Charter School notifying the parent/guardian of the student’s “Truant” status. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Charter School. • This letter shall be re-sent after a fourth (4th) unexcused absence.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is habitual truant • Phone, email, or Class Dojo message home • Parent/guardian will receive “Truancy Letter #2 – Habitual Truant Classification Notice and Conference Request,” notifying the parent/guardian of the student’s “Habitual Truant” status and a parent/guardian conference will be scheduled to review the student’s records and develop an intervention plan/contract • Charter School will consult with a school counselor regarding the appropriateness of a home visitation and/or case management.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone, email, or Class Dojo message home • Parent/guardian will receive a “Truancy Letter #3 – Referral to SART Meeting” and the student will be referred to a Student Success Team (SST) and the SART.



1. If the conditions of the SART contract are not met, the student may incur additional administrative action up to and including disenrollment from the Charter School, consistent with the Involuntary Removal Process described below.
2. If a student is absent ten (10) or more consecutive school days without valid excuse and the student's parent/guardian cannot be reached at the number or address provided in the registration packet and does not otherwise respond to the Charter School's communication attempts, as set forth above, the student will be in violation of this Policy and the SART contract (if any) and may be subject to disenrollment in compliance with the Involuntary Removal Process described below. If the student is disenrolled after the Involuntary Removal Process has been followed, notification will be sent within thirty (30) days to the student's last known school district of residence.
3. Any documentation received by the Charter School regarding a student's enrollment and attendance at another public or private school (i.e., CALPADS report) shall be deemed evidence of a **voluntary** disenrollment and shall not trigger the Involuntary Removal Process below.
4. For all communications set forth in this process, the Charter School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to update the Charter School with any new contact information.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

- When students attend school, they get better grades, score better on assessments, and are more likely to go to college.
- It is our responsibility to teach students the importance of attendance now so they are prepared for the future.
- It's the law. Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children go to school. When parents are at work, students should be safe at school.

PARENTS INFLUENCE ATTENDANCE - GET INVOLVED!

- Plan family vacations for non-school days only.
- Schedule non-emergency medical and dental appointments after school hours.
- Make sure your child's school has your accurate daytime contact information, including cell phone number and/or e-mail address.
- Communicate often with your child's teachers.
- Make your school aware of any problems that may be causing your child to miss school.

Every student is expected to attend school on a daily basis unless there is a valid justification for his/her absence.

(EC 48200) Do not allow your child to have “parent permitted truanancies.” These truanancies are best described as absences for reasons other than what the law allows. They may include the following:

- Personal business
- Car problems
- No clean clothes
- Rain

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students who attend school regularly derive educational benefits. Independent study contracts will only be approved if the student will miss five (5) or more consecutive days of instruction, not to exceed 14 days in one school year. The school will need at least a 5-day prior notice prior to participation in the independent study. The rule of thumb would be to notify the school as soon as the parent is aware of a condition that may warrant independent study. **Parents must request an Independent Study Contract by emailing info@araratcharterschool.com.** The principal’s decision on approval is final. Parents should understand that an Independent Study Contract cannot replicate the education within the classroom and that such absence from in-person instruction can affect a student’s learning and grade on tests and projects. It is the student’s responsibility to check in with teachers upon return to school for any additional work missed. Teachers will assign work, and that work must be completed and returned according to the independent study Master Agreement.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Any students who will have zero tardies and zero absences for a given period of time will be recognized monthly. As an incentive for perfect attendance, those students who will receive a “Perfect Attendance Certificate” will also be awarded in some way, to be determined by teachers and staff.



TARDY



To develop the value of punctuality in our students, ACS has adopted a strict policy, which is outlined below:

- Tardy arrivals to school are never “excused.”
- Each student is allowed two (2) tardies per year that will not have consequences which allow for emergencies and uncontrollable situations.
- Three (3) tardies are considered one unexcused absence.
- Upon your child’s sixth tardy arrival, you will be called in for a meeting with the school.

Students arriving after 8:00 am (ACS1) and 7:50 am (ACS2) will be considered tardy.



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) school days 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.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

The California Education Code, Section 51101, states that parents/guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools have the right, and should have the opportunity, to work together in a mutually supportive and respectful partnership with schools to help their children succeed, to be informed in advance about a school’s rules, and to be informed of the procedures for visiting schools and observing classrooms.

ACS’s Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities is an integral component in the school’s mission which indicates the partnership role of families and schools to achieve student success. It also affirms the rights and responsibilities that parents have in advocating for their children’s academic success.

Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities to Ensure Their Child’s Success

Parents are equal partners in the education of their children. Family strengths and assets are essential to the academic success of students and recognizes parents as the first and most important lifelong teachers of their children. To that end, families and ACS assume their responsibility for student success and commit to a partnership that:

- Maintains high expectations for student achievement
- Ensures all children are ready for college, careers, and life
- Promotes productive conversation and collaboration
- Reflects mutual respect and support

Parents Have the Right To:

- A free education that honors their child’s learning and prepares them for college careers, and life
- A welcoming environment that values family assets and contributions to learning
- Information about the school’s expectations, educational programs, policies and procedures
- The CA School Dashboard to assess the quality of their child’s school
- Visit their child’s classroom and develop partnerships with teachers and staff
- Opportunities to learn how best to support education at home and at school
- Intervention classes and other learning supports for their child
- File a formal complaint without fear of reprisal
- Translation/interpretation services to communicate effectively with school staff

Parents Have the Responsibility to:

- Promote literacy, high achievement, and a love for learning
- Ensure their child attends school every day, on time, and ready to learn
- Monitor and guide their child’s academic progress to ensure success
- Confer with teachers and other school staff about their child’s education
- Attend meetings and learning activities to be informed and support their child’s education
- Express their level of satisfaction through the annual School Experience Survey
- Provide all information about their child as needed by the school
- Advocate for their child’s education

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

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 Charter School Liaison.

School Liaison: The Principal or designee designates the following staff person as the School Liaison for homeless students (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)):

Samantha Parisen
Assistant Principal
sparisen@araratcharterschool.com

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

1. Homeless students are identified by school personnel and through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. Homeless students enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at Charter School.
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 the Charter School, 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 the law, the Charter School’s charter, and Board policy.
7. Parents/guardians and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, as applicable.
8. Charter School personnel providing services receive professional development and other support.
9. The Charter School 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 Charter School 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: Charter School shall administer a housing questionnaire for purposes of identifying homeless children and youth. Charter School shall ensure that the housing questionnaire is based on the best practices developed by the CDE. Charter School shall annually provide the housing questionnaire to all parents/guardians of students and to all unaccompanied youths at Charter School. 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 at Charter School 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. Charter School 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: The Charter School 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. The Charter School will immediately enroll a homeless student 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). The Charter School will also immediately enroll any homeless student 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).

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 Charter School operates an intersession program, Charter 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 custodian¹ 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 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.

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 homeless student.

The Charter School 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

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*



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 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 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 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.

EDUCATION OF FOSTER AND MOBILE YOUTH

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

1. *“Foster youth”* means any of the following:
 - a. A child who has been removed from their home pursuant to Section 309 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code (“WIC”).
 - b. 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).
 - c. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant WIC section 602, has been removed from the child’s home by the juvenile court, and is in foster care.
 - d. A nonminor under the transition jurisdiction of the juvenile court, as described in WIC section 450, who satisfies all of the following criteria:
 - i. The nonminor has attained 18 years of age while under an order of foster care placement by the juvenile court.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. The nonminor is participating in a transitional independent living case plan.
2. 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.²
3. A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in WIC section 11400.
4. *“Former juvenile court school pupils”* refers to a student who, upon completion of the student’s second year of high school, transfers from a juvenile court school to the Charter School.
5. *“Child of a military family”* refers to a student who resides in the household of an active duty military member.
6. *“Currently Migratory Child”* refers to a child who, within the last 12-months, has moved with a parent,

² 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.



guardian, or other person having custody to the Charter School from another Local Educational Agency (“LEA”), either within California or from another state, in order 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. “Currently Migratory Child” 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.

7. “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.
8. “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.
9. “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.
10. “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.
11. “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 pupils, 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 Principal or designee designates the following staff person as the Liaison for Foster and Mobile Youth:

Samantha Parisen
Assistant Principal
sparisen@araratcharterschool.com



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 the 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 pupil 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 pupils, 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 re-enrollment 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 have 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.

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 record keeping needs of Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School shall not lower a foster youth’s grades because 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.

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.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Charter School does not discriminate against any person based on 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.

The Charter School Board of Directors 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. The Charter School Board of Directors shall not adopt or approve the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use of such would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code section 220.

The Charter School 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 Charter School 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. The Charter School shall not encourage a student currently attending Charter School 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 the Charter School’s charter and relevant policies.

The Charter School does not request nor require student records prior to a student’s enrollment.

The Charter School 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.

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>

The Charter School 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). The Charter School also 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. The Charter School 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 whom the Charter School does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender. The Charter School 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 Uniform Complaint Procedures (“UCP”) Compliance Officer:

Dr. Aida Tatiassian
Principal
6555 Sylmar Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: atate@araratcharterschool.com

Ovsanna Keshishyan
Compliance Manager
6555 Sylmar Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: okeshishyan@araratcharterschool.com

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

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES



ACS (ACS) is committed to ensuring that employees and all individuals who work with or have contact with students conduct themselves with students in a way that is supportive, positive, professional, and non-exploitative. ACS will not tolerate inappropriate conduct or behavior towards or with students by its employees or any individual who works with or has contact with students. Parents or guardians who have any questions or concerns regarding the conduct or behavior towards or with students by an employee or individual who works with or has contact with students are encouraged to speak to the school administrator.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

ACS (ACS) is committed to creating a climate on campus where every student feels safe and welcome. For more detailed information please refer to ACS’s Discipline Policy. Guiding principles for everyone in the school:

- ▶ **Be Respectful**
- ▶ **Be Responsible**

► Be Appreciative of Differences

School Pride Means.....

- ★ Treating others with respect
- ★ Finding peaceful solutions
- ★ Listening to each other
- ★ Being drug free
- ★ Keeping the school clean and beautiful
- ★ Having healthy friendships
- ★ Producing own work
- ★ Maintaining honesty and integrity
- ★ Showing empathy and compassion
- ★ Defending others' rights
- ★ Appreciating differences
- ★ Respecting the property of others
- ★ Engaging in safe activities



STUDENT DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS



ACS faculty, staff, and administration are committed to establishing a positive educational atmosphere in the classroom, on campus, and at school sponsored events. While recognizing the prime responsibility for good grooming is that of the student and parent, the school nevertheless shares in this obligation since it believes that good grooming signifies the difference in character and motivation that should distinguish ACS students from students attending other schools. ACS is the student's place of work and respect for other members of society and oneself places some restrictions on the nature of our dress and grooming. We want our students' dress to reflect the character of our school.

All clothing must be neat, clean and acceptable in appearance. Clothing will be worn as its design is traditionally intended and fit the size of the wearer. The following is a description of the acceptable clothing available to students. Please read and adhere to the following standards of dress. For examples of our Dress Standards, visit ACS's website at www.araratcharterschool.com.

Slacks: Slacks will be uniform-type cotton, solid navy-blue color, properly tailored to fit at the waist and covering undergarments. Slacks will be regular cut – non-riveted. ***TIGHTS, LEGGINGS, JEGGINGS, SWEAT PANTS, AND ANY SPANDEX OR PANTS/SHORTS THAT LOOK LIKE SPANDEX (FORM-FITTING) ARE NOT ALLOWED AND ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR UNIFORM-STYLE PANTS OR SHORTS.*** No oversized or “baggy cut” clothing is permitted.

This includes baggy-cut trousers and baggy-cut cargo pants. Slacks will be the correct length without bagging at the ankle and will be hemmed (cuffed) without side slits, holes, rips, safety pins, staples or tape. No jean styling (**jean**



styling has sewn-on patch pockets and reinforcing rivets. All clothing must be regular cut). All belt buckles will be plain. All belts will be worn as designed through belt loops without excessive length.

Shorts: Shorts will be uniform-type cotton, solid navy-blue color. Shorts cannot be shorter than arm length. They must be properly tailored to fit the waist and cover undergarments. No short-shorts, cut-offs or tight, form-fitting shorts (bike-type shorts) will be allowed. Shorts will be regular cut – non-riveted, no jean shorts (see above).

Skorts: Skorts will be either plain navy blue or navy blue, with light blue and gold checkers and no shorter than arms length. No short skorts or solid color skorts will be permitted.



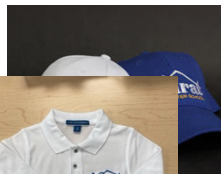
Shirt: Shirts will be solid white or Navy polo (with or without ACS logo) with a **COLLAR** and **SLEEVES** from Monday thru Thursday, and ACS Spirit wear the royal blue T-shirt on Fridays. **Sleeveless shirts, tank tops, graphic design or rhinestones on shirts are NOT allowed. Sheer/"see-through" fabric is NOT allowed.** Shirt will be **BUTTONED** during school hours. **Shirts/T-shirts will be worn as designed.**



T-shirts: T-shirts will be “regular cut.” The T-shirt must be long enough to cover the mid-section and stay below the top of the pants/Skorts at all times. No bare midriff may be showing at any time. T-Shirts may not be worn Monday thru Thursday unless specified otherwise. ACS T-shirts are mandatory at every school-sponsored field trip.



Outerwear: Preferred jackets will be royal blue ACS Hoodies. Otherwise, jackets, sweaters and other outerwear will be solid colors – **no prints, stripes, logos, characters, sports insignias, graphic design, or rhinestones.**



Caps: Caps will be ACS caps **only** and may be worn outside for sun protection. Hats, caps, or beanies should not be worn. No backward baseball caps. All caps must be removed when entering any room. Headgear worn for purposes of religious observance will be permitted.



heeled shoes



Shoes: Shoes (athletic shoes preferred) will be worn at all times. Safety is of utmost importance. Sandal type (backless, open toed or “flip flops”) or are NOT permitted, even on free-dress days.



FREE DRESS: The standards must be followed during dress-free days as well. Refer to slacks, shorts skorts, shirts, T-shirts and shoes sections for more clarification.

THE FOLLOWING ARE ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED:

Apparel with gang-related symbols or insignias, any attire that could be used as a weapon, such as chains, spikes, or studs. This includes chains attached to wallets. SUNGLASSES AND CAPS MAY BE WORN OUTSIDE FOR SUN PROTECTION ONLY. Headgear worn for purposes of religious observance will be permitted.

DRESS REGULATIONS ARE IN EFFECT AT ALL SCHOOL FUNCTIONS AND EVENTS UNLESS SPECIFIED OTHERWISE VIA SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS.

THE FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES OF DRESS STANDARD VIOLATIONS ARE FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR:

For any dress standard violation, the student will be sent to the office. Office staff will then contact the student’s parent and request the appropriate school attire to be brought to school immediately. The student will ONLY return to class after changing into an acceptable school uniform.

In the case of financial hardship, please contact the school’s administration for accommodation. Your information will be kept strictly confidential.

SPIRIT WEAR

ACS has spirit wear! These are custom-made school t-shirts, long sleeve shirts, hooded jackets, and caps with the ACS logo. All students are highly encouraged but not required to wear spirit wear every Friday. Girls can wear their jumpers or skorts and wear spirit wear over them. Boys can wear them instead of polo shirts. All staff will be wearing ACS spirit wear every Friday as well. Parents may purchase these items if they wish. Spirit wear **MUST** be worn for ALL field trips. A student cannot participate in a school-sponsored field trip without wearing an ACS t-shirt or long-sleeve shirt. Also, a parent may not chaperon students during a field trip without wearing an ACS shirt. For additional information, please refer to Student Dress Code/Uniform Section.

STUDENTS’ SMART PHONE AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES



It is the policy of ACS to prohibit the use of cellular phones or any non-school-issued electronic mobile device by students on campus during normal school hours. Students are permitted to possess private devices, including but not limited to cellular phones, or other electronic mobile devices such as cameras, electronic games, radios, MP3 players, computing devices, tablets, etc. on campus, provided that any such device shall remain turned off and stored in a locker, backpack, where it is not visible during normal school hours. All students are required to adhere to the following guidelines regarding private devices:



Private devices may be used:

- Off-campus.
- Before or after any School sponsored activity occurring before or after the regular school day.
- In the case of an emergency or in response to a perceived threat of danger.
- When an administrator of the Charter School grants permission to a student to possess or use a private device, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that administrator.
- 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.
- When the possession or use of a private device is required in a student’s individualized education program (“IEP”).

Private devices must be turned off and shall not be used:

- During instruction, classroom time, including assemblies, and any other school activity, which takes place during the regularly scheduled school day on or off campus.
- During recess, between class periods, or during lunch.
- During events sponsored by the School held before or after regular school hours.
- On field trips or excursions sponsored by the Charter School.

During State and other assessments, students are prohibited from accessing any unauthorized electronic devices at any time during the entire testing session. **Students must comply any time a request is made by school personnel to cease the use of a cellular telephone and/or other electronic mobile devices, even before or after school.** Cell phone use on the school bus is for emergency purposes only, and the driver’s authorization is required. Prior to the use For more information, you may call 818-994-2904. ACS is not responsible for lost or stolen cellular telephones or other electronic mobile devices.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.

INTERNET ACCESS



ACS provides access to the Internet and email through the school’s computer network. The ACS website is located at www.araratcharterschool.com. The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) regulate all uses of ACS computers and networks. The purpose of providing access to the Internet and ACS network resources is for regular instructional or business activity or to compile data necessary for educational research. **No student shall be allowed to access the internet or use school technology until ACS has a signed Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement on file. This Agreement shall be distributed to families at the beginning of each school year.**

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

ARARAT PROGRAM FOR EXTENDED LEARNING (APEX)



Ararat Charter is committed to providing students with a safe and healthy learning environment. Ararat's Program for Extended Learning (APEX) emphasizes student engagement and allows for greater connection to caring adults at school. A safe and supportive environment entails both emotional and physical safety.

Vision: To provide quality after-school programming to enhance students' skills, knowledge, and abilities that will further develop the whole child.

Mission: To offer creative programming that will increase or enhance students' skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Purpose: To broaden students' scope and understanding of the world around them.



The APEX program is Ararat Charter's first after-school program. The LEA, for the first time, provides an after-school program to its community. The program employs trusted adults that understand the students and the culture of the school. Structure and predictability are the cornerstones of a supportive environment. The daily schedule that provides enrichment, nutrition, social and emotional learning (SEL), and team sports provide the structure needed to support students emotionally. School environments that are safe and supportive are successful at connecting students to a network of caring adults, including parents, other primary caregivers, and teachers. Through SEL lessons, the APEX program also cultivates self-esteem and self-efficacy.

APEX program secures the physical safety of students by being a closed campus. Protocols are in place that have supported all Ararat community members in staying healthy and safe. These protocols continue to support the community during the APEX programs.

The APEX program provides instructional block time with homework and intervention support. Enrichment activities enhance the school's offerings with art, creative writing, project-based learning, readers theatre, etc. A block of time also is reserved for social and emotional learning, and mindfulness and team sports build students' skills in physical activities that improve their socialization, coordination, and collaboration skills.

The APEX program is multifaceted and allows students to increase their skills, knowledge, and abilities in various subject areas and avenues:

- Homework, Tutoring, and Intervention: this allows students to better understand grade-level standards and prepare them for the next grade level.
- Enrichment: this allows students to explore their creative side with STEAM, project-based learning, creative writing, reader's theatre, crafts, etc. APEX has partnered with Parker-Anderson Enrichment to provide a plethora of engaging classes for students to choose from.
- Social and Emotional Learning: this immerses students in conversations, community circles, and collaboration with their peers to build their compassion, empathy, and resiliency. APEX will have classes that focus on JEDI - Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion through literature, projects, videos, and presentations.
- Team sports: supports students' health by developing their hand-eye coordination, team spirit, and skills in playing team sports and increasing their overall knowledge of nutrition. Structured physical activities allow students to learn and grow through play. Structured play allows students to engage in fun activities, discover themselves - their potential, and build critical social skills. The APEX coaches will lead team activities and sports and allow students to develop gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, sportsmanship, and physical fitness. Helping students love being active and maintaining a healthy lifestyle are the goals of this program.
- Nutrition: Supper is provided daily for all who are present. Ararat Charter contracts with LAUSD Food Services and will continue with this arrangement for APEX.

APEX classes will be available to all students. The needs of the community, students, parents, and school were identified through various sources: surveys, parent advisory committees, and informal meetings with staff and parents. Furthermore, the school has an ELOP/APEX Committee that has met regularly to intricately plan out the

details of the program. The Quality Standards for Expanded Learning will be used to assess program quality and used to revise and refine the areas of improvement. Data will be collected in a variety of ways, and information will be collected from all stakeholders - parents, students, and staff. The results will be used to assess the quality of the program and make the necessary changes.

Field Trips will be part of the APEX program. Visits to aquariums, zoos, county/state/national parks, etc., will provide expanded learning opportunities for all students enrolled in the after-school and Saturday sessions. All expenses, including transportation, fees, and meals, will be provided at no cost to the students.

FOOD SERVICES

LAUSD Food Services Division is responsible for the operation of the cafeterias at both campuses.

The Café LA offers the following U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) federal meal programs; the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the Summer Food School Program (SFSP).

Pursuant to California law, the Charter School shall make available a nutritionally adequate breakfast and a nutritionally adequate lunch free of charge and with adequate time to eat, during each schoolday 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 schoolday. This shall apply to all pupils in kindergarten through grade twelve (12).

Under the CACFP, supper meals are also available to students on school campuses.

If parents/legal guardians have questions regarding meal programs at the school, they can contact the food services manager. They are knowledgeable in all areas of meal service, food preparation, sanitation, safety, and the various programs offered and serving times.

For additional information about the programs as well as nutritional resources, please visit <https://achieve.lausd.net/cafela> or call (213) 241-6419 or (213) 241-6409.



Nutrition & Café LA Menus

A team of nutrition specialists plans the menus, and continue to improve and instill the highest nutritional standards. Menus are available at the school or at: <https://achieve.lausd.net/cafela>.

The menus adhere to the following principles to ensure that every student finds healthy and appealing meal options at school:

- Offer a variety of menu choices, including a daily vegetarian and vegan option, fresh salad, and sandwich options;
- Provide only whole grain-rich products;
- Offer fresh fruits and vegetables daily;
- Offer only antibiotic-free chicken;
- Participate in Meatless Mondays, where the menu consists of only vegetarian items on Monday;
- Meals have no more than 30% of total calories from fat, no more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat, and no added trans fats;
- Meals contain no artificial colors, flavors, monosodium glutamate (MSG), nitrates, or sulfites;

- Use student feedback obtained from student taste-testing of all potential menu items, where only those items with a high student acceptability rating are considered for menu placement.

If a student requires a special diet or has special dietary needs, parents/legal guardians may obtain the “Los Angeles Unified Medical Statement to Request Special Meals” form from the Food Services Manager, school nurse, or website at: <https://achieve.lausd.net/cafela>.

The following forms and information are available under the [Nutritional Information and Special Needs](#) link near the bottom of the “Menu” page:

- Los Angeles Unified Medical Statement to Request Special Meals;
- Parent/Legal Guardian Request to Substitute Soy Milk for Fluid Milk;
- Nutrient Analysis;
- Carbohydrate Count;
- Food Allergen and Ingredient List.

FORMAL AND INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

PROCEDURE OF FILING AN INFORMAL (GENERAL) COMPLAINT

ACS is an Independent Charter School, and is governed by its own Governing Board. If an issue arises, it should be pursued by contacting the responsible parties of authority in this order: 1) TEACHER; 2) PRINCIPAL; 3) BOARD CHAIRPERSON; 4) THE GOVERNING BOARD. The decision of the Board will be final. Every effort should be made to address the concerns at the informal level with the child’s Teacher and/or Principal. The Governing Board has invested authority in the Principal to deal with complaints and concerns. If concerns are not satisfactory resolved at the teacher level, the Parent/Guardian may request a meeting with the principal or submit a written informal complaint to the Principal. The Principal will work with all parties concerned to investigate and reach a resolution.

For additional information see the policy on the school website or school office.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE (UCP)

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(a).



2. Complaints alleging a violation of state or federal law or regulation governing the following programs:
 - Consolidated Categorical Aid;
 - Education 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;
 - School Safety Plans; and/or

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 other than complaints relating to pupil fees must be filed in writing with the following Compliance Officer:

Dr. Aida Tatiassian
 Principal
 6555 Sylmar Ave.
 Van Nuys, CA 91401
 Phone: 818-994-2904
 Fax: 818-994-8096
 Email: atate@araratcharterschool.com

Ovsanna Keshishyan, Compliance Manager
 6555 Sylmar Ave.



Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: okeshishyan@araratcharterschool.com

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.

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. For unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints arising under state law, however, a complainant must wait until sixty (60) calendar days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies. The moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief and is applicable only if the Charter School has appropriately, and in a timely manner, apprised the complainant of the complainant's right to file a complaint in accordance with 5 C.C.R. § 4622.

A copy of the UCP shall be available upon request free of charge in the main office. 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.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports/Restorative Practices (PBIS/RP)

Ararat Charter School's Discipline Foundation Policy states that every student has the right to be educated in a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment. Every educator has the right to teach in an atmosphere free from disruption and obstacles that impede learning. This is achieved through the adoption and implementation of a consistent schoolwide positive behavior support and discipline plan, which includes: teaching school rules and social-emotional skills, reinforcing appropriate student behavior, using effective classroom management, building healthy relationships, and providing early intervention for misconduct and appropriate use of restorative consequences. The Charter School's Governing Board affirms the School's commitment to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports/Restorative Practices (PBIS/RP) to build community and authentic relationships, increase attendance, improve test scores, reduce the suspension, and support the overall positive culture and climate of the school.

Parents/legal guardians play an integral part in our School's creation and implementation of their PBIS/RP plan. This includes engaging in community-building activities, supporting school/classroom expectations, reinforcing appropriate student behavior, and using consequences that are restorative in nature.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Students who are provided transportation are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner when engaging with the bus driver, school staff, other students, chaperons, or any member of the community. Students who ride school buses are expected to adhere to the same rules of conduct and behavior on the school bus as in school. Ensuring that there is orderly conduct on and around the bus is the responsibility of the school bus driver (Title 5, California Code of Regulations Section 14103). Any student who engages in misconduct disrupts school bus travel, disrespects the school bus driver, or jeopardizes the safety of school bus rides is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension. If parents/legal guardians have questions regarding student conduct on the school bus, contact (818) 994-2904 or email info@araratcharterschool.com.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

SCHOOL CAMPUS VOLUNTEERS

School volunteers assist our school by providing support to teachers and other staff through a variety of activities. The school’s office facilitates the processing of school volunteers, maintains a database of school volunteers, and offers training for the office equipment. School volunteers must meet basic health and safety requirements to ensure the well-being of all students and staff. Volunteers also must familiarize themselves with ACS’s Volunteer Policy before they can volunteer. Field trips and on-site fundraising are also subject to the same policy. The purpose of the Volunteer Programs is to augment and enhance educational and support services to schools and offices by leveraging the rich talents and expertise of parents/guardians and members of the school community. Volunteers contribute to schools in the following ways:



- a. Enrich the school experience for students and staff
- b. Assist teachers in the classrooms
- c. Assist students, staff, parents, and community activities
- d. Promote partnerships between the school, the home, and the community
- e. Serve as positive role models for students

FOUR-TIERED VOLUNTEER SYSTEM					
Tier 1	On-Demand Safety Parent or Guardian Volunteer	On-Demand Extended Family Volunteer	Single Event Volunteer		
Tier II	Classroom Volunteer	Room Parent	Campus Volunteer	Office Volunteer	Field Trip or Event Chaperone or Volunteer



Tier III	One-on-One Tutor	Cafeteria Volunteer	Overnight Field Trip Chaperone or Volunteer	Student Activities Volunteer	
Tier IV	At-Home Volunteer	Virtual Volunteer			

The four-tiered volunteer system was developed to assist the school with identifying the various health and safety requirements, and duties and responsibilities for volunteers. The duties and responsibilities outlined below are only a summary and are ***NOT intended to be all-inclusive.***

Tier I Volunteers
Required: California Megan’s Law Website Clearance
Required: COVID-19 Liability Waiver
Recommended: DOJ Clearance
Not Required: TB Clearance
Must be directly supervised at ALL times by school staff
Volunteers must submit a Single Event or On-Demand Application and sign the Volunteer Commitment Form.

Single Event Volunteer
Volunteers for one day only in the entire school year. Potential volunteers fill out the Single Event Volunteer Application.

On-Demand Safety Parent/Guardian/Extended Family Volunteer
Only parents, guardians, and extended family, at the discretion of the principal, can participate as Tier I “On-Demand Safety Volunteers.” Volunteers support schools in case the Principal or Designee declares *an on-demand safety need* that requires safety support from parents, guardians, or an extended family whose child attends the public school.

The volunteer would fill out the On-Demand Volunteer Application and submit it to the Principal or designee. Principals or the designee in anticipation of such a safety demand, may, within a reasonable period, invite parents/guardians/extended family to fill out an On-Demand Safety Volunteer Application with the understanding that their support will not be implemented until the declaration is made by the administration.



Tier II Volunteers

Required: Fingerprint Clearance

Required: California Megan's Law Website Clearance

Required: TB Clearance

Required: COVID-19 Liability Waiver

Must be directly supervised at ALL times by school staff.

Volunteers must fill out the Volunteer Application and sign the Volunteer Commitment Form.

Classroom Volunteer – Supervised by: Principal/Teacher

- Assists the classroom teacher
- Works in the classroom with small groups of students (2 or more) to reinforce skills
- Performs clerical or record-keeping tasks for the teacher in the classroom (e.g., classroom assignments, homework collected, etc.)
- Volunteers are not to have access to student, family, or employee records.
- Present information to the class in areas of specialized expertise

Room Parent – Supervised by: Principal/Teacher

- Assists teacher in communicating with parents who agree to be contacted
- Plans, coordinates, and seeks help from other parents for classroom celebrations in compliance with the School's policy

Campus Volunteer – Supervised by: Leadership Team

- Safety Valet / School Tours / Playground

Office Volunteer – Supervised by: Operations Team

- Assists school staff with duplicating and preparing outgoing or instructional materials
- Volunteers are not to have access to student, family, or employee records

Field Trip/Event Chaperone Volunteer – Supervised by: Teacher/Certificated Staff

- Assists during field trips under the direct supervision of certificated staff

Tier III Volunteers

Required: DOJ Clearance

Required: California Megan's Law Website Clearance

Required: TB Clearance

Must be directly supervised at ALL times by school staff.

Volunteers must fill out the Volunteer Application and sign the Volunteer Commitment Form

One-on-One Tutor (Virtual or On-Campus)

Supervised by: Principal/Teacher/Certificated Staff Assigned by Principal

- Provides directed assistance to assigned students one-on-one virtually or on-campus in identified target academic areas with the teacher or Certificated Staff Assigned by Principal in the classroom or breakout room

Cafeteria Volunteer

Supervised by: Principal/Cafeteria Manager/Teacher/ Staff Assigned by Principal

Assists children and staff with the distribution of food, cleanup, and assists in maintaining an orderly and safe environment during mealtimes in the school cafeteria and during Breakfast in the Classroom.

Overnight Field Trip Chaperone Volunteer

Supervised by: Teacher/ Certificated Staff Assigned by Principal

Assists designated teacher in the supervision of an assigned group of students on overnight field trips

Overnight Field Trip Chaperone Volunteer

Supervised by: Teacher/ Certificated Staff Assigned by Principal

Assists designated teacher in the supervision of an assigned group of students on overnight field trips

Student Activities Volunteer

Supervised by: Principal/Certificated Staff Assigned by Principal

Assists with administratively approved student sports activities, band, clubs, culinary groups, etc.

Tier IV Volunteers

Required: California Megan’s Law Website Clearance

Optional: DOJ Clearance

Not Required: TB Clearance

Not Required: Liability Waiver

Volunteers must fill out the Volunteer Application and sign the Volunteer Commitment Form.

Virtual or At-Home Volunteer

- Assists the school or office from home or other non-campus or non-office location
- Does not interact with or have access to students

Note: Volunteers who will interact with students in a virtual environment, such as a classroom, should be processed as Tier II volunteers. Volunteers who will interact with students in a virtual environment in breakout rooms should be processed as Tier III volunteers.

For more information on volunteering please contact the School’s Office at 818-994-2904.



INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Individuals interested in volunteering must check with the classroom teacher, administrator, or designee regarding available Tier II, Tier III, and Tier IV volunteer opportunities before submitting an application.

- ▶ All applicants will be asked to accept the School Volunteer Program Waiver of Liability.
- ▶ Virtual volunteers will be cleared to begin service once they receive an approval email from info@araratcharterschool.com.
- ▶ Volunteers do not receive compensation for the services they provide.
- ▶ Volunteers must meet certain health and safety requirements, including Covid-19 and Tuberculosis (TB) clearance.
- ▶ Volunteers may not replace the direct job duties of an Ararat Charter School employee.
- ▶ On-Campus volunteers are not permitted to bring children during their service hours.
- ▶ Volunteers are expected to sign and abide by the ACS Volunteer Commitment Form.
- ▶ Volunteers are expected to follow all school policies, including the ACS Code of Conduct with Students and the ACS Employee Code of Ethics.
- ▶ On-Campus Tier II and Tier III volunteers will receive an official badge once their application has been approved.
- ▶ Tier I, and Tier IV volunteers will be emailed a letter in place of a badge when they are approved to volunteer.
- ▶ Once a person receives the ACS volunteer badge they are cleared to provide on-campus Tier II or Tier III volunteer services at the designated classroom or office until the end of the school year or until the principal or designee determines volunteer services are no longer required.
- ▶ The permanent ACS volunteer badges are non-transferable between volunteers. Badges must be visible while volunteers are providing service on campus.
- ▶ On-Campus Tier II and Tier III school volunteers are required to sign in and pick up their ACS volunteer badges upon entering the campus. School volunteers are to sign out when they exit the campus and leave their ACS volunteer badges at the school at the end of the day.

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION ROLLOVER PROCESS

Due to health and safety precautions, the volunteer application forms will not be rolled over from one year to the next.

Designees and approvers must annually enter the date they verified applicants' DOJ clearance and that they do not appear in the CA Megan's Law Online database. TB Clearance dates are valid for up to four years from the initial clearance date. Fingerprint Clearance dates may also be re-entered provided that volunteers have not had more than a two-year gap in volunteer service.

SAFETY CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS CALIFORNIA MEGAN'S LAW WEBSITE CLEARANCE

In compliance with the LAUSD policy, the administrator or administrative designee must check all volunteers, including on-campus and virtual volunteers, against the California Megan's Law Website at <http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov/>. Any volunteer applicant whose name appears on the California Megan's Law

Website is prohibited from serving as a volunteer on-site in any capacity for any length of time, including Single Event activities.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI) AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) FINGERPRINTING CLEARANCE

Tier II and Tier III volunteers must be fingerprinted. Volunteer applicants need to be fingerprinted only once during their volunteer services. However, if the volunteer ceases to volunteer for a period of two years or longer, a new fingerprint clearance is required. ACS adheres to the California State statutes pertaining to supervised volunteerism in public schools. Previous school employees (certificated and classified) who wish to volunteer must be fingerprinted.

HEALTH CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

Health clearances are required for all volunteers except for active ACS employees. Tier II and Tier III volunteers must provide clearance of TB prior to starting on-campus volunteer services. Valid forms of TB clearance include a letter from a medical professional stating that the patient does not have Tuberculosis.

TB test results for new volunteers are valid for up to 60 days prior to starting volunteer services. TB clearance for continuing volunteers is valid for a period of up to four years.

OTHER VOLUNTEERS

The following section describes other types of volunteers and the criteria they must adhere to when volunteering at a school.

Extended Family Members

Extended family members include grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, siblings, etc. Extended Family Members must submit the appropriate application, and sign and submit the ACS Volunteer Commitment Form.

Community Members

Community members are defined as anyone who lives in the surrounding community of a school or is an employee of community-based organizations and agencies or is a business representative from the wider business community or the local community. Community members must submit the appropriate application, and sign and submit the ACS Volunteer Commitment Form.

High School Students

High school students currently enrolled in 10th through 12th grade may volunteer with permission of their parent/guardian and the school administrator or designee. The Student Volunteer Permission Form must be signed by the student and the parent/guardian, and the attending school's administration and submitted to the school administrator.

The student must also sign the ACS Volunteer Commitment Form and submit it to the school administrator. The school must ensure that the volunteer forms, which contain student information, are kept in the school's main office in a secure locked location for five years.

ACS Active Employees

Ararat employees who volunteer must also fill out the Volunteer application. The Charter School requires employees to submit fingerprint and TB clearance prior to the date of hire so the health and safety clearance requirements have been met for active ACS employees.

University Interns and Volunteers from Community Organizations with MOUs

Tier III volunteers associated with community organizations are required to complete the volunteer application and go through the health and safety screening process that includes fingerprint clearance.

University students aged 18 or older who wish to volunteer without compensation or fulfillment of university program requirements are welcome to apply as community members.

SCHOOL VISITORS

ACS is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for its students. The enhanced involvement and assistance of parents, community members, and organization representatives in school programs and activities have increased the number of school campus visitors. In some instances, campus visitors have created concerns for staff. Therefore, all school campus visitors must be informed and must adhere to the laws and school policies of visitors to school campuses, as stated in ACS policy.

- All campus visitors must have the consent and approval of the Principal or Compliance Manager by completing the classroom observation request form.
- Permission to visit must be given at the time requested if at all possible or within a reasonable period of time following the request. This does not preclude visits from occurring on the same day as requested.
- Children who are not enrolled at the school are not to be on the campus unless prior approval of the principal/designee has been obtained.

Parents do have the right to:

- 1- Be informed in advance of the procedures for visiting the school;
- 2- Request and obtain approval of the principal/designee to enter a school campus;
- 3- Observe in the classroom in which their child is enrolled for a maximum of 20 minutes after making a request;
- 4- Observe in the classroom or classrooms for the purpose of selecting the school in which their child will be enrolled within a reasonable period of time after making a request;
- 5- Be aware that classroom visitors often distract the students and that what you see may be different than what occurs on a regular basis.
- 6- Request a meeting with the classroom teacher and/or school principal/designee following the observation, and meet with their child's teacher(s) and/or the school principal/designee within a reasonable period of time after making a request.
- 7- 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 will be further restricted from visiting the school.



Parents do not have the right to:

- 1- Willfully interfere with the discipline, order, or conduct in any school classroom or activity with the intent to disrupt, obstruct, or inflict damage to property or bodily injury upon any person.
- 2- Disrupt class work or extracurricular activities, or cause disorder in a place where a school employee is required to perform his or her duties.

Parents should:

- Follow the established school policy in requesting a classroom visitation from the principal/designee.
- Complete a visitor's permit and obtain the principal/designee's approval before proceeding to the classroom.
- Sign in and out of the Visitor Book and get a Visitor Pass from the office staff.
- Enter and leave the classroom as quietly as possible.
- Do not converse with the students, teacher, and/or instructional aides during the visitation.
- Do not interfere with the execution of any school activity during the visitation.
- Keep the length and frequency of the classroom visits reasonable (to be determined by the activity being observed).
- Keep the frequency of classroom visits reasonable (to be determined by the activity being observed).
- Follow the school's established procedures for scheduling an appointment with the teacher(s) and/or principal/designee after the classroom visit, if needed.
- Administrator's Authority Adults and minors over 16 years of age who enter a school campus and fail to adhere to the posted "Visitor's Policy" or who defy the principal/designee's authority may be reported to the appropriate police agency and may be subject to criminal charges.
- Visitors may not participate in field trips.
- ACS Policy states that smoking and the use of all tobacco products are prohibited on all school properties.

All volunteers must have a current TB test clearance, be cleared from any criminal charges by the Department of Justice, and have a completed COVID-19 Vaccination card.

NEWS MEDIA ACCESS AND PUBLICITY

Occasionally, reporters and other members of the news media may visit the school to write about, photograph, or videotape activities such as school events, school assemblies, special programs, or newsworthy events. Taking a picture of a student requires consent from a parent/legal guardian. Parents/legal guardians sign the Authorization and Release Form at the time of enrollment to grant that permission. The Permission to Photograph or Videography Form covers publicizing good news that the Charter School may want to share on the School's website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or other social media sites. Parents/legal guardians who do not want their child to be interviewed, videotaped, or photographed should not sign or return that form. However, even with a signed form, students can turn down a request to be interviewed or photographed by telling their teacher.

Student Health and Safety

SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

ACS is committed to ensuring a safe school environment for all students and staff. ASC has developed a Safe School Plan which will be reviewed and revised by the School Leadership Council when needed.

CHILD ABUSE

Any school employee who has a reasonable suspicion that child abuse has occurred or is occurring is required by law to file a suspected child abuse report with the appropriate child protective services agency, such as the local police, sheriff's department, or the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Parents may learn more about the Safe School Plan from the Compliance Manager or a member of the School Safety Planning Committee, which is responsible for annually reviewing and updating the Safe School Plan. The site administrator will print out the plan and make enough copies so that it is readily available for inspection to all school staff and the public. Copies should be available from key personnel and such places as the main office, and the emergency bin.

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.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, DRUGS AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND PROHIBITION

ACS does not tolerate the use, possession, or sale of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco by students on school campuses or at school-sponsored activities. School administrators must take immediate action to prevent, discourage, and eliminate the use or possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco on campus and at school activities, in cooperation with local law enforcement.

GUN-FREE SAFE SCHOOL

The possession of firearms on school campuses is prohibited by the Federal Gun-Free Safe Schools Act and California law. Students found in possession of a firearm will be subject to arrest, will be suspended, and recommended for expulsion. Possession includes, but is not limited to storage in lockers, purses, backpacks, or automobiles.



CALIFORNIA MEGAN’S LAW NOTIFICATION

Parents/legal guardians and members of the public have the right to review information regarding registered sex offenders at the main office of the local law enforcement agency for this school district. (Penal Code Section 290.4). In accordance with the School’s policy, Compliance Manager must annually check all volunteer applicants, including ACS employee volunteers and continuing volunteers, at the beginning of the school year or before volunteer service starts against the California Megan’s Law online database for sex offenders at: <http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov/>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Administrators at ACS work diligently to make sure that students and staff are prepared for an emergency. Every school has a detailed Coordinated Safe School Plan that provides guidance for the school staff in an emergency. Regular drills are a part of a school’s activities. Every school conducts the following types of drills:

- Fire Drill
- Earthquake or Emergency Drill
- Protected Campus or “Lockdown” Drill
- Duck, Cover and Hold Drill
- Take Cover Drill



Parents are asked to make sure that their students actively participate and take these drills seriously. These drills make the public schools the safest place for students during an emergency. In addition to conducting regular drills, each school 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. School staff regularly checks these supplies.

HEALTH INFORMATION

A student returning to school following a serious or prolonged illness, injury, surgery, or other hospitalization, must have written permission by the licensed California health care provider to attend school, including any recommendations regarding physical activity.

A student returning to school with sutures (stitches, staples), ace bandage (elastic bandage) casts, splints, crutches, cane, walker, or a wheelchair must have a licensed California health care provider’s written permission to attend school that includes any recommendations and/or restrictions related to physical activity, mobility and safety.

An excuse (less than 10 weeks) from a physical education class may be granted to a student who is unable to participate in regular or modified curriculum for a temporary period of time due to illness or injury. A parent’s written request for an excuse will be accepted for up to 5 days; thereafter, a written request is needed from the student’s health care provider.



Students are allowed to wear protective gear (hats, sun visors) while outdoors at recess. School will regulate the type of sun protective clothing/headgear in accordance with California Education Code Section 35183.5. Students are also allowed to use sunscreen (over the counter) as an allowable sun protection measure for their outdoor

activities while at school.

ASTHMA PROGRAM

Asthma is one of the leading causes of school absenteeism that may interfere with student achievement. If your student is frequently absent due to asthma symptoms, frequently in the doctor's office because of asthma, in the emergency room, or recently hospitalized due to asthma, their asthma may not be well controlled. You may refer your student to the Asthma Program by contacting the school nurse. Students referred to the Asthma program improve their control of symptoms and decrease days missed from school.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

Communicable disease inspections may be conducted periodically. A student suspected of having a communicable disease will be excluded from school until guidelines for readmission are met. Guidelines for exclusion and readmission follow policies set forth by ACS, the state Department of Health, and the Department of Education. Guidance in addressing communicable diseases also comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and national organizations.

Temporary exclusion of a student from the school generally occurs for communicable diseases, including, but not limited to, the following conditions: conjunctivitis (pink eye); skin infections (impetigo), strep throat, chickenpox, scabies, head lice, and pertussis (whooping cough). Exclusion may occur immediately or at the end of the school day, depending on the disease, its communicability, and district, county, and state policy. Readmission to school is based on condition and appropriate treatment.

Schools may notify parents/legal guardians about school exposure to chickenpox, head lice, COVID-19, or other communicable diseases that pose a risk to students. In some cases, decisions regarding notification are made by public health officials. The parent/legal guardian for whom certain communicable diseases present a particular hazard should contact the school nurse. Students at risk include those with conditions affecting the immune system and those receiving certain drugs for the treatment of cancers or organ transplants.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, guidance from public health officials may be added or changed. Ararat Charter School will continue to abide by all requirements and guidelines set forth by public health officials.

FEVER/INFLUENZA

Any student excluded from school with flu-like symptoms and/or **a fever of 100 degrees or greater must be free from symptoms and fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.**

An effort will be made to notify parents/guardians about school exposure to chickenpox, head lice, or other communicable disease that pose a risk to students. The parent/guardian of a student for whom chickenpox presents a particular hazard should contact the school nurse. Students at risk include those with conditions affecting the immune system and those receiving certain drugs for the treatment of cancers or organ transplants. Information on the treatment and prevention of head lice is available from the school nurse or school health personnel.

DIABETES MELLITUS

The Charter School will provide an information sheet regarding type 1 diabetes to the parent or guardian of a student when the student is first enrolled in elementary school, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.6. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

1. A description of type 1 diabetes.
2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes.
3. A recommendation that parents or guardians of students displaying warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes should immediately consult with the student's primary care provider to determine if immediate screening for type 1 diabetes is appropriate.
4. A description of the screening process for type 1 diabetes and the implications of test results.
5. A recommendation that, following a type 1 diagnosis, parents or guardians should consult with the pupil's primary care provider to develop an appropriate treatment plan, which may include consultation with and examination by a specialty care provider, including, but not limited to, a properly qualified endocrinologist.

A copy of the information sheet regarding type 1 diabetes is available at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/type1diabetes.asp>. Please contact the office if you need a copy of this information sheet or if you have any questions about this information sheet.

IMMUNIZATIONS

New students to Ararat Charter School will not be admitted or conditionally enrolled unless a current, complete immunization record or valid medical exemption is presented at the time of enrollment. Students may be conditionally admitted and enrolled if missing doses of required vaccines are not yet due. Students who are in foster care, experiencing homelessness, migrant, military family, or who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) are to be enrolled immediately, regardless of the availability of immunization records or whether immunizations are up to date or complete. The immunization requirements do not prohibit students from accessing special education and related services required by their IEPs.

Students new to Ararat Charter School must show that they have received all currently required immunizations in order to be enrolled. Conditional admission is available if a student is current on all available doses but has additional doses to obtain. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are encouraged to visit their child's health care at: www.shotsforschool.org.

The immunization status of all students will be reviewed periodically. Students who do not meet the state guidelines must be excluded from school 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 the public health department. Only a Medical Doctor (MD) or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) licensed in California may exempt a student from some or all immunization requirements due to a medical condition: As of January 1, 2021, all new medical exemptions for school and childcare must be issued through California Immunization Registry-Medical Exemption (CAIR-ME). Parents/legal guardians and physicians can register and create an account in CAIR-ME at any time. Once registered, parents/legal guardians can log in to CAIR-ME to request a medical exemption. Parents/legal guardians take the exemption request number to their child's physician, who can log in to CAIR-ME to issue the exemption. Once the exemption is issued, the physician prints the two (2) page form and provides a copy to the parents/legal guardians to give to their child's school or childcare facility.

A physician will be required to provide the following information on the medical exemption in CAIR-ME:

- The specific nature of the physical condition or medical circumstance of the child for which a licensed physician does not recommend immunization;
- Each specified required vaccine that is being exempted;
- Whether the medical exemption is permanent or temporary;
- If the exemption is temporary, an expiration date of no more than 12 calendar months from the date of signing.

School health personnel are available for consultation. There are many school-based clinics that offer immunizations to students. Parent/legal guardians can contact Student Medical Services for more information.

These required immunizations include:

Child's Grade	List of shots required to attend school
TK/K-12 Admission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>NOTE: Four doses of DTaP are allowed if one was given on or after the fourth birthday. Three doses of DTaP meet the requirement if at least one dose of Tdap, DTaP, or DTP vaccine was given on or after the seventh birthday (also meets the 7th-12th grade Tdap requirement.) 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. MMR doses must be given on or after 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.</p>

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION/ASSISTANCE

Any student who is required to take, during the regular school day, medication (prescribed or over-the-counter) may be assisted by the school nurse or other designated school personnel if the school receives:

- 1) a written statement from an authorized health care provider licensed by the State of California to prescribe medications detailing the method, amount, and time schedules by which such medication is to be taken, and
- 2) written consent from a parent/guardian for the school to assist in administration.



Students may not carry or use medication on campus without written consent. However, students may carry and self-administer certain medication (e.g., inhaled asthma medication or auto-injectable epinephrine medication) if the school receives the appropriate documentation. This includes:

1. A written statement from the authorized health care provider detailing the name of medication, method, amount and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken, and confirming that the student is able to self-administer the medication; and
2. A written statement from the parent or guardian of the student consenting to the self-administration, providing release for the school nurse or other health care personnel to consult with the health care provider of the student regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and



releasing the school district and school personnel from liability in the case of adverse reaction.

Certain Asthma Action Plans may be sufficient for students to carry and self-administer asthma medication at school. A student may be subject to disciplinary action if the medication is used in a manner other than as prescribed. The required forms are available from the school nurse or administrator. School health personnel do not prescribe or give advice regarding medication.

ORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Kindergarten students while enrolled in a public school, or first grade students not previously enrolled in a public school, must present evidence of having received an oral health assessment by May 31st of the school year. This assessment may be performed no earlier than 12 months prior to the date of the initial enrollment of the student into a public school. This law will impact students currently enrolled in kindergarten or first grade. The oral health assessment may be performed by a licensed dentist or other licensed or registered dental health professional. The parents or legal guardian of the student may be excused from complying with the oral health assessment if they sign a waiver stating that they could not find a dental office that accepted their child's insurance, they could not afford to pay for the assessment, or they did not want to have their child's oral health evaluated. There is no penalty for students and families who are not able to comply with the oral health assessment (e.g., students may not be excluded from school for noncompliance with the assessment or waiver).

MEDICAL CARE ON FIELD TRIPS

Each student's parent/legal guardian must provide written permission for a field trip and authorization for medical care. For those students with health issues/medical conditions, parents/legal guardians are responsible to provide all necessary medications, supplies, and equipment needed for the field trip at least five (5) school days prior to departure. In order to administer medication (prescription and over the counter) on the field trip, parents/legal guardians must have submitted a complete "Request For Medication To Be Taken During School Hours" form, which includes the parent/legal guardian signature and the written California licensed health care provider's order with signature and date. If a student needs a Specialized Physical Health Care Service (Protocol), a current completed Parent Consent and Authorized Healthcare Provider Authorization covering the field trip date(s) MUST be in place.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND RIGHT TO REFUSE



perform schoolwork.

All students must complete a health screening examination on or before the 90th day after the student's entrance into first grade or such students must have obtained a waiver pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 124040 and 124085. This examination can be obtained from your family physician or possibly through the services provided by your County Health Department. Information and forms are distributed to students enrolled in kindergarten. If your child's medical status changes, please provide the teacher with a physician's written verification of the medical issue, especially if it impacts in any way your child's ability to

A parent/guardian having control or charge of any child enrolled in the Charter School may file annually with the Compliance Manager 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.

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Ararat Charter School is committed to the health and safety of the school community. For the most updated school COVID-19 health and safety protocols, please visit: www.araratcharterschool.com

PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

The Charter School recognizes that pregnant and parenting students are entitled to accommodations that provide them with the opportunity to succeed academically while protecting their health and the health of their children. A pregnant or parenting student is entitled to eight (8) weeks of parental 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. The Charter School will ensure that absences from the student's regular school program are excused until the student is able to return to the regular school program.

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 reenrollment in courses.

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

Dr. Aida Tatioussian
Principal
6555 Sylmar Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: atate@araratcharterschool.com

Ovsanna Keshishyan
Compliance Manager
6555 Sylmar Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: okeshishyan@araratcharterschool.com



A copy of the UCP is available upon request at the main office. For further information on any part of the complaint procedures, including filing a complaint or requesting a copy of the complaint procedures, please contact the Principal.

NAME/GENDER CHANGE REQUEST

Student records include a student’s legally recognized name and gender. If a parent/legal guardian wishes for the student to be known by a preferred name/gender that differs from the legally recognized one, the parent/legal guardian may complete the Name/Gender Change Request Form, which is available at the School. The preferred name/gender will appear in most but not all School-generated communications and records, although the legal name/gender will continue to be used in records as required by law. If a name/gender change is issued by court order, families may provide a copy to the school so that the student's records can be updated.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Charter School recognizes that when unidentified and unaddressed, mental health challenges can lead to poor academic performance, increased likelihood of suspension and expulsion, chronic absenteeism, student attrition, homelessness, incarceration, and/or violence. Access to mental health services at the Charter School and in our community is not only critical to improving the physical and emotional safety of students, but it also helps address barriers to learning and provides support so that all students can learn problem-solving skills and achieve in school and, ultimately, in life. The following resources are available to your child:

Available on Campus:

- School-Based Counseling Services – your child is encouraged to directly contact a Charter School official by coming into the office during school hours and request an appointment to speak with a counselor. The School’s officials will make every effort to arrange the counseling sessions. The counselor supports students by providing individual sessions, group or parent consultations whenever a student is having a difficult time due to academic stress, transition to changes in their environment, or social concerns, including isolation. Counseling services, whether provided by our Charter School or by an outside provider listed herein, are voluntary.
- Special Education Services – if you believe your child may have a disability, you are encouraged to directly contact a [INSERT NAME] at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] to request an evaluation.
- Prescription Medication while on Campus – if your child requires prescription medication during school hours and you would like assistance from School staff in providing this medication to your child, please contact the school’s office at 818-994-2904.

SUICIDE PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, & POSTVENTION

Suicide is a serious public health problem that takes an enormous toll on families, friends, classmates, co-workers, and communities. Suicide prevention is the collective effort of all adults that support and work with students,



including parents/legal guardians, caregivers, families, local community organizations, mental health practitioners, and related professionals. The aim is to reduce the incidence of suicide through education, awareness, and services.

If IMMEDIATE assistance is needed due to a life-threatening situation, call 911. For a psychiatric emergency, contact the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health 24-hour ACCESS Center at (800) 854-7771 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255, available 24 hours every day.

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.

SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS

The purpose of this notice is to inform and to remind parents and legal guardians of all students at the Charter School 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 easily 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.

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.

Additional information regarding fentanyl from the CDPH’s Substance and Addiction Prevention Branch [can be found here](#).

CUSTODY

If a court has made order(s) restricting or limiting a parent’s rights to visitation or custody of a child and/or access to information about the child, it is the obligation of both parents to immediately provide a legible copy of the court stamped order, signed by the judge, to each child’s school site. Copies of court orders can be obtained in the clerk’s office at the courthouse where the orders were made.

One parent’s oral or written assertion, without confirmation by a signed court order, is insufficient reasons for the school to deny the other parent access to the child and/or the child’s records.

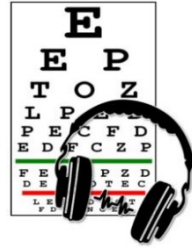
ACS will follow the most recent signed child custody court order that has been provided, or in the absence of any orders, California law as cited above, giving parents equal rights to custody of the child.

Parents are requested to avoid involving school personnel in child custody disputes. If a parent is uncertain as to whether the school has current information regarding child custody, he or she should contact their child’s school site to verify the school has been provided with legible copies of the most recent court orders.



VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

Screening of the students' vision and hearing will be done at the school site in accordance with State mandates. Parents/Guardians will be notified of any findings as a result of the mandated screening tests that require further attention.



NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

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 name
2. Student’s address
3. Parent’s/guardian’s address
4. Telephone listing
5. Student’s electronic mail address
6. Parent’s/guardian’s electronic mail address
7. Photograph/video
8. Date and place of birth
9. Dates of attendance
10. Grade level
11. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
12. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
13. Degrees, honors, and awards received
14. The most recent educational agency or institution attended
15. 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.)

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 at: [INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION]. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

Please note that data collected and reported by Charter School to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (“CALPADS”³) pursuant to state law, will be shared with the California College Guidance Initiative (“CCGI”⁴) and will:

³ 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.

⁴ 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”).



- 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.

GRADE CHANGE REQUEST PROCESS

Parents/legal guardians have a right to request a change of a student's grade on the following grounds:

- Mistake;
- Fraud;
- Bad faith; and/or;
- Incompetency in assigning the grade (EC Section 49066).

When grades are earned for any course of instruction taught in public schools, the grade earned by each student shall be the grade determined by the teacher of the course. In the absence of any of the grounds listed above, the grade shall be final.

Any request for a grade change must start with the classroom teacher within 30 days of the date the grade report was mailed. The next step, if not resolved with the teacher, is a written request to the principal. If not resolved, the decision may be appealed to the Principal and, finally, the Governing Board. At each step, the parent/legal guardian has the right to present information in support of the request.

USE OF STUDENT INFORMATION LEARNED FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

The Charter School complies with all federal, state, and local guidelines regarding the gathering and/or maintenance of information about any enrolled student obtained from social media in the student's educational record. The Charter School gathers student information from social media. Such information shall be maintained in the Charter School's records with regard to the student and shall be destroyed within one (1) year after a student turns 18 years of age or within one (1) year after the student is no longer enrolled in the Charter School, whichever occurs first. A non-minor student or a student's parent or guardian may access the student's records for examination of the information, request the removal of information or corrections made to information gathered or maintained by the Charter School by contacting the Principal.

BLACKBOARD CONNECT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Ararat Charter School uses a schoolwide notification system called Blackboard Connect (BBC) to communicate with parents/legal guardians and employees regarding emergency situations, attendance, school events, and other important issues affecting parents/legal guardians and the student. The BBC service allows the Charter School to send personalized voice messages to the family's home, work, or cell phones and contacts through email, text messaging, and social networks. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for the cost of text messages.

Parents/legal guardians can specify on which phone they receive general notifications, attendance, and emergency communications by completing the Student Emergency Information Card. Ararat Charter School is able to reach everyone in the school community within minutes based on BBC's capabilities. Keeping parents/legal guardians more informed and involved leads to higher student achievement and student safety. Please help us by ensuring we have current contact information by completing the Student Emergency Information Card. Should the contact information change or needs to be corrected, please contact the school directly.

There are many instances when the school will attempt to reach parents/legal guardians:

- **General** notification messages are sent throughout the day. These messages are non-emergency in nature and announce upcoming events or reminders;
- **Attendance** notification messages are generally sent in the morning and in the early evening. These messages are sent to inform parents/legal guardians that the child has been reported with an unexcused absence or tardy for one (1) or more periods or an entire day of school. The most appropriate number is a daytime phone number. Working parents/legal guardians are encouraged to provide their work number or cell phone number. It is recommended that the attendance number not be the home number if no one is there during the day;
- **Emergency** notification messages are of an urgent nature and are sent when warranted. The phone number parents/legal guardians should provide is where parents/legal guardians are most likely to be reached during the majority of the waking hours. Blackboard Connect will call every number stored in the notification system, including the numbers for general and attendance notifications, to ensure that the parents/legal guardians are reached. This number should be for the parent/legal guardian and not the alternate contacts provided on the Student Emergency Information Card. The information on the Student Emergency Information Card will be utilized should the school not be able to reach the parent/legal guardian;
- **Teacher** messages are sent to inform parents/legal guardians of the student's academic standing, general behavior, work habits, classroom reminders, and notifications. These messages are sent via phone, email, or text and use the general phone number provided.

Important Call Delivery Tips

- When a call comes from the School, the message recipient's caller ID will display the school's phone number;
- When listening to a message, background noise may cause the system to stop and start over. Blackboard Connect is carefully tuned to determine whether a person or an answering machine/voicemail has been reached, and background noise may affect the delivery of the message. If possible, move to a quiet area, or press the mute button on the phone;
- If any part of a message is missed, please stay on the line, and press the * (star) key on the phone to hear the entire message again.

Opting Out of General Notifications

Every parent/legal guardian can opt-out from receiving general notification messages sent via phone, email, or text message:

- When a call is received, listen to the prompts at the end of the message to opt-out. To opt back into receiving messages, please call 818-994-2904.

- To opt-out of text messages, follow the instructions at the end of the message. To opt back into receiving text messages, please call 818-994-2904;
- To opt out of email messages, follow the instructions at the end of the message. To opt back into receiving email messages, please call 818-994-2904.

Only general notifications will be impacted. Attendance and emergency calls will continue to be sent.

Please have the student return the completed Student Emergency Information Card to the school as soon as possible. Should the contact information change or needs to be corrected, please contact the school directly. Only the school has the ability to change the contact information. It is important that the school has current contact information so parents/legal guardians can receive these important messages. All personal information is maintained in the strictest confidentiality.

Appendix: Complete Policies

TITLE IX POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

This Title IX Policy Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sex (“Policy”) contains the policies and grievance procedures of Ararat Charter School (“Charter School”) to prevent and address sex discrimination, including but not limited to sexual harassment, sex-based hostile environment harassment, discrimination based on pregnancy or related conditions, sex-based discrimination in access to athletics or educational resources, and retaliation against a person who has reported sex discrimination.

Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits any acts of sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by California law, Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*) and the Title IX regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106), including in admission and employment.⁵ Charter School will take actions to promptly and effectively end any sex discrimination in its education program or activity, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects.

This Policy applies to conduct occurring in Charter School’s education programs or activities on or after August 1, 2024 including but not limited to incidents occurring on the school campus, during school-sponsored events and activities regardless of the location, and through school-owned technology, whether perpetrated by a student, parent/guardian, employee, volunteer, independent contractor or other person with whom Charter School does business.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (hereinafter collectively referred to as “Title IX”) may be referred to the Charter School Title IX Coordinator, the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

Definitions

Prohibited Sex Discrimination

Title IX and California law prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, including sex-based harassment and differences in the treatment of similarly situated individuals on the basis of sex with regard to any aspect of services, benefits, or opportunities provided by Charter School. Discrimination on the basis of sex includes discrimination on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Prohibited Sex-Based Harassment

Under Title IX, “sex-based harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- Quid pro quo harassment occurs when an employee, agent, or other person authorized by Charter School to provide an aid, benefit, or service under Charter School’s education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditions the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
- Hostile environment harassment is unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or

⁵ Charter School complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and local ordinances in its investigation of and response to reports and complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.



denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from Charter School's education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:

- The degree to which the conduct affected the complainant's ability to access Charter School's education program or activity;
 - The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
 - The parties' ages, roles within Charter School's education program or activity, previous interactions, and other factors about each party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;
 - The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
 - Other sex-based harassment in Charter School's education program or activity.
- Sexual assault, meaning an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 - Dating violence, meaning violence committed by a person:
 - Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
 - Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - The length of the relationship;
 - The type of relationship; and
 - The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
 - Domestic violence, meaning felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:
 - Is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under applicable family or domestic violence laws, or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;
 - Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
 - Shares a child in common with the victim; or
 - Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under applicable family or domestic violence laws.
 - Stalking, meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:
 - Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or
 - Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Under California Education Code section 212.5, sexual harassment consists of conduct on the basis of sex, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct on the basis of sex, regardless of whether or not the conduct is motivated by sexual desire, when: (a) submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, education, academic status, or progress; (b) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment, educational or academic decisions affecting the individual; (c) the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; and/or (d) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through Charter School.

Examples of conduct that may fall within the Title IX definition of sex-based harassment, the Education Code definition of sexual harassment, or both:

- Physical assaults of a sexual or sex-based nature, such as:
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
 - Intentional physical conduct that is sex-based or sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, poking another's body, violence, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work or school because of sex.

- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, derogatory sex-based comments, or other sex-based conduct, such as:
 - Sexually oriented or sex-based gestures, notices, epithets, slurs, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
 - Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an individual for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.
 - Subjecting or threats of subjecting a student or employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making the student's or employee's performance more difficult because of the student's or the employee's sex.
 - Retaliation against an individual who has articulated a good faith concern about sex-based harassment.

- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the work or educational environment, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing or possessing any such material to read, display or view in the work or educational environment.
 - Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the work or educational environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic.
 - Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an individual by sex in an area of the work or educational environment (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

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

Complainant means a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex-based discrimination, or a person other than a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination and who was participating or attempting to participate in Charter School's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination. Complaints may also be made by: (1) a parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of a complainant; or (2) Charter School's Title IX Coordinator. For complaints of sex discrimination other than sex-based harassment, complaints can also be made by any student, employee, or other person who was participating or attempting to participate in Charter School's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

Complaint means an oral or written request to Charter School that objectively can be understood as a request for Charter School to investigate and make a determination about alleged sex discrimination.

Confidential Employee means an employee of Charter School whose communications are privileged or confidential under Federal or State law (e.g., a licensed therapist or psychologist, etc.) or an employee whom Charter School has designated as confidential under Title IX for the purpose of providing services to persons related to sex discrimination.

Party means a complainant or respondent.

Respondent means a person who is alleged to have violated Charter School’s prohibition on sex discrimination.

Supportive Measures are individualized measures offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, without unreasonably burdening a complainant or respondent, not for punitive or disciplinary reasons, and without fee or charge to a party to (1) restore or preserve that party’s access to Charter School’s education program or activity, including measures that are designed to protect the safety of the parties or Charter School’s educational environment; or (2) provide support during Charter School’s grievance procedures or during an informal resolution process.

Title IX Coordinator

The Board of Directors of Charter School (“Board”) has designated the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator (“Coordinator”):

Dr. Aida Tatiossian
Principal
6555 Sylmar Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: atate@araratcharterschool.com

In the event the above-named individual becomes unavailable or unable to serve as the Coordinator, the Board has designated the following employee to serve as a temporary or interim Coordinator until a new Coordinator is designated:

Ovsanna Keshishyan
Compliance Manager
6555 Sylmar Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91401
Phone: 818-994-2904
Fax: 818-994-8096
Email: okeshishyan@araratcharterschool.com

The Coordinator is responsible for coordinating Charter School’s efforts to comply with the requirements of Title IX, receiving reports and complaints of sex discrimination and inquiries about the application of Title IX, addressing reports and complaints of sex discrimination and taking other actions as required by this Policy, monitoring for barriers to reporting conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, and taking steps reasonably calculated to address such barriers.

The Coordinator may serve as an investigator and/or decisionmaker for complaints, except in cases where doing so would constitute a conflict of interest. The Coordinator may delegate one or more of their duties to one or more designees who have received the required Title IX training and do not have a conflict of interest or bias for



or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. However, the Coordinator must at all times retain ultimate oversight over those responsibilities and ensure Charter School's consistent compliance with Title IX.

Reporting Sex Discrimination

All employees who are not a confidential employee must promptly notify the Coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. This requirement does not apply to an employee when the employee is the person who was subjected to the conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Any student who feels they are a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the Executive Director, Coordinator, 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.

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

While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report to the Coordinator. Charter School will promptly and effectively investigate and respond to all oral and written complaints and reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on an anonymous report.

Privacy

Charter School 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 but is not limited to keeping the identity of the reporter and other personally identifiable information confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to comply with the law, carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by the Coordinator or designee on a case-by-case basis.

Retaliation

Charter School prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who files a report or complaint, testifies, assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation or proceeding related to misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation or lack of participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the individual. Individuals alleging retaliation in violation of this Policy may file a complaint in accordance with the grievance procedures set forth in this Policy.

Nothing in this Policy precludes Charter School from requiring an employee or other person authorized by Charter School to provide aid, benefit, or service under Charter School's education program or activity to participate as a witness in, or otherwise assist with, an investigation or proceeding under this Policy.

Confidential Employees

Contact information for the confidential employees at Charter School, if any, can be found on the Charter School website or obtained from the Coordinator.

A confidential employee's status as confidential, for Title IX purposes, is only with respect to information received while the employee is functioning within the scope of their duties to which privilege or confidentiality applies or



with respect to information received about sex discrimination in connection with providing services to persons related to sex discrimination.

A confidential employee must explain the following to any person who informs them of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX:

- The employee’s status as confidential for purposes of Title IX, including the circumstances in which the employee is not required to notify the Coordinator about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination;
- How to contact the Coordinator and how to make a complaint of sex discrimination; and
- That the Coordinator may be able to offer and coordinate supportive measures, as well as initiate an informal resolution process or an investigation under the grievance procedures.

Coordinator’s Response to Reports of Sex Discrimination

When notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, the Coordinator or designee must:

- Treat complainants and respondents equitably;
- Promptly offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the complainant;
- If grievance procedures are initiated or an informal resolution process is offered; offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the respondent; and
- Notify the complainant or, if the complainant is unknown, the reporting individual, of the grievance procedures and informal resolution process, if available and appropriate. If a complaint is made, the Coordinator will notify the respondent of the same.

In response to a complaint, the Coordinator will initiate the grievance procedures, or the informal resolution process if available, appropriate, and requested by all parties. In the absence of a complaint or the withdrawal of any or all of the allegations in a complaint, and in the absence or termination of an informal resolution process, the Coordinator must determine whether to initiate a complaint by considering, at a minimum:

- Complainant’s request not to proceed with a complaint and the complainant’s reasonable safety concerns;
- Risk that additional acts of sex-based discrimination would occur if a complaint is not initiated;
- Severity of the alleged conduct, including whether the discrimination, if established, would require removal or discipline of a respondent to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence;
- The age and relationship of the parties, including whether the respondent is an employee;
- The scope of the alleged conduct including but not limited to whether there is a pattern, ongoing conduct, or impact to multiple individuals;
- The availability of evidence and the complainant’s willingness to participate in the grievance procedures; and
- Whether Charter School could end the alleged sex discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating its grievance procedures.

The Coordinator may initiate a complaint if the conduct as alleged presents an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the complainant or other person, or prevents Charter School from ensuring equal access on the basis of sex to its education program or activity. The Coordinator or designee must notify the complainant before initiating a complaint and appropriately address reasonable safety concerns, including by providing supportive measures.

The Coordinator will take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within Charter School’s education program or activity.

Supportive Measures

Once notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX, the Coordinator or designee will promptly contact the complainant to offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the complainant. If the grievance procedures are initiated or informal resolution is offered, the Coordinator or designee will offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the respondent.

Supportive measures may include but are not limited to: counseling; extensions of deadlines and other course-related adjustments; campus escort services; increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus; restrictions on contact applied to one or more parties; leaves of absence; changes in class, work, housing, or extracurricular or any other activity, regardless of whether there is or is not a comparable alternative; and training and education programs related to sex-based harassment.

Supportive measures must not unreasonably burden either party or be imposed for punitive or disciplinary reasons. Supportive measures will be designed to protect the safety of the parties or Charter School's educational environment, or to provide support during the grievance procedures or the informal resolution process.

Parties may contact the Coordinator to discuss modification of any supportive measures. Parties also have the opportunity to seek modification or termination of a supportive measure applicable to them if circumstances change materially.

If the party is not satisfied with the Coordinator's decision on the request to modify supportive measures, the party may contact Principal, info@araratcharterschool.com, who is an appropriate and impartial employee or who may designate such an employee, to seek modification or reversal of Charter School's decision to provide, deny, modify, or terminate supportive measures applicable to them. The impartial employee is someone other than the Coordinator who made the challenged decision and has the authority to modify or reverse the decision.

If a party is a student with a disability, the Coordinator must consult with one or more members of the student's IEP Team and 504 Team, if any, in the implementation of supportive measures for that student.

Informal Resolution

At any time prior to determining whether sex discrimination occurred under Charter School's Title IX grievance procedures, Charter School may offer an informal resolution process to the parties. Charter School does not offer or facilitate informal resolution to resolve a complaint that includes allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of an elementary school or secondary school student, or when such a process would conflict with Federal, State, or local law.

Before initiation of the informal resolution process, the parties will be provided with notice that explains:

- The allegations;
- The requirements of the informal resolution process;
- The right to withdraw and initiate or resume the grievance procedures;
- That the parties' agreement to a resolution at the conclusion of the informal resolution process precludes the parties' use of the grievance procedures arising from the same allegations;
- The potential terms that may be requested or offered in an informal resolution agreement (e.g., restrictions on contact and participation in activities or events) including notice that an informal resolution agreement is binding only on the parties; and
- What information is retained and whether and how it may be disclosed by Charter School for use in grievance procedures if the grievance procedures are initiated or resumed.

Parties will not be required or pressured to agree to participate in the informal resolution process. Charter School will obtain the parties' voluntary consent to participate in the informal resolution process. Parties may end the informal resolution process and proceed with the grievance procedures at any time.

The facilitator of the informal resolution process will not be the same person as the investigator or the decisionmaker in the grievance procedures. The facilitator cannot have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. The Coordinator will take appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure sex discrimination does not continue or recur.

Grievance Procedures

Scope and General Requirements

Charter School has adopted these grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in Charter School's education program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Coordinator or designee will promptly initiate these grievance procedures, or the informal resolution process if available, appropriate, and requested by all parties.

Charter School requires that any Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. A decisionmaker may be the same person as the Coordinator or investigator.

Charter School will treat complainants and respondents equitably. Charter School presumes that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged sex discrimination until a determination is made at the conclusion of its grievance procedures.

Charter School may consolidate complaints of sex discrimination against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against another party, when the allegations of sex discrimination arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

Charter School allows for the reasonable extension of timeframes on a case-by-case basis for good cause with notice to the parties that includes the reason for the delay. Requests for extensions must be submitted to the Coordinator in writing at least one (1) business day before the expiration of the timeframe. If a timeframe is extended, the Coordinator or designee will notify the parties of the new timeframe and the reason for the delay. Charter School will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the parties and witnesses during its grievance procedures. These steps will not restrict the ability of the parties to obtain and present evidence, including by speaking to witnesses; consult with their family members, confidential resources, or advisors; or otherwise prepare for or participate in the grievance procedures. The parties shall not engage in retaliation, including against witnesses.

Charter School will objectively evaluate all evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible—including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.⁶ Credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

If a party is a student with a disability, the Coordinator or designee must consult with one or more members, as appropriate, of the student's IEP Team and 504 Team, if any, to determine how to comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") throughout the grievance procedures.

⁶ Inculpatory means tending to impute guilt or fault, and exculpatory means tending to absolve from guilt or fault.



Dismissal

In most cases, Charter School will determine whether a complaint is dismissed within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the complaint.

Charter School may dismiss a complaint if:

- Charter School is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;
- The respondent is not participating in Charter School's education program or activity and is not employed by Charter School;
- The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the complaint, the Coordinator declines to initiate a complaint, and Charter School determines that, without the complainant's withdrawn allegations, the conduct that remains alleged in the complaint, if any, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX even if proven; or
- Charter School determines the conduct alleged in the complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. Prior to dismissing the complaint on this ground, Charter School will make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the complainant.

Upon dismissal, the Coordinator or designee must promptly notify the complainant in writing of the basis for the dismissal and the complainant's right to appeal the dismissal on the following grounds within five (5) business days of the dismissal notice:

- Procedural irregularity that would change the outcome;
- New evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the determination whether sex-based harassment occurred or dismissal was made; and
- The Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that would change the outcome.

If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the Coordinator or designee must also simultaneously notify the respondent in writing of the dismissal, the basis for the dismissal, and the respondent's right to appeal the dismissal on the above grounds within five (5) business days of the dismissal notice.

If the complaint is dismissed, the Coordinator or designee will offer supportive measures to the complainant, as appropriate. The Coordinator or designee will also offer supportive measures to the respondent, as appropriate, if the respondent has been notified of the allegations. The Coordinator will continue to take appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur. Dismissal does not preclude action under another applicable Charter School policy.

Appeal of a Dismissal

If a dismissal is timely appealed in accordance with this Policy, the Coordinator or designee will promptly notify the parties in writing of the appeal, including notice of the allegations if such notice was not previously provided to the respondent, the contact information for the decisionmaker for the appeal, and the parties' right to submit a statement to the decisionmaker of the appeal in support of, or challenging, the outcome within five (5) business days of the appeal notice.

The decisionmaker for the appeal will be someone who has received the required Title IX training and did not take part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint. The appeal procedures will be implemented equally for the parties. Within fifteen (15) business days of the appeal notice to the parties, the decisionmaker will notify the parties in writing of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

Notice of the Allegations

Upon initiation of the grievance procedures, the Coordinator or designee will provide notice of the allegations to the parties whose identities are known. The notice will include:

- Charter School’s grievance procedures and any informal resolution process;
- Sufficient information available at the time to allow the parties to respond to the allegations. Sufficient information includes the identities of the parties involved in the incident(s), the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination under Title IX, and the date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s), to the extent that information is available to Charter School;
- A statement that retaliation is prohibited; and
- A statement that the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence or an accurate description of this evidence; and if Charter School provides a description of the evidence, the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access to the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence upon the request of any party.

Emergency Removal

Charter School may place a non-student employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance procedures in accordance with Charter School’s policies.

Charter School may remove a respondent from Charter School’s education program or activity on an emergency basis, in accordance with Charter School’s policies, provided that Charter School undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of any person arising from the allegations of sex discrimination justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

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

Investigation

Investigations of complaints will be adequate, reliable, and impartial. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than twenty-five (25) business days. Charter School has the burden to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred. The investigator will review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine what evidence is relevant and what evidence is impermissible regardless of relevance in accordance with Title IX.

The following types of evidence, and questions seeking that evidence, are impermissible (i.e., will not be used, accessed or considered, except by Charter School to determine whether one of the exceptions listed below applies, and will not be disclosed), regardless of whether they are relevant:

- Evidence that is protected under a privilege recognized by Federal or State law or evidence provided to a confidential employee, unless the person to whom the privilege or confidentiality is owed has voluntarily waived the privilege or confidentiality;
- A party’s or witness’s records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional in connection with the provision of treatment to the party or witness, unless Charter School obtains that party’s or witness’s voluntary, written consent for use in the grievance procedures; and
- Evidence that relates to the complainant’s sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless evidence about the complainant’s prior sexual conduct is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct or is evidence about specific incidents of the complainant’s prior sexual conduct with the respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant’s consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude determination that sex-based harassment occurred.



The parties will have an equal opportunity to present fact witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible and to access such evidence. The parties may submit a written response to the investigator within five (5) business days of being provided with access to the evidence or an accurate description of it. The parties' timely submitted written responses, if any, will be considered by the investigator and decisionmaker before a determination of responsibility is made.

Charter School will take reasonable steps to prevent and address any unauthorized disclosure of information or evidence by the parties.

Determination of Responsibility

Before making a determination of responsibility, the decisionmaker may question parties and witnesses to adequately assess a party's or witness's credibility to the extent credibility is in dispute and relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of sex discrimination.

Determinations will be based on an objective evaluation of all relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence and credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness. The standard of evidence used to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard.

Within fifteen (15) business days of the expiration of the timeframe for the parties to submit a written response to the evidence or an accurate description of it, the decisionmaker will notify the parties in writing of the determination whether sex discrimination occurred including the rationale for such determination, and the procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

Appeal of the Determination of Responsibility

Should a party find Charter School's determination unsatisfactory, the party may, within five (5) business days of notice of Charter School's determination, submit a written appeal to the Chair of the Charter School Board, who will serve as the decisionmaker for the appeal or designate a decisionmaker for the appeal. The decisionmaker for the appeal must not have taken part in the investigation of the allegations.

The decisionmaker for the appeal will: 1) notify the other party of the appeal in writing; 2) implement appeal procedures equally for the parties; 3) allow the parties to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome within five (5) business days of the appeal or notice of the appeal; and 4) within fifteen (15) business days of the appeal, issue a written decision to the parties describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from Charter School or termination of employment. If there is a determination that sex discrimination occurred, the Coordinator or designee will coordinate the provision and implementation of any remedies and/or disciplinary sanctions ordered by Charter School including notification to the complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions. The Coordinator will take appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within Charter School's education program or activity.

No party, witness, or other person participating in Charter School's grievance procedures will be disciplined for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct based solely on Charter School's determination whether sex discrimination occurred.

Student Pregnancy and Related Conditions

Charter School will not discriminate against any student or applicant based on their current, potential, or past pregnancy or related conditions. For more information about policies and procedures applicable to employees who are pregnant or have a related condition, please refer to the Charter School employee handbook.

When a student, or a person who can legally act on behalf of the student, informs any employee of the student's pregnancy or related condition, unless the employee reasonably believes that the Coordinator has already been notified, the employee must promptly:

- Provide that person with the Coordinator's contact information; and
- Inform that person that the Coordinator can coordinate specific actions to prevent sex discrimination and ensure the student's equal access to Charter School's education programs and activities.

If a student, or a person who has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, notifies the Coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related condition, the Coordinator or designee must promptly:

- Inform the student, and if applicable, the person who notified the Coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related conditions and has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, of Charter School's obligations under:
 - 34 C.F.R. § 106.40(b)(1) through (5), which relates to the rights of students who are pregnant or have a related condition; and
 - 34 C.F.R. § 106.44(j), which includes rules on disclosures of personal information;
- Provide Charter School's Title IX notice of nondiscrimination; and
- Consult with the student about potential reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures as necessary to prevent sex discrimination and ensure equal access, and if the student accepts an offered reasonable modification, implement the modification.

A student who is pregnant or has a related condition will be provided with a lactation space other than a bathroom, that is clean, shielded from view, free from intrusion from others, and may be used for expressing breast milk or breastfeeding as needed.

A student who is pregnant or has a related condition may voluntarily take a leave of absence for the time deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed healthcare provider, or if the student so chooses, the time allowed under any Charter School leave policy for which the student qualifies. A pregnant or parenting student is entitled to eight weeks of parental leave, 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.

Upon the student's return from leave, the student will be reinstated to the academic status, and, as practicable, to the extracurricular status that the student held when the leave began. The student will not be required to provide any kind of certification demonstrating their ability to physically participate in any class, program, or extracurricular activity unless:

- The certified level of physical ability or health is necessary for participation in the class, program, or extracurricular activity;
- Such certification is required of all students participating in the class, program, or extracurricular activity; and
- The information obtained is not used as a basis for sex discrimination.

Students who are pregnant or have a related condition will not be required to provide supporting documentation unless necessary and reasonable to determine reasonable modifications or additional actions related to lactation space, leaves of absence, or voluntary access to any available separate and comparable portion of the program.

Training

All supervisors of staff will receive sexual harassment training within six (6) months of their assumption of a supervisory position and will receive further training once every two (2) years thereafter. All employees, Coordinators and designees, investigators, decisionmakers, and other persons who are responsible for implementing Charter School's grievance procedures or have the authority to modify or terminate supportive measures will receive Title IX and sexual harassment training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment as required by law.

Recordkeeping

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

- For each complaint of sex discrimination, records documenting the informal resolution process or the grievance procedures, and the resulting outcome.
- For each notification the Coordinator receives of information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, records documenting the actions Charter School took to meet its obligations under 34 C.F.R. § 106.44.
- All materials used to provide required Title IX training. Charter School will make these training materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.

The above records will be maintained in a secure location until destroyed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

TITLE IX SEX DISCRIMINATION AND Harassment COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____ Date: _____
Email Address: _____
Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____
Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____
List any witnesses that were present: _____
Where did the incident(s) occur? _____

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e., specific statements and conduct; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I hereby authorize Charter School to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Complainant Date: _____

Print Name

To be completed by Charter School:

Received by: _____ Date: _____

Follow up Meeting with Complainant held on: _____



SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

The Board of Directors of Ararat Charter School (“ACS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Board of Directors has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures.

In compliance with Education Code section 215, this policy has been developed in consultation with ACS and community stakeholders, ACS school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and professionals, the county mental health plan, law enforcement, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating ACS’s strategies for suicide prevention and intervention. ACS must work in conjunction with local government agencies, community-based organizations, and other community supports to identify additional resources.

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, ACS shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for ACS. The suicide prevention point of contact for ACS and the Principal shall ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Staff Development

ACS, along with its partners, has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Training shall be provided for all school staff members. It may also be provided, when appropriate, for other adults on campus (such as substitutes and intermittent staff, volunteers, interns, tutors, coaches, and afterschool staff). Training shall include the following:

1. All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists, other public entity professionals, such as psychologists or social workers) who have received advanced training specific to suicide. Staff training may be adjusted year-to-year based on previous professional development activities and emerging best practices.
2. At least annually, all staff shall receive training on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention.
3. At a minimum, all staff shall participate in training on the core components of suicide prevention (identification of suicide risk factors and warning signs, prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention) at the beginning of their employment or annually. Core components of the general suicide prevention training shall include:
 - a. Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.
 - b. How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide.

- c. How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and an immediate referral for a suicide risk assessment.
 - d. Emphasis on immediately referring (same day) any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by staff member.
 - e. Emphasis on reducing stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.
 - f. Reviewing the data annually to look for any patterns or trends of the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, or death. Data from the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS) should also be analyzed to identify school climate deficits and drive program development. See the Cal-SCHLS Web site at <http://cal-schls.wested.org/>.
 - g. Information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Youth affected by suicide.
 - ii. Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts.
 - iii. Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders.
 - iv. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.
 - v. Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care.
 - vi. Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences.
4. In addition to initial orientations to the core components of suicide prevention, ongoing annual staff professional development for all staff may include the following components:
- a. The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health.
 - b. Common misconceptions about suicide.
 - c. Charter School and community suicide prevention resources.
 - d. Appropriate messaging about suicide (correct terminology, safe messaging guidelines).
 - e. The factors associated with suicide (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors).
 - f. How to identify youth who may be at risk of suicide.
 - g. Appropriate ways to interact with a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or is suicidal. Specifically, how to talk with a student about their thoughts of suicide and (based on ACS guidelines) how to respond to such thinking; how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately respond and provide support based on ACS guidelines.
 - h. Charter School-approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including multi-tiered systems of support and referrals). Such procedures should emphasize that the suicidal student should be constantly supervised until a suicide risk assessment is completed.
 - i. Charter School-approved procedures for responding to the aftermath of suicidal behavior (suicidal behavior postvention).
 - j. Responding after a suicide occurs (suicide postvention).
 - k. Resources regarding youth suicide prevention.
 - l. Emphasis on stigma reduction and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.
 - m. Emphasis that any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide is to be immediately referred (same day) for assessment while being constantly monitored by a staff member.

Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services

Employees of ACS must act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. While it is expected that school professionals are able to identify suicide risk factors and warning signs, and to prevent the



immediate risk of a suicidal behavior, treatment of suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting. In addition, treatment of the mental health challenges often associated with suicidal thinking typically requires mental health resources beyond what schools are able to provide.

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education

1. Parents/guardians/caregivers may be included in suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, the Charter School shall share this Policy with parents/guardians/caregivers by notifying them where a complete copy of the policy is available.
2. This Suicide Prevention Policy shall be easily accessible and prominently displayed on the ACS Web page and included in the parent handbook.
3. Parents/guardians/caregivers should be invited to provide input on the development and implementation of this policy.
4. All parents/guardians/caregivers may have access to suicide prevention training that addresses the following:
 - a. Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.
 - b. How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide.
 - c. How to respond appropriately to the student who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and referral for an immediate suicide risk assessment.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATION

Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, ACS along with its partners has carefully reviewed and will continue to review all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe messaging about suicide. Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with ACS and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

ACS's instructional and student support program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and resilience. The instruction shall not use the stress model to explain suicide.

ACS's instructional curriculum may include information about suicide prevention, as appropriate or needed. If suicide prevention is included in the Charter School's instructional curriculum, it shall consider the grade level and age of the students and be delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. Under the supervision of an appropriately trained individual acting within the scope of her/his credential or license, students shall:

1. Receive developmentally appropriate, student-centered education about the warning signs of mental health challenges and emotional distress. The content of the education may include:
 - a. Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma.
 - b. How to recognize behaviors (warning signs) and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others.
 - c. Help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help.
 - d. Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.



2. Receive developmentally appropriate guidance regarding ACS's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures.

Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula (e.g., health classes, orientation classes, science, and physical education).

ACS will support the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that raise awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention (e.g., Mental Health Awareness Week, Peer Counseling, Freshman Success, and National Alliance on Mental Illness on Campus High School Clubs).

INTERVENTION AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

ACS designates the following administrators to act as the primary and secondary suicide prevention liaisons:

1. School Psychologist
2. Principal

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary designated suicide prevention liaison. If this primary suicide prevention liaison is unavailable, the staff shall promptly notify the secondary suicide prevention liaison.

The suicide prevention liaison shall immediately notify the Principal or designee, who shall then notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible if appropriate and in the best interest of the student. Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.

The suicide prevention liaison shall also refer the student to mental health resources at ACS or in the community.

When a student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported on campus or at a school-related activity, the suicide prevention liaison shall, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one or more of the following, as appropriate:
 - a. Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred.
 - b. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened.
 - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.
 - d. Remaining calm, keeping in mind the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed.
 - e. Moving all other students out of the immediate area.
 - f. Not sending the student away or leaving him/her alone, even to go to the restroom.
 - g. Providing comfort to the student, listening and allowing the student to talk and being comfortable with moments of silence.
 - h. Promising privacy and help, but not promising confidentiality.
2. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.

3. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed and coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary.
4. After a referral is made, ACS shall verify with the parent/guardian that the follow up treatment has been accessed. Parents/guardians will be required to provide documentation of care for the student. If parents/guardians refuse or neglect to access treatment for a student who has been identified to be at risk for suicide or in emotional distress, the suicide prevention liaisons shall meet with the parent to identify barriers to treatment (e.g., cultural stigma, financial issues) and work to rectify the situation and build understanding of care. If follow up care is still not provided, ACS may contact Child Protective Services.
5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at ACS.
6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted on the ACS campus, the suicide prevention liaison shall follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in ACS's safety plan. After consultation with the Principal or designee and the student's parent/guardian about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Principal or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. ACS staff may receive assistance from ACS counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted off the ACS campus and unrelated to school activities, the Principal or designee shall take the following steps to support the student:

1. Contact the parent/guardian and offer support to the family.
2. Discuss with the family how they would like ACS to respond to the attempt while minimizing widespread rumors among teachers, staff, and students.
3. Obtain permission from the parent/guardian to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis are correct.
4. The suicide prevention liaisons shall handle any media requests.
5. Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students.
6. Offer to the student and parent/guardian steps for re-integration to school. Re-integration may include obtaining a written release from the parent/guardian to speak with any health care providers; conferring with the student and parent/guardian about any specific requests on how to handle the situation; informing the student's teachers about possible days of absences; allowing accommodations for make-up work (being understanding that missed assignments may add stress to the student); appropriate staff maintaining ongoing contact with the student to monitor the student's actions and mood; and working with the parent/guardian to involve the student in an aftercare plan.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS DURING OR AFTER A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Students shall be encouraged through the education program and in ACS activities to notify a teacher, the Principal, another ACS administrator, psychologist, ACS counselor, suicide prevention liaisons, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions. ACS staff should treat each report seriously, calmly, and with active listening and support. Staff should be non-judgmental to students and discuss with the student, and parent/guardian, about additional resources to support the student.



RESPONDING AFTER A SUICIDE DEATH (POSTVENTION)

A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have devastating consequences on the school community, including students and staff. ACS shall follow the below action plan for responding to a suicide death, which incorporates both immediate and long-term steps and objectives:

The suicide prevention liaison shall:

1. Coordinate with the Principal to:
 - a. Confirm death and cause.
 - b. Identify a staff member to contact deceased's family (within 24 hours).
 - c. Enact the Suicide Postvention Response.
 - d. Notify all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
2. Coordinate an all-staff meeting, to include:
 - a. Notification (if not already conducted) to staff about suicide death.
 - b. Emotional support and resources available to staff.
 - c. Notification to students about suicide death and the availability of support services (if this is the protocol that is decided by administration).
 - d. Share information that is relevant and that which you have permission to disclose.
3. Prepare staff to respond to needs of students regarding the following:
 - a. Review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment.
 - b. Talking points for staff to notify students.
 - c. Resources available to students (on and off campus).
4. Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior.
5. Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior.
6. Communicate with the larger school community about the suicide death.
7. Consider funeral arrangements for family and school community.
8. Respond to memorial requests in respectful and non-harmful manner; responses should be handled in a thoughtful way and their impact on other students should be considered.
9. Identify media spokesperson if needed.
10. Include long-term suicide postvention responses:
 - a. Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed.
 - b. Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of deceased.
 - c. Consider long-term memorials and how they may impact students who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk of suicide.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Charter School will include the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) and the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) on all student identification cards. ACS will also include the number for the Crisis Text Line, which can be accessed by texting HOME to 741741 and a local suicide prevention hotline on all student identification cards.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES: STAFF/STUDENT INTERACTION POLICY

Ararat Charter School (“ACS”) recognizes its responsibility to make and enforce all rules and regulations governing student and employee 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 personnel:

A. Examples of PERMITTED actions (NOT corporal punishment)

- Stopping a student from fighting with another student;
- Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism;
- Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student;
- Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object;
- Requiring students to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills;
- Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities.

B. Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment)

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

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Acceptable and Unacceptable Staff/Student Behavior

This policy is intended to guide all school faculty and staff in conducting themselves in a way that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of Ararat Charter School employees and to specify the boundaries between students and staff.

Although this policy gives specific, clear direction, it is each staff member’s obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents, 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 staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing the boundaries of a student/teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member’s perspective, but can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from a student or parent point of view. The objective of the following lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived as, sexual misconduct.

Staff 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 employees 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/staff 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, he or she must immediately report the matter to an 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.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC BEHAVIORS

The following examples are not an exhaustive list:

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors (Violations of this Policy)

- Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal and intimate nature.
- Kissing of any kind.
- Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation.
- Intentionally being alone with a student away from the school.
- Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments.
- Sexual jokes.
- Seeking emotional involvement with a student for your benefit.
- Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented.
- Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student in an attempt to gain their support and understanding.
- Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior.

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors without Parent and Supervisor Permission

(These behaviors should only be exercised when a staff member has parent and supervisor permission.)

- Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities.
- Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed.
- Allowing students in your home.

Cautionary Staff/Student Behaviors (These behaviors should only be exercised when a reasonable and prudent person, acting as an educator, is prevented from using a better practice or behavior. Staff members should inform their supervisor of the circumstance and occurrence prior to or immediately after the occurrence)

- Remarks about the physical attributes or development of anyone.
- Excessive attention toward a particular student.
- Sending emails, text messages or letters to students if the content is not about school activities.

Acceptable and Recommended Staff/Student Behaviors

- Getting parents' written consent for any after-school activity.
- Obtaining formal approval to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions.
- Emails, text, phone and instant messages to



students must be very professional and pertaining to school activities or classes (Communication should be limited to school technology). • 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 informed when 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 type of special needs student. • Asking another staff member to be present when you must be alone with a student after regular school hour

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(J).)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law.

Charter School shall ensure that its staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy and/or current equivalent policy, as required by the Modified Consent Decree. Charter School shall comply with the terms of the School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights resolution adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education on May 6, 2013.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of Charter School’s student expulsion process and shall facilitate the post-expulsion placement of expelled students.

Charter School shall document and implement the alternatives to suspension and expulsion that Charter School utilizes in response to attendance-related concerns, e.g. truancy or excessive tardiness.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Charter School shall establish and implement policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. If a student is recommended for expulsion and the student receives or is eligible for special education, pending the completion of the expulsion process, Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at an appropriate interim educational placement determined in coordination with the LAUSD Division of Special Education.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a Section 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and Charter School, an IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District’s



Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a Section 504 Plan, Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

- A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
- B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement Section 504?

NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Upon expelling any student, Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division by submitting an expulsion packet to the CSD immediately or as soon as practicable, which shall contain:

- Completed “Notification of Charter School Expulsion” [form available from the CSD website or office], including attachments as required on the form
- Documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including statement of specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- Copy of parental notice of expulsion hearing
- Copy of expulsion notice provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process, and options for enrollment
- If the student is eligible for Special Education, documentation related to expulsion in compliance with IDEA and the MCD, including the Expulsion Analysis page of the pre-expulsion IEP
- If the student is eligible for Section 504 accommodations, documentation that Charter School conducted a Link Determination meeting to address two questions:
 - A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
 - B. Was the misconduct a direct result of Charter School’s failure to implement Section 504 Plan?

Notwithstanding and apart from the documentation sent to the Charter Schools Division as indicated above, if the student is a resident of a school district other than LAUSD, Charter School must notify the superintendent of the student’s district of residence within 30 days of the expulsion. Additionally, upon request of the receiving school district, Charter School shall forward student records no later than 10 school days from the date of the request as stated in Education Code section 49068 (a) and (b).

OUTCOME DATA

Charter School shall gather and maintain all data related to placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.



REHABILITATION PLANS

Pupils who are expelled from Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by Charter School's governing board 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. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may apply to Charter School for readmission. Charter School shall inform parents in writing of its processes for reinstatement and applying for expungement of the expulsion record.

READMISSION

Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, Charter School's governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless Charter School's governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil's parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil's parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

REINSTATEMENT

Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT

Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act. **SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE SYSTEM**

Students learn best in an environment where there are clear expectations about behavior, and when the culture of the school values and respects all stakeholders.

In order to maintain a positive learning environment, ACS has developed a comprehensive set of student discipline policies through the work of a committee that includes interested parents, guardians, students, and staff. The ACS student discipline policy and procedures for suspension and expulsion include positive behavioral interventions. These policies are distributed in the school's student handbook and describe the school's expectations regarding mutual respect, safety, personal responsibility, work habits, attendance, violence, and substance abuse. Each family receives a copy of these policies and is required to verify that they have reviewed them with their children at the time of enrollment or at the beginning of the school year.



The discipline policy is not discriminatory or arbitrary; during summer professional development days as well as monthly staff meetings, all staff receive extensive professional development during on ACS's policies and procedures for discipline. The process follows general principles of due process. At Ararat Charter School, the Governing Board and or the Discipline Committee is charged with ensuring that students recommended for expulsion are afforded a fair and impartial hearing and all due process rights. Challenges or objections to suspensions and opportunity transfers may be addressed directly with the Governing Board. Students who are recommended for expulsion have a right to an expulsion hearing and to address the Governing Board before the Board makes the final decision to expel. Students sign agreements related to their understanding of and responsibility to the standards set forth in the discipline policy within the handbook. Students who do not live up to their responsibilities and who violate the school rules may expect some consequences for their behavior, such as:

- Warning
- Loss of Privileges
- Notices to parents by telephone or letter
- Referral to the administrator
- Request for parent conference
- In-school suspension
- Suspension
- Expulsion

In addition to a positive schoolwide behavior system, through our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) program, aligned with LAUSD's Discipline Foundation Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights, ACS's Student Support and Progress Team (SST) utilizes a number of behavioral interventions to promote the types of behaviors that will allow our students to be successful at ACS and throughout secondary school, college, and beyond and to make every effort to keep students in class. The SSPT leads efforts to support individual students' needs and provide differentiated behavioral support for students who need it. This includes identifying the students who are in the most need of behavioral support (based on classroom behavior data and teacher input) and implementing behavior monitoring and coordinated behavior plans, including target goals, behavior trackers, and frequent communication with parents. Incidents are recorded in the Charter School's student information system and are reviewed periodically by the school's discipline committee.

For extreme cases, the Charter School takes a problem-solving approach, developing contracts with students and families which include reinforcements for success and consequences for continuing problems. Additionally, the Charter School employs a well-qualified full-time Resource Specialist to support our students' social-emotional needs and advise our staff on how best to meet our students' social-emotional needs as well.

There are a variety of other alternatives to suspension that are also used on a case-by-case basis, such as:

- Alternative programming, such as student schedule changes

- Appropriate in-school alternatives in which students receive academic tutoring and behavior coaching to help them learn skills for more positive behaviors moving forward
- Mini-courses/modules on topics related to social-emotional behavior to provide opportunities for self-reflection on behavior
- Parent meetings to confer and develop appropriate behavior interventions to support the student and inform different decision-making in the future
- Targeted support for students with attendance-related concerns

The Charter School explores additional partnerships that both support students' behavior needs in Charter School and create positive self-identities within students.

No pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the basis for which the pupil is being involuntarily removed and his or her right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal.

If a parent, guardian, or educational rights holder 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, 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.

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 the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

For students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities, alternatives to suspension or expulsion are attempted first.

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Education Code section 234 *et seq.* ACS's policy on bullying prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics, as specified in the definition of hate crimes. The Charter School's process for receiving and investigating complaints includes complaints of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics, as specified, and a requirement that Charter School personnel who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so, a timeline to investigate and resolve complaints, and an appeal process. The school investigates all incidents with fidelity and gather evidence before any decision is made.



IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-school suspensions are given as an alternative to out of school suspensions and are held in the Principal's office. A student may be assigned to in-school suspension, at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee, for actions that violate the Charter School's code of conduct or the enumerated offenses for suspension and expulsion set forth below, if the student poses no danger or threat to the Charter School campus, students and/or staff. Students assigned to in-school suspension are supervised by the Principal or his/her designee, and serve their in-school suspension at a supervised suspension classroom.

Students receive written assignments and tests during the duration of their in-school suspension to ensure they receive continued instruction. Students with disabilities continue to be provided with all supports and services as described in their IEP. During in-school suspensions, teachers provide the students with assignments to complete by the end of the school day. If the student has questions about the assignments, the teachers provide support. During the day of the suspension, the students' teachers address behaviors that may have contributed to the students' in-school suspension. In addition to completing assigned work, the student is required to complete a reflection addressing why the behavior occurred and what can be done in the future to ensure that the offense is not repeated.

The school holds a conference with the student and parent prior to issuing the in-school suspension. The notification is made by the principal or designee via phone and written notice is issued once it is determined that a suspension is warranted, outlining the reason and duration of the in-school suspension.

In-school suspensions is no more than five (5) consecutive days per incident, and no more than ten (10) days in one school year. For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, if the pupil denies the charges, the Charter School provides an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present his or her side of the story. The Principal makes the decision about whether the student shall be suspended.

To ensure the safety of all students, staff, and visitors to ACS, students who violate Education Code Sections 48900.3 (caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence), 48900.4 (engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation against a pupil or group of pupils or school district personnel), or 48900.7 (made terrorist threats against school officials or school property, or both) are precluded from in-school suspensions.

GROUND FOR IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION, OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Criteria of discipline is determined using Attachment 3 of the LAUSD School Climate Bill of Rights.

A single suspension may not be issued for maximum of 5 consecutive school days. The total number of days for which a student, including students with a 504 Plan, may be suspended from school maximum of 20 days. Students with an IEP can be suspended for maximum of 10 school days in any school year.

ANNOTATED EXCERPTS FROM THE CURRENT CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE § 48900. GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

A pupil shall not be suspended from Charter School or recommended for expulsion, unless the Principal of the Charter School determines that the pupil has committed an act as defined pursuant to any of subdivisions (a) to (r), inclusive:

- a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- (2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated Charter School employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to Charter School property or private property.
- g) Stolen or attempted to steal Charter School property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit use or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription products.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) (Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- k) [Removed per Assembly Bill No. 420]
- l) Knowingly received stolen Charter School property or private property.
- m) Possessed an imitation firearm. As used in this section, "imitation firearm" means 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.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.
- o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a Charter School disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil 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 pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

- r) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261, directed specifically toward a pupil, or Charter School personnel.
- s) A pupil shall not be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this section, unless that act is related to Charter School activity or Charter School attendance occurring within a Charter School under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of the Charter School district or principal or occurring within any other Charter School district. A pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated in this section and related to Charter School activity or attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
 - (1) While on Charter School grounds.
 - (2) While going to or coming from school.
 - (3) During the lunch period whether on or off the campus.
 - (4) During, or while going to or coming from, a Charter School sponsored activity.
- t) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this section, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (a).
- u) As used in this section, "school property" includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- v) A superintendent of the Charter School district or principal may use his or her discretion to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion, including, but not limited to, counseling and an anger management program, for a pupil subject to discipline under this section.
- w) It is the intent of the Legislature that alternatives to suspension or expulsion be imposed against a pupil who is truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from Charter School activities.

Grades 4-12

48900.2 – Committed sexual harassment.

48900.3 – Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence.

48900.4 – Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against Charter School personnel or pupils.

48900.7 – Made terroristic threats against Charter School officials, Charter School property or both.

The following Categories shall define the degree of Principal discretion in suspended students and recommending expulsion:



Category I

The Principal shall immediately suspend and recommend expulsion when the following occur at the Charter School site or at a Charter School activity off campus, or any of the following reasons (E.C. 48915.1[c]) for grades 4-12:

1. Possessing, selling, or furnishing a firearm. E.C. 48915(c)(1); 48900(b)
2. Brandishing a knife at another person. E.C. 48915(c)(2); 48900(a)(1) and 48900(b)
3. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance. E.C. 48915(c)(3); 48900(c)
4. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery (as defined in 488900[n]). E.C. 488915(c)(4); 48900(c)
5. Possession of an explosive E.C. 48915(c)(5); 48900(b)

Category II

The Principal has limited discretion student offences listed below. The Principal must recommend expulsion when any of the following occur at Charter School or at a Charter School activity off campus unless the principal determines that expulsion is inappropriate (E.C. 48915[a]):

1. Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense. E.C. 48915(a)(1); 48900(a)(1), maybe also 48900(a)(2).
2. Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil. E.C. 48915(a)(2); 48900(b)
3. Unlawful possession of any controlled substance, except for the first offence of less than an ounce of marijuana. E.C. 48915(a)(3); 48900(c).
4. Robbery or extortion. E.C. 48915(a)(4); 48900(e).
2. Assault or battery upon any Charter School employee. E.C. 48915(a)(5); 48900(a)(1) and 48900(a)(2)

Category III

The remaining offenses include the following student offenses that require limited principal discretion. The Principal may recommend expulsion when any of the following occur at any time, including, but not limited to, while on Charter School grounds; while going to or coming from school; during the lunch period, whether on or off the campus; or during, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity.

1. Caused or attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person. (Unless, in the case of "caused," injury is serious. [See II.1]). E.C. 48900(a)(1); 48915(b)
2. First offense of possession of marijuana of not more than one ounce, or possession of alcohol. E.C. 48900(c); 48915(b)
3. Sold, furnished, or offered a substitute substance represented as a controlled substance. E.C. 48900(d); 38915(b)
4. Caused or attempted to cause damage to Charter School or private property. E.C. 48900(f); 48915(e)
5. Stole or attempted to steal Charter School or private property. E.C. 48900(g); 48915(e)
6. Possessed or used tobacco. E.C. 48900(h); 48915(e)



7. Committed an obscene act or engage in habitual profanity or vulgarity. E.C. 48900(i); 48915(e)
8. Possessed, offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia. E.C. 48900(j); 48915(e)
9. [Removed per Assembly Bill No. 420]
10. Knowingly received stolen Charter School or private property. E.C. 48900(l); 48915(e)
11. Possessed an imitation firearm. E.C. 48900(m); 48915(e)
12. Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation against a pupil or group of pupils or Charter School district personnel. E.C. 48900.4; 48915(e)
13. Committed sexual harassment. E.C. 48900.2; 48915(e)
14. Caused or attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence. E.C. 48900.3; 48915(e)
15. Made terrorist threats against Charter School officials or Charter School property, or both.
E.C. 48900.7; 48915(e)
16. Willfully use force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense. E.C. 48900(a)(2); 48915(b)
17. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a disciplinary action. E.C. 48900(o); 48915(e)
18. Any behavior listed in Category I or II that is related to Charter School activity or Charter School attendance but that did not occur on campus or at a Charter School activity off campus. E.C. 48915(b)
19. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
E.C. 48900(p); 48915(e)
20. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing, as defined in Section 32050. E.C. 48900(q); 48915(e)
21. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of electronic act directed specifically toward a pupil or Charter School personnel. E.C. 48900(r); 48915 (e)

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

A student may receive an out-of-school suspension if it is determined by the principal or the designee that the student's presence would be a danger to others at school and their removal from school is necessary. Students who have been suspended may not appear on campus nor attend any Charter School functions (before school, during school, or after school, including in the evening) while suspended, except to take state assessments.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

Suspensions (whether in-school or out-of-school) shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

Conference

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal.



The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or 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 a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense, in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(i). This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil’s parent or guardian to attend a conference with school administration. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil’s parent or guardian at the conference.

Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of suspension, the Principal or Assistant Principal shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. When a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing by the Principal or Assistant Principal of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil’s parent or guardian or, if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil’s educational rights holder. This notice shall state the specific offense(s) committed by the student. In addition, the notice also states the date and time when the student may return to school. If the Principal or Assistant Principal request that the parent/guardian confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice shall request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

Length of Suspension

The length of suspension for students shall not exceed a period of 5 consecutive days unless an expulsion is recommended. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding 5 consecutive days, a second conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian and the Principal to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 10th day of suspension. The total number of days for which a pupil may be suspended from school shall not exceed a total of 20 school days in any school year, or more than 10 days for a student with an IEP, unless a pupil enrolls in or is transferred to another regular school, in which case the total number of schooldays for which the pupil may be suspended shall not exceed 30 days in any school year. During suspensions, teachers provide the students with assignments to complete by the end of the duration of the suspension. If the student has questions about the assignments, the teacher provides support. Parents and Guardians may challenge or object to suspensions and opportunity transfers may be addressed directly with the Governing Board.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

As required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer to determine whether the student should



be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing, as required by law.

When the Principal determines that a student has committed an offense(s) that warrants an expulsion, the Principal completes the appropriate misconduct report and provides a copy to a neutral and impartial Discipline Review Panel appointed by the Board. The Panel consists of at least 3 objective and unbiased who are certificated and neither a teacher of the student nor a member of the Charter School Governing Board. Panel may otherwise include any combination of staff and teachers or administrators. The Panel is presided over by a designated neutral hearing chairperson. The Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense, and the Principal makes the final determination. The decision to expel a pupil shall be based on the finding of one or both of the following (Education Code section 48915(b)):

- Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.
- Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.

Expulsion Hearing

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether or not the student should be expelled. The hearing will be held within 30 days from the date of the expulsion recommendation, after the Principal determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The hearing will be presided over by the Discipline Review Panel as described above. A Facts and Findings document that includes dates, times, incidences, people present, and an objective anecdotal record of the events is prepared by the Principal to summarize the evidence adduced at the hearing.

The Principal prepares a written notice of the hearing in the parent/guardian's native language, which is emailed and mailed, within 48 hours of the expulsion recommendation, and it will be forwarded to the student and the student's parents at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will 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. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.
9. The availability of reasonable accommodations and/or language support.



The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all pupil confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the parent/guardian makes a written request for a public hearing in open session three days prior to the date of the scheduled hearing.

After the expulsion hearing, the Discipline Review Panel then makes a written report within two (2) school days to the Principal, the student, and his/her parent/guardian, summarizing the grounds for expulsion and the evidence presented at the hearing. The report will include the Panel's recommendation to the Principal as to whether or not to expel the student and if so, for what period of time. Students can be expelled for a time that is not to exceed one year if they have met the requirements for reinstatement. If this Panel recommends against expulsion, then the student will be immediately reinstated and permitted to return to an instructional program. If this Panel recommends the pupil for expulsion, the Board makes a final decision on whether or not to accept the recommendation for expulsion and/or any other recommendations by the Panel.

A student and his/her parent/guardian may appeal an expulsion decision by the Panel to the Charter School's Governing Board, consistent with the appeal procedures described below.

Expulsion Appeal Procedures

The expelled student and his/her parent/guardian has the right to appeal the Panel's decision to expel the student to the ACS governing board within five (5) school days of notification of the Panel's decision. The parent/guardian must submit an appeal request in writing to the governing board, along with any additional evidence that the parent/guardian wishes to submit to the governing board. ACS's Governing Board reviews and vote on the appeal request within ten (10) school days of receipt of the request for appeal. The Governing Board's final decision shall be delivered within three (3) days of the decision, by the most expedient means of communication identified by the parent/guardian or student at the hearing (telephone, e-mail, etc.) and shall also be delivered, in writing, by certified mail. The Governing Board's decision is final.

For students who are suspended pending expulsion, independent study is offered to provide an educational program to the student during this time to ensure the student has classroom work and regular contact with a certificated teacher. For students who do not voluntarily agree to this option, the Charter School provides the student with classroom material and current assignments to be completed at home during the length of the suspension.

ACS also provides post-expulsion support to facilitate access to education for expelled students by providing homework packets from student's teachers to be picked up by the parent or guardian on a daily basis until the parent or guardian contacts the LAUSD Student Discipline and Expulsion Unit.

Expulsion causes the student to be terminated from enrollment at ACS for the entire term of the expulsion. The school also provides support by informing the parent/guardian and student that they must call the LAUSD Student Discipline and Expulsion Unit, provide the number to the LAUSD Student Discipline and Expulsion Unit, and allow the parent/guardian and student to use the school's telephone to make that phone call. The school provides the families of the student who have been expelled with a directory of local resident schools.



ACS will provide post-expulsion support to facilitate access to education for expelled students by providing homework packets from all the student's teachers to be picked up by the parent or guardian on a daily basis until the parent or guardian contacts the LAUSD Student Discipline and Expulsion Unit.

Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses The Charter School may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the Discipline Review Panel. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

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 his/her right to (a) receive five days' notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. The Charter School must also provide the victim 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 Discipline Review Panel, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The Discipline Review Panel may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The Discipline Review Panel may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she 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 person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The Discipline Review Panel may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her 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 is helpful to the Charter School. The person presiding over the hearing 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 presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes 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 the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing 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 panel 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.

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

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

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no recommendation to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Discipline Review Panel or Governing Board on appeal determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the accused pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

If the Discipline Review Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program at the Charter School.

Written Notice to Expel

Following a decision of the Discipline Review Panel to expel, the Principal shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Discipline Review Panel’s adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

1. Notice of the specific offense(s) committed by the student
2. Notice of the student’s or parent/guardian’s obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student’s status with the Charter School.
3. Notice of any appeal rights/procedures
4. Information about alternative placement options

The Principal shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the education office for the student’s district of residence and to the authorizer. This notice shall include the following:

1. The student’s name
2. The specific expellable offense committed by the student

Reinstatement and Readmission

Pupils who are expelled from ACS shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Discipline Review Panel at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review, to ensure the student is complying with the rehabilitation plan as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan includes improved behavior, attendance and academic performance and shall include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to ACS for readmission.

The readmission process includes a meeting with the Principal to determine whether the pupil has met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan and/or whether the pupil continues to pose a danger to campus safety. The Principal shall make a recommendation to the Governing Board for readmission unless there is a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan and/or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. The Governing Board makes the final determination. These procedures shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil’s parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is issued. ACS is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period.



Rehabilitation Plans

Criteria for the rehabilitation plan includes the following: enrollment in another school; upholding school rules and behavioral expectations; acceptable attendance; completion of school work; and community service hours. ACS shall mail written notification to parent within 30 days prior to the end of the expulsion term. This notification requests parent to submit written documentation to the school showing that the student has met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan. ACS’s governing board shall review the reinstatement documentation and vote to reinstate or not. If the board votes to reinstate the student, ACS shall remove record of the student’s expulsion from their student records. If the student does not meet the requirements of their rehabilitation plan as determined by the Board, the Board will revisit at a later date not to exceed one (1) year.

Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

The school will help provide the parent necessary information and a list of placement options. Pupils 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.

