



College for Certain

**STUDENT FAMILY  
HANDBOOK**

**2016-2017**

**ANNUAL NOTIFICATION AND GUIDELINES**

This Student Family Handbook enumerates sections of the Education Code that require annual parent and/or guardian notification. (Education Code 48980[a])

California state law governs the basic operation of public schools, and the legislature regularly passes new laws affecting the quality and availability of education, as well as laws mandating that local school districts undertake new responsibilities.

These laws often require that Aspire adequately inform parents of the opportunities and protection to which they are entitled. Aspire complies with this by providing families with this Annual Notification in the Student Family Handbook at the beginning of each school year and by issuing the same publication to new families as they enter Aspire schools during the year.

The following contains a summary of state law provisions with which all parents and guardians should be familiar. In some cases, the laws have been summarized, and the precise code number has been provided should parents require more detailed information.

The Student Family Handbook will be published annually. All registered families of Aspire Public Schools will indicate their willingness to be governed by the Student Family Handbook by signing annually a written statement to that effect. The Administration reserves the right to amend the Handbook at any time for just cause. Parents of Aspire Public Schools students will be notified of the changes, in writing, in a timely manner.

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## **ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **VISION**

Every student is prepared to earn a college degree.

### **MISSION**

To open and operate small, high-quality charter schools in low-income neighborhoods, in order to:

- Increase the academic performance of underserved students
- Develop effective educators
- Share successful practices with other forward-thinking educators, and
- Catalyze change in public schools.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Parents of all enrolled students will receive an Acceptance letter and either an Enrollment Confirmation form or Registration Packet; enrollment is not considered complete until that Enrollment Confirmation Form or Registration Packet has been completed and returned. Failure to return the Enrollment Confirmation Form or Registration Packet by the specified deadline may result in the spot being given to the next student on the waitlist.

### **RE-ENROLLMENT**

Before new students can be enrolled, current families are asked to complete a Re-Enrollment Form, indicating whether they plan to return the following school year.

### **INTRA-ASPIRE TRANSFERS**

An Intra-Aspire Transfer is when a student(s) is currently attending an Aspire school (has completed or will have completed at least a full school year at another Aspire school site) desires to attend another Aspire school. The Intra-Aspire transfer process does not guarantee a successful transfer. The student's enrollment in his/her current school will be held until released by parents upon registration at another Aspire school.

The Intra-Aspire Transfer policy does not provide for students to transfer between Aspire schools mid-year. Families can only initiate Intra-Aspire Transfer requests during the annual open enrollment period; Intra-Aspire transfers are only considered during the regularly published lottery process. Students who receive transfers during the annual lottery process can move schools at the beginning of the next school year.

Those students that want to transfer between Aspire schools will need to mark the box re: “**Transfer my child to another Aspire school**” on the Re-enrollment form. The parent must then complete an “**Intra-Aspire Transfer Request**” form. Doing this will:

1. Hold their spot at the current school
2. Provide them with an enrollment priority to transfer to an alternate Aspire campus (if applicable, based on specifications of school's charter).
3. Aspire Public Schools does not accept foreign exchange students

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

State law requires that for unconditional admission to school, all students under 18 shall be fully immunized according to the requirements of the California Department of Public Health. All entering students must be up-to-date with immunizations according to Aspire policy and the schedule provided by the California Department of Public Health. Students may be exempted from this requirement for medical reasons only. As of January 1, 2016 exemptions based on personal beliefs, including religious beliefs, will no longer be an option for the vaccines that are currently required for entry into school in California. Personal beliefs exemptions on file for a child already attending school will remain valid until the child reaches the next immunization checkpoint at kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade. In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the child has not been immunized, he or she will be excluded from school for the period of communicability. Students who do not comply with the requirements shall be excluded from school. The immunization requirements do not prohibit pupils from accessing special education and related services required by their individualized education programs. If you have questions about your child's immunization record and/or admission status, please contact your child's school.

## **MEDICATION**

If your child needs to take any prescription medications, you must have: 1) a doctor's written and signed note (Parent/Physician Statement) detailing the method, amount, and time schedules for such medication, and 2) a written and signed note (Parent/Physician Statement) from the parent indicating his/her desire that the school assist the student as set forth by the physician in his/her statement. For safety reasons, children are not allowed to have medicine in their classrooms, lunchboxes, or in their pockets. All medication must be dispensed through the office. You may also come and administer medication to your child, if needed. From time to time some parents request that their child be able to take Tylenol or Advil at school. This is permissible only with written parent and doctor permission (Parent/Physician Statement) and the medication must be in its original container.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Parents are asked to notify the office in writing as soon as any change of contact information (telephone numbers, address, etc.) occurs. This will ensure that all communication will be received without delay or interruption. Every student must have complete and up-to-date Emergency Contact Information, properly signed and on file in the school Office. **STUDENTS MAY ONLY LEAVE CAMPUS WITH AN ADULT WHOSE NAME IS LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION.**

## **ATTENDANCE**

Aspire Public Schools (APS) believe that only through daily participation in classroom activities can students achieve success and progress in their academic and social growth. Regular attendance is also preparation for entry into the world of employment. Just as the Aspire team works with all students to help them succeed, students and parents must understand they are accountable for regular class attendance and daily assignments.

## **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

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

- (1) Due to his or her illness.
- (2) Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
- (3) For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered.
- (4) For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of his or her immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than one day if the service is conducted in California and not more than three days if the service is conducted outside California.
- (5) For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.
- (6) Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent.
- (7) For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service, observance of a holiday or ceremony of his or her religion, attendance at religious retreats (for purposes of this section, attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester), attendance at an employment conference, or attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization when the student's absence has been requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designee.
- (8) For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Section 12302 of the Elections Code
- (9) For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Section 49701, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for a period of time to be determine at the discretion of the superintendent of the school district.

## **“MAKE-UP” WORK FOR STUDENTS WHO WERE ABSENT**

Students who are absent from school for any of the excused reasons stated under “Excused Absences,” including suspension, shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests. Upon satisfactory completion, the student shall be given full credit for completed work. Local school procedures will guide, pursuant to the regulations of APS, what assignments the student shall make-up and in what period of time the student shall complete such assignments. The tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the absence. (Education Code §48205)

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Independent Study is an instructional strategy, whether, that responds to a student's individual needs. It is an alternative to classroom instruction consistent with Aspire's course of study and is not an alternative curriculum.

Acceptable reasons for requesting Independent Study include excused or warranted absence from school for five (5) or more consecutive school days. Written requests for independent study should be directed to the principal at least two weeks before the anticipated departure.

Permission to grant Independent Study is up to the discretion of the principal. If the student has been on Independent Study before and has not completed the work as assigned, it is up to the Administrator Principal as to whether he she should be allowed to participate in the program again. No student with exceptional needs may participate in Independent Study unless the Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifically provides for participation.

## **GENERAL TARDINESS**

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

Individual schools shall create and publish procedures to govern the admission of students that are tardy to school. Generally, tardy students are required to obtain a “Tardy Pass” from the school office before proceeding to the classroom. Tardy students entering the classroom late, without documentation, shall be directed to return to the office to check-in and obtain the admission documents in accordance with local school attendance procedures.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

Any student who has been absent from school (excused or unexcused) for 10% or more of the total days of attendance for that school year may be required by the school principal to provide an official medical or judicial verification in order to excuse an absence. Students with such an excess of absences will be notified in writing of the official verification requirement.

**Any teacher may change the grade of a student who has accrued 10 unexcused absences per semester to a failing grade for their courses at the marking period (grade of “F” or “NC”). (Education Code §49067)**

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

## **WITHDRAWAL DUE TO EXCESSIVE UNVERIFIED ABSENCES (AWOL)**

In rare circumstances, students will be disenrolled from an Aspire school for multiple consecutive days without attempting to notify the school of the absences or without responding to school inquiries (phone, fax, and mail) about the student absence.

## **TRUANCY**

A student is considered truant when the student is:

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

The parent and/or guardian of a student classified as truant shall be notified by letter containing the following information and requesting a conference with the parent, student, teacher, and principal: [Education Code §48260.5]

1. The student is truant.
2. The parent and/or guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school.
3. The parent and/or guardian who fails to meet this obligation may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution pursuant to Education Code 48260 et seq.
4. The availability of alternative educational programs in the local district.
5. The right of the parent and/or guardian to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss the solution to the student's truancy.
6. That the student may be assigned, with or without parent consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including, but not limited to, Weekend Makeup School.
7. A conference is requested with the parent and/or guardian and student.

## **ATTENDANCE REVIEW**

The school's local School Attendance Review Team (SART) and the Aspire School Attendance Review Board (SARB) will work with families and students to resolve attendance and truancy problems. If, after repeated interventions, the student continues to be truant and does not follow the SART or SARB's directives, the matter may be referred to the District Attorney for prosecution and other appropriate action may be taken by the school up to, and including, a recommendation for disenrollment for the following academic year. A registered delivery confirmation letter must be sent to the parent or guardian informing them of this action. [Education Code §48260, 48261, 48262]

### **Local School's Student Attendance Review Team (SART)**

The school's Student Attendance Review Team (SART) will hold a hearing with the parent and/or guardian and truant student to resolve attendance and truancy problems. At that time if the student continues to be truant and does not follow the school's SART directive, the matter will be referred to Aspire's Student Attendance Review Board. A Certified Delivery Confirmation letter will be sent to the parent and/or guardian informing them of this action. [Education Code 48260, 48261, 48262]

The school's SART will consist of:

- The principal;
- The student's teacher from the school in which the student is enrolled; and
- Other relevant members, including: another Aspire administrator, an Aspire Home Office representative, other teachers or staff as appropriate, counselor, etc.

### **Aspire's Student Attendance Review Board (APS SARB)**

The Aspire SARB will hold a hearing with the parent and/or guardian and truant student to resolve attendance and truancy problems. At that time if the student continues to be truant and does not follow the APS SARB's directive, the matter may be referred to the District Attorney for prosecution and other appropriate action may be taken by the school up to, and including, a recommendation for disenrollment for the following academic year. A certified delivery confirmation letter will be sent to the parent or guardian informing them of this action. (Education Code 48260, 48261, 48262)

The APS SARB will consist of:

- The school principal or their administrative designee;

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

## NOTIFICATIONS OF TRUANCY

### First Notification of Truancy or Excessive Absences

- Letter #1 sent regular and registered delivery confirmation mail when a student has accrued **three (3) truancy events**.
- Student may be assigned, with or without parent consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including, but not limited to, Weekend Makeup School.

### Second Notification of Truancy or Excessive Absences

- Letter #2 sent regular and registered delivery confirmation mail.
- A student must be notified a **second time** once they have accrued at least **six (6) truancy events**.
- Student may be assigned, with or without parent consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including Weekend Makeup School.

### Notification of Determination as an Habitual Truant

- Letter #3 sent regular and registered delivery confirmation mail. In addition, parent may be asked to sign the letter in person
- A student must be notified a **third time** once they have accrued a **seventh (7) truancy event**. Student is identified as a **Habitual Truant**.
- Hold SART meeting with student, parent, teacher advisor, and Principal. If not already on file, an Attendance Contract must be signed at this meeting.
- Student will be assigned, with or without parent consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including, but not limited to, Weekend Makeup School.
- If the parent guardian fails to respond in 10 days or does not attend the scheduled conference, the matter may be referred to the Aspire SARB.

### Notification of Continued Truancy – Referral to Aspire SARB

- Letter #4 sent regular and registered delivery confirmation mail from the Regional Office. In addition, a parent may be asked to sign the letter in person.
- A student must be notified a **fourth time** once they have reached an **eighth (8) truancy event**.
- Principal refers student to Aspire SARB with required attachments.
- Student will be assigned, with or without parent consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including Weekend Makeup School.
- If the parent and/or guardian fails to respond in 10 days or attend the scheduled conference, the matter may be referred to the District Attorney's office and other appropriate actions, including a recommendation for disenrollment upon the accrual of additional truancy events.

## SATURDAY ATTENDANCE MAKEUP SCHOOL

In an effort to respond to the problems of student absences, a weekend "makeup" school program may operate to allow the students the opportunity to voluntarily participate as a means of making up missed instructional time. Weekend Makeup School does not remove absences from the student's record. Students classified as truant may be assigned without parental permission. Parental permission shall be obtained for all non-truant students.

### Assignment to Weekend "Makeup" School

Assignment of students to weekend "makeup" school (WMS) would be predicated on the following criteria:

- (1) A student who has been labeled as truant may be assigned to WMS without parental permission.
- (2) A student who has a recorded absences may attend the WMS with parental permission

As long as the WMS does not last more than 240 minutes and students are dismissed by 12 noon in order for them to be able to go home for lunch, then the school is not obligated to offer breakfast or lunch.

## **CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT**

### **NOTICE OF REGULATIONS**

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

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT CYCLE**

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

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

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

### **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATION GUIDELINES**

Students must remember that they are responsible for their own actions and will have to abide by the consequences, both positive and negative, of those actions. Students will be held accountable for their behavior in school and during any school sponsored activity. The staff will be responsible for positive reinforcement, consistency, and modeling appropriate behavior. Students will learn to be effective decision makers and problem solvers who demonstrate elements of self-direction, responsibility, and self-discipline. This entire process is built on respect with every adult and student viewed as a person who has dignity and worth as an individual.

Each school will be a safe and orderly place for our students to receive a quality education. Students, parents, and school staff must share equal responsibility for creating the best possible educational setting. Open, honest communication with students, parents, and school staff is the best way to achieve this goal.

In order to reach the goals and objectives of this school, you are expected to:

- **BE RESPONSIBLE, BE RESPECTFUL, AND BE SAFE** by carrying yourself with respect and showing respect to others.
- **ABIDE** by all Federal, State, County, and City Laws.
- **ABSTAIN** from the possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of drugs (illegal or prescription) or alcohol.
- **REFRAIN** from the possession, use, or distribution of tobacco products or cigarettes.
- **DESIST** from the possession or use of firearms, weapons, explosives, fireworks, or any other item capable of harming any person or property (or any items that could create the impression of such harm).
- **KEEP AWAY** from gang related activities, such as "throwing signs" and group intimidation or gang affiliation.

- MAINTAIN A PEACEFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT by avoiding fighting, horsing around, hitting, loud noise, or threats towards any person.
- PROTECT SCHOOL PROPERTY by not wasting, damaging, defacing, or destroying any school property or property belonging to another person. Graffiti is prohibited. Don't destroy or write on school buildings, grounds, or property.
- RESPECT THE LEARNING SPACE by not littering on school property and keeping food, drinks, and gum out of classrooms and hallways. Eat only in approved areas and have only water in classrooms.
- DESIST from carrying beeper devices and music players.
- FOLLOW ADDITIONAL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES contained in the Student Family Handbook and as developed by the administration and approved by the Advisory School Council.
- FOLLOW RULES that apply to specific classes and subjects. These rules will be made known to students and parents, in writing, at the beginning of the school year.

## **SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

Each school has adopted common rules that apply across all classrooms and at all times. These common rules are:

- 1) FOLLOW DIRECTIONS OF ALL STAFF AT ALL TIMES.
- 2) LOOK PROFESSIONAL AT ALL TIMES: No sagging, headwear, sunglasses, or hoods.
- 3) USE POSITIVE LANGUAGE: No teasing, bullying, profanity, or insults.
- 4) KEEP HANDS, FEET, AND OBJECTS TO YOURSELF: No provoking or fighting.
- 5) BE PROUD AND TAKE CARE OF THE SCHOOL AND OTHER PEOPLE'S PROPERTY: No littering, gum chewing, or defacing of property. Eat only in approved areas and have only water in classrooms.

## **CLOSED CAMPUS**

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

## **SUSPENSION**

Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from class instruction for adjustment or disciplinary reasons.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion. Students who come to school during the term of their suspension or expulsion may receive further disciplinary action.

Except in cases where suspension for a first offense is warranted in accordance with law, each school site shall consider suspension from school only when other means of correction have not been successful or where the student's presence would constitute a danger to persons or property or seriously disrupt the educational process.

### Authority to Suspend

1. A teacher may suspend a student only from his/her classroom for the day of the suspension plus the following school day.
2. The Principal or his/her designee may suspend a student from class, classes or the school campus for a period not to exceed five school days.

3. The CEO or designee may extend a student's suspension pending final decision by the Aspire Administrative Panel on a recommendation for expulsion.
4. A student with an IEP being considered for expulsion may be suspended for ten (10) consecutive days pending assessment and an IEP Team meeting. The suspension may also be extended pending final decision by the Aspire Administrative Panel on a recommendation for expulsion.

### Jurisdiction

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act 1) occurred on Aspire property or at an Aspire-sponsored event; 2) is related to an Aspire school activity, and/or 3) school attendance occurring at an Aspire school or at any other school, or 3) to or from activities described in #1 or #2.

### Suspension Alternatives

As part of or instead of disciplinary action prescribed by this article, the principal of a school, the principal's designee, the superintendent of schools, or the governing board may require a pupil to perform community service on school grounds or, with written permission of the parent or guardian of the pupil, off school grounds, during the pupil's nonschool hours. For the purposes of this section, "community service" may include, but is not limited to, work performed in the community or on school grounds in the areas of outdoor beautification, community or campus betterment, and teacher, peer, or youth assistance programs. This section does not apply if a pupil has been suspended, pending expulsion, pursuant to Section 48915. However, this section applies if the recommended expulsion is not implemented or is, itself, suspended by stipulation or other administrative action. [Education Code 48900.6]

### Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion (CA Education Code)

The following information is provided in order to provide uniformity within Aspire in matters of student misconduct requiring disciplinary action. The following offenses constitute grounds for suspension and expulsion:

- a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.  
or (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 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 school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal 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) (1) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- (2) Except as provided in Section 48910, a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts enumerated in this subdivision, and this subdivision shall not constitute grounds for a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to be recommended for expulsion.
- l) Knowingly received stolen 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 school disciplinary proceeding for purposes 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 preinitiation 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. For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the following meanings:
1. "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
    - A. Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
    - B. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
    - C. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
    - D. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
  2. (A) "Electronic act" means the transmission, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
    - A. A message, text, sound, or image.
    - B. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
      - i. Posting to or creating a burn page. "Burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).

- ii. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).
  - (1) "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
  - (2) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
2. B) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) and subparagraph (A), an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
3. "Reasonable pupil" means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.
- 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 harm.

In addition to the grounds specified in Sections 48900, an Aspire student enrolled in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive, may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the CEO, CEO's designee, or the principal of the school in which the student is enrolled determines that the student has:

- Committed sexual harassment as defined in the Education Code section 212.5. [Education Code 48900.2]
- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. [Education Code 48900.3]
- Intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation, directed against any Aspire personnel or students, that are sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or students by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. [Education Code 48900.4]
- Made terroristic threats against school officials or school property. [Education Code 48900.7]
- Possessed or used any electronic signaling device that operates through the transmission or reception of radio waves, including, but not limited to, paging and signaling equipment, cell phones, pagers, game devices, lasers, laser-pointers, and music playing devices while students are on campus or attending a school-sponsored activity, or while under the supervision and control of any Aspire employee. [Education Code 48901.5 (a)]

#### Procedures in Cases Requiring Suspension

1. **Incident Investigation-** The school site administrator or teacher investigates the incident and determines whether or not it merits suspension.
2. **Determination of Length of Suspension-** The school site administrator determines the appropriate length of the suspension in conjunction with local school policy and school-specific disciplinary management plans (maximum of five consecutive school days). [Education Code 48911 (a)]

The total number of days for which a student may be suspended from school shall not exceed 20 school days in any school year. [Education Code 48903 (a)] A student who accumulates more than 20 days of suspension in a school year may be recommended for expulsion to the Aspire Board of Directors.

3. **Legal Notifications**-Prior to the suspension or expulsion of any student, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts of assault which may have violated Penal Code 245 [Education Code 48902].

The principal or designee also shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts that may involve the possession or sale of narcotics or of a controlled substance or possession of weapons or firearms in violation of Penal Code 626.9 and 626.10. [Education Code 48902].

Within one school day after a student's suspension or expulsion, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities, by telephone or other appropriate means, of any student acts which may violate Education Code 48900(c) or (d), relating to the possession, use, offering or sale of controlled substances, alcohol or intoxicants of any kind. [Education Code 48902].

When the Principal or other school official releases a student to a peace officer for the purpose of removing the student from the school premises (after the release), the Principal or other school official shall take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the student regarding the release of the minor to the officer, and regarding the place to where the minor is reportedly being taken. **Note:** The responsibility to notify the parent, guardian, or other responsible relative concerning the release of a student does not apply to the release of a student who has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse. [Education Code 48906]

4. **Suspension Conference**- Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal.
5. **Notice of Suspension**- The Principal or designee must complete an Aspire Notice of Suspension form. The parent will be given written notice of the suspension using this form. The Aspire Notice of Suspension serves as written notification of the student's suspension and indicates the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school.

A copy of this form is stored in the OnCourse discipline system– suspension notices should not be placed in the student's cumulative file.

### Appeals Process

A student or the student's parents/guardians may appeal those disciplinary actions, other than expulsion, imposed upon a student for his/her school related offenses.

- Appeals must be made first in writing at the school level, and should be directed to the principal. The principal or principal's designee will attempt to resolve the appeal with a written response within ten (10) school days.
- After appeal at the school level, if further appeal is desired, the appeal should be made to the Aspire Home Office and should be directed to the CEO or designee (Regional Manager of Student Services) for resolution with a written response within fifteen (15) school days.
- After appeal at the Aspire administrative level, if further review is desired, the appeal may be forwarded to the Aspire Executive Committee for resolution with a written response within 20 school days.

If any appeal is denied, the parent may place a written rebuttal to the action in the student's file.

### **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is the involuntary removal of a student from all Aspire schools and Aspire programs for acts of specified misconduct.

Except for single acts of a grave nature [enumerated in Education Code 48915 (a) or (c)], expulsion should only be used when:

- there is a history of misconduct,
- other forms of discipline (including suspension) have failed to bring about proper conduct,
- or when the student's presence causes a continuing danger to other students.

### Authority to Expel

A student may be expelled by the Aspire Administrative Panel. The Administrative Panel will consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher or principal of the pupil nor a member of the Aspire Board of Directors. The Aspire Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed a suspendable or expellable offense.

While under expulsion, a student cannot enroll in another Aspire school without approval of the Aspire Board of Directors. At the conclusion of an expelled student's term of expulsion, a student cannot enroll in an Aspire school without approval of the Aspire Board of Directors through the readmission process.

Educational placement of an expelled student during their term of expulsion is at the discretion of the District of Residence or the authorizing district.

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AND STUDENTS WITH 504S**

### **MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION**

If a student with a disability (IDEA or Section 504 qualified) is suspended for ten or more school days (including both in and out of school suspension) or is recommended for expulsion, procedural safeguards for the student require a team to convene. In School Suspensions are not counted towards the ten days of removal if all three the following conditions apply: 1) The student can continue to progress in the general education curriculum; 2) The student receives the services listed in their IEP; and 3) The student can participate with their general education peers to the extent dictated by their IEP. The "Manifestation Determination IEP/504 Meeting" will determine whether the misconduct was directly caused by the student's disability and/or whether the IEP or 504 plan was being properly implemented. If it is determined at the meeting that the disability had no direct causal effect on the misconduct, and the IEP/504 was being properly implemented, then the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a non-disabled student

### **EXPELLABLE OFFENSES**

- **Mandatory Expulsion**

The Principal or CEO (or the CEO's designee) shall immediately suspend and shall recommend the expulsion of a student who has been determined to have committed any of the following acts at school or at school sponsored activity while under the school's jurisdiction. The Aspire Administrative Panel will also expel the student.

**Mandatory Expulsion does not require a second finding of fact.** [Education Code 48915(c)]

- Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm, unless pupil had obtained prior written permission to possess the firearm from a certificated school employee
- Brandishing a knife at another person
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery
- Possessing an explosive

- **Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion**

The Principal or CEO (or the CEO's designee) shall immediately suspend and shall recommend the expulsion of a student who has been determined to have committed any of the following acts at school or at a school sponsored activity while under the school's jurisdiction. The Aspire Administrative Panel may order the student expelled.

**Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion requires a second finding of fact.** [Education Code 48915(a)]

- Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense [Ed. Code 48900(a)].

- Possession of any knife as defined in Education Code 48915(g), explosive or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student
- Unlawful possession of any controlled substance, as listed in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, except for the first offense for the possession of not more than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana, other than concentrated cannabis [Ed. Code 48900(c)].
- Robbery or extortion [Ed. Code 48900(g)]
- Assault or battery upon any school employee as defined in (Penal Code 240 and 242)

**Permissive Expulsion- requires a second finding of fact**

Upon recommendation of the Principal or CEO (or the CEO's designee), the Aspire Administrative Panel may order a student expelled upon finding that the pupil, at school or at a school sponsored activity on or off school grounds, violated any of the suspendable acts listed under suspension.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

We are committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment of any kind. Harassment of any student or staff member by another student or staff member is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. Harassment can occur any time during school hours or during school related activities. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

### Verbal Harassment

Any written, verbal language or physical gesture directed at a staff member or student that is insolent, demeaning, abusive, implicitly or explicitly implied as a threat of bodily harm is totally unacceptable and shall be deemed harassment and will be dealt with as such.

### Cyber Harassment

Any written language, video or pictures directed at a staff member or student that is insolent, demeaning, abusive, implicitly or explicitly implied as a threat of bodily harm is totally unacceptable and shall be deemed harassment and will be dealt with as such. This includes social networking websites such as Snapchat, Facebook, and Twitter, etc.

### Physical Harassment

Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault deliberately impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement

### Sexual Harassment

Includes unwelcome sexual advances and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any or all of the following occurs:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic status or progress.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

It is the responsibility of the school to:

1. Implement this policy through regular meetings with all staff, ensuring that they understand the policy and its importance;
2. Make all staff, students, and parents aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement;
3. Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile or offensive school environment;

4. Establish practices designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation, or harassment.

It is the responsibility of the student to:

1. Conduct herself/himself in a manner which contributes to a positive school environment;
2. Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, or harassing;
3. Consider immediately informing anyone harassing him/her that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
4. Report all incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Principal;
5. If informed he she is perceived as engaging in discriminatory, intimidating, harassing or unwelcome conduct, to discontinue that conduct immediately.

### Transgender Harassment

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

- The right to privacy in that no school staff will share a student's personal information with other students.
- The right to openly discuss and express their gender identity and expression, and to decide when, with whom, and how much information to share.
- All official school records must maintain the student's name and gender assigned at birth unless a legal court document is provided to the school.
- Students will be referred to by their name of preference in unofficial records and upon completion of the Gender Equity Form (provided upon request). Parents may request students be enrolled under their preferred name and gender.
- Staff and students will strive to properly address students with their preferred name and appropriate gender-based pronoun in all communication. Persistent failure to consistently refer to the student will be interpreted as denial of a student's gender identity and a form of harassment.
- All students may use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender identity at school. Any student may use a gender neutral bathroom as well.
- If classes are gender specific, students will be placed in the section that corresponds to their gender identity.
- Participation in athletics will be governed by the rules and policies set forth in sponsoring organizations.
- Participation in all clubs and activities will be open to all students.
- Dress code is gender-neutral and transgender students may dress in accordance with their gender identity.
- Bullying related to transgender identity will be quickly addressed and is considered a violation of EC 48900.r described above

### **SEARCHES**

A student's attire, personal property, vehicle or school property, including books, desks and school lockers, may be searched by a principal or a principal designee who has reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal items or illegally obtained items. These may include illegal substances, drug paraphernalia, weapons or other objects or substances which may be injurious to the student or to others. **Illegally possessed items shall be confiscated and may be turned over to the police.**

## **POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OR DANGEROUS OBJECTS**

It is a violation of state law and Aspire Public School policies and regulations for any person to carry a firearm, weapon, or other dangerous object on school premises, school provided transportation or areas of other facilities being used for school activities.

Student in possession of any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object will be suspended and possibly recommended for expulsion. State law mandates expulsion for students who knowingly possess a firearm or brandish a knife at another person.

## **DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO FREE:**

Aspire Public Schools recognizes the need for a Drug free, Alcohol free and Tobacco free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all Aspire buildings, facilities and vehicles. Aspire Public Schools support abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs for all students in order that their development can reach full intellectual, emotional, social, and physical potentials. Students are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, a recommendation for expulsion.

Students found using or in possession of controlled substances may be suspended. Students found selling controlled substances will be recommended for expulsion.

## **OTHER PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Students are not allowed to bring any games, toys, or trading cards to school for use during the school day (including break and lunch). Cell phones, MP3 players, personal handheld devices are also subject to be taken away. Prohibited items will be returned only to a parent and/or guardian. Repeated offences will result in items being taken away and not returned until the end of the school year.

## **DRESS CODE**

Learning deserves an environment of respect and freedom from distraction. Aspire Board policy requires that all students enrolled in Aspire Public Schools comply with the school's uniform policy. Students who are out of uniform will be subject to disciplinary action. All uniforms should be marked with the student's name. Uniforms (including shoes) are to be clean, maintained, appropriately sized, and worn as they are designed to be worn. The uniform reflects a positive pride in self and school.

### Uniform Policy

The purpose of uniform dress at the school is:

- To focus students on school as a professional workplace
- To focus students away from clothing as a competition
- To symbolize our united effort on the road to college
- To develop and enhance a sense of school pride
- To enhance school safety

Outer garments must be appropriate for the comfort and normal activities of students while in school. All items must be worn in traditional and appropriate fashion. A top must cover a student's chest and midriff. Bottoms must cover a student's hips and buttocks. All clothing must be worn in the student's appropriate size.

Clothing must be in good condition and cannot be bleached, stained, ripped, torn, frayed, etc. If a color or item of clothing becomes a safety issue or a distraction from learning, the student may be asked to remove the article, or substitute with something more appropriate. This includes accessories such as shoes, shoelaces, hats, scrunchies, etc. We reserve the right to update the dress code as needed at any time and provide a copy to families, students, and staff.

### Casual/Free Dress Days

"Casual Dress" means non-uniform; however, students wishing to remain in uniform on non-uniform days may do so. Dress may be casual, but should still adhere to the Dress Code policy and reflect personal and school pride. Clothing should be neat, clean, un-torn, and appropriate for school. Any student in

non-uniform must ensure that the choice of dress covers at least as much of the body as would the uniform. Students whose clothing is inappropriate may be sent home for the remainder of the day. The administration reserves the right to determine which clothing is inappropriate.

## **SAFETY BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL**

For the safety of students, parents or guardians are not to drop students off, nor are students to arrive at school prior to 30 minutes before the start of school, unless the student is involved in a regular school activity, meeting, or community program. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to arrange to have their student leave or be picked up right after school, unless the student is involved in a regular school activity, meeting, or community program or is staying at the request of school personnel. In case of emergency, all students should go directly to the school office at any time before or after school.

Students who cannot comply with these requirements are placing all those at the school at risk by disregarding safety considerations. Students placing themselves or others at risk by violating the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion.

## **TELEPHONES**

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

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

## **HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMICS**

### **Graduation Requirements**

Students wishing to earn a high school diploma from an Aspire school shall successfully complete course work within a course of study in alignment with the UC/CSU a-g program and earn the designated number of a-g credits outlined below. In some cases such as UC validation, college credits, etc., Aspire graduation requirements exceed the UC/CSU a-g program so that students are competitive for private college admissions and scholarships.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Credits Required</b>	<b>Comments</b>
A. History/Social Sciences	30	1 year of World History, 1 year of US History, 1 semester each of US Government & Economics. US Government and Economics are CA State requirements and do not need to be UC a-g approved courses.
B. English	40	Emphasis in Literature & Composition.
C. Mathematics	30	Courses must be taken in grades 9-12 Recommended sequence: Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Geometry is required. UC validation rules are in effect but 30 credits must still be earned. For the Class of 2017, total required high school credits is 20; this exception is in place because most students in this class took Alg 1 at their Aspire middle school. 4 years recommended.
D. Laboratory Science	20	In at least two areas: physical and biological science; biology is required. 3 years recommended.
E. World Languages	20	Courses must be taken in grades 9-12. Twenty credits must be earned in the same language. UC validation rules are in effect but 20 credits must still be earned.
F. Visual & Performing Art	10	The 10 credits must be in the same form of art in a year-long sequence taken in the correct order, or a semester block covering a year's worth of credit.
G. Electives	10	Courses can be an additional year in any of the a-g courses listed above or can be an a-g approved "g" elective.

Other Academic Electives	55	Courses can be additional years in any of the a-g courses listed above, labs which extend a-g courses, academic support courses, non a-g courses which are academic in nature, and additional Advisory course work. <b><i>Courses such as PE and other non-academic courses do not satisfy this requirement.</i></b>
Technology	5	May waive by juried assessment; if waived, credits substituted by another college preparatory elective.
Advisory	20	Students must enroll in and pass advisory <b>every semester, every year.</b> Schools will vary in offering half or full courses; credits taken beyond the required credits will count for electives. Advisory credit can be earned for such courses as College Success Seminar and Senior Mentorship and Leadership.
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>Credit is earned for grades of C- or higher only. Courses that offer credit in multiple areas (i.e., tech and UC elective) do not count more than once toward the 240-credit requirement</b>

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

Requirement	Comments
Exhibitions	Students must successfully complete an exhibition in each grade level: 9, 10, 11 and 12
College Credits	Students must take at least 5 college courses, for a total of at least 15 college credits. College units may be equivalent to 50 or more high school credits and may be used to satisfy the Other Academic Elective or a-g requirements above. At least 9 college credits must be academic in nature; the remaining 6 credits can be non-academic in nature (i.e. auto tech, wood shop, graphic design, etc.)

Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 240 instructional minutes per school day [Education Code 46144, 46146].

## CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

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

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

## COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS SUPPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the above requirements, all seniors at Aspire schools are supported, but not required, to complete the following activities during their senior year.

College Entrance Exams	Students apply for and take the prescribed college-board entrance examinations. Students who cannot afford to take these exams will receive financial assistance in order to meet this obligation.
College Applications	Students apply to at least three (3) 4-year colleges or universities (in addition to or instead of community colleges). In most cases, students are able to apply to schools that will waive application fees. In cases where this is not possible Aspire will financially assist students in meeting this obligation. This requirement is reduced to 1 for a student who applies and is accepted to 4-year college through a binding Early Decision program.
College Financial Aid	Students apply to at least one (1) scholarship and/or complete the FAFSA or Dream Act application.
College Acceptance	Students will be supported by the college counselor to ensure that all students will be accepted to a 4-year university

## GRANTING CREDIT FROM NON-ASPIRE SCHOOLS

Aspire will transfer any credits received at another high school, however, no credit will be awarded for grades below C- from an external school. If a student transferring to an Aspire school has earned below a C- in a UC/CSU a-g course required for graduation, the student will be required to enroll in additional coursework (i.e., Extended Day, Intersession and or Summer School).

Students entering an Aspire school more than 3 weeks into the grading period of a semester must make-up all missed work for each class in order to earn a semester grade or have progress grades that are a C- or higher in each course.

When transferring credits from a school using a different credit system, Aspire will evaluate the course and transfer the courses and credits into the appropriate format. (i.e., quarter to semester, trimester to semester).

## WAIVER OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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

An individual student may be granted an exemption from any Aspire course requirement provided there is a direct relationship between his/her inability\* to meet the requirement and the student's ability, including: limited course offerings, late transfer into an Aspire school, accommodations or modifications associated with IEPs or 504s, etc.

Approval of requests to waive graduation requirements is determined by a member of Aspire's Senior Leadership Team and/or Education Team.

## ASPIRE GRADING

Students earn grades based on established performance levels as described on the next page. In pursuit of our college for certain mission, students do not earn high school credits for any course in which they receive less than a C-.

When grades are given for any course of instruction, the grade given to each student shall be the grade determined by the teacher of record for the course, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence the grade shall be final (Education Code 49066a).

Teachers may make changes to grades until they have been stored in PowerSchool. After grades are stored, teachers are prohibited from changing grades without securing the approval of the school site principal, the Area Superintendent, and the Senior Director of Early College High School. All grade changes will be documented in student's cumulative folder using the official Aspire "Grade Change" form and requests for changes will only be accepted for 21 school days after the official close of the marking period. Teachers wishing to change a student's grade after grades have been stored should apply the following criteria:

- The student had extenuating circumstances that prohibited the student from completing the course on time (example: automobile accident, serious illness).
- The student did not receive adequate materials to complete the course (example: textbook)
- The grade should not be changed if the student made little or no effort to complete the assignments or solicit support during the time span of the course

The school should present available options for making up the core course to the student that has failed a graduation requirement: repeating the course, enrolling in a college class, summer school or an online course.

## **TESTING**

California students are required by state law to take multiple assessments to measure their progress and mastery of the CA adopted Common Core standards. These include the:

- CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)
- Smarter Balanced Achievement Consortium Tests in grades 3 – 8 and 11
- CA English Language Development Test (CELDT) for English Learners in K-12
- Additional benchmark and interim tests are administered for internal Aspire purposes
- Internal Reading Diagnostic Assessment

## **DROP CLASS POLICY**

Students are able to withdraw/drop classes within the first four (4) weeks of the course only for the following three reasons:

- Student has taken and received credit for same class previously.
- Student needs to take a required class in lieu of course.
- The course is not required to meet the Aspire graduation requirements.

No student will be allowed to drop a class after four (4) weeks of class unless:

- The student had extenuating circumstances that prohibited the student from completing the course on time (example: automobile accident, serious illness).
- The student did not receive adequate materials to complete the course (example: textbook)

## **RE-TAKING A CLASS FOR WHICH A PASSING GRADE WAS EARNED**

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

GRADE	4.0 POINT SCALE UNWEIGHTED	5.0 POINT SCALE WEIGHTED	DESCRIPTION
A +	4.00	5.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates exceptional progress in meeting content standards at his or her grade level and acquiring the knowledge, skills, and habits on assignments, class participation, projects, and tests to be ready to take high school college preparatory courses in that subject.</li> <li>• Produces notably superior work and receives consistently high marks on class tests.</li> <li>• Does all assigned work plus additional work.</li> <li>• Shows superior ability to learn facts, principles, and skills; applies them to new situations.</li> <li>• Demonstrates creativity and originality.</li> <li>• Assumes active, alert leadership in learning activities.</li> <li>• Is on or above grade level in classes where grade level standards exist. Shows capabilities in critical thinking related to the subject.</li> </ul>
A	4.00	5.00	
A-	3.67	4.67	
B+	3.33	4.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masters fundamentals thoroughly, and does above average daily work; receives consistently above-average marks on class tests.</li> <li>• Does all assigned work plus some additional work.</li> <li>• Shows above average ability to learn and apply facts, principles, and skills.</li> <li>• Does some independent work, showing initiative and originality.</li> <li>• Assumes active, alert role of follower, and shows some leadership in learning activities.</li> </ul>
B	3.00	4.00	
B-	2.67	3.67	
C+	2.33	3.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows satisfactory grasp of fundamentals and receives consistently average marks on class tests.</li> <li>• Does assigned work, and usually makes up work missed.</li> <li>• Shows average ability to learn and apply facts, principals, and skills.</li> <li>• Shows average ability in critical thinking, and some originality.</li> <li>• Follows class activities and makes some contribution.</li> </ul>
C	2.00	3.00	
C-	1.67	2.67	
D+	0.00	0.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student demonstrates inconsistent progress in meeting content standards at his or her grade level and acquiring the knowledge, skills, and habits on assignments, class participation, projects, and tests to be ready to take high school college preparatory courses in that subject</li> <li>• Shows below average growth in understanding of the subject.</li> <li>• Receives consistently below-average marks on tests.</li> <li>• Does less than the average amount of assigned work, and seldom makes up work missed.</li> <li>• Shows below-average ability or initiative in learning and applying facts, principals, and skills.</li> <li>• Participates inadequately or ineffectively in learning activities.</li> <li>• Shows below average ability or initiative in critical thinking and creativity.</li> </ul>
D			
D-			
F			

## WEIGHTED SCALING

For the Aspire weighted 9-12 GPA, only for grades of C- or better, Aspire will grant the weighted scale for UC-approved honors courses, AP courses, IB courses, and college and community college academic courses that are not remedial in nature and that are taken during high school. For non-Aspire GPAs, weighting is determined by the organization calculating the GPA (UC, CSU, Cal Grant, etc.).

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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

### Consequences for Violating Academic Integrity

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

## INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

All instructional materials, including teacher’s manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any applicable (instructional) program shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of students [20 USC 1232h(a)].

## TEXT BOOKS

Students are responsible for all books and school materials issued to them. All textbooks are to be protected with sturdy book covers, no contact (adhesive) or other permanent book covers allowed. Students will be fined for unusual wear or damage to books. Students will be charged a replacement fee for all lost books or other school materials, including library books.

## REQUIRED RESTITUTION

Student grades, diplomas, and transcripts may be withheld from students and parents or guardians when a student has damaged, destroyed, or not returned loaned property of the school and restitution has not been made. The records are withheld from the student and parent and/or guardian, but will not be withheld from a requesting school.

## STUDENT LIFE

### Activities

**Students must maintain an overall grade point average (G.P.A) of at least of 2.0 in all course work attempted and or be passing all classes in order to participate in any co-curricular activity.** Activity & Athletic eligibility are discussed fully in Aspire Board Policies and Administrative Regulations (§6145.2). A co-curricular activity is defined as a program that may be associated with the curriculum in a regular classroom that meets one of the following criteria:

- The program is supervised or financed by the school.
- Students participating in the program represent the school.
- The program includes both preparation for and performance before an audience or spectators.

In essence, for a student to be eligible for activities:

- The student is currently enrolled in **at least** 30 semester credits of academic school work, **AND**
- The student has accrued the equivalent of at least 25 semester credits of academic work at the completion of the most recent grading period, **AND**

- The student is maintaining minimum progress toward meeting the high school graduation requirements as prescribed by Aspire’s Board of Directors; AND
- The student has maintained, during the previous quarter at least a 2.0 GPA (on a 4.0 GPA scale – *inclusive* of any Community College Credits) in all enrolled courses.

### Athletics

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

1. Athletes must meet or exceed the Aspire Eligibility requirements.
2. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 for the previous grading period to remain eligible. In accordance with CIF, students who fall below 2.0 may be placed on probation for one quarter. Additionally, athletes must meet the Aspire eligibility requirements.
3. Students must exhibit satisfactory citizenship and conduct on and off the field, which includes not having four or more referrals.
4. Students must observe all regulations outlined in the current edition of the CIF Blue Book.
5. Students must pass a physical examination given by a medical doctor.
6. Students may provide evidence of their own personal insurance, but are not required to have personal insurance. The Aspire Public Schools liability insurance provides limited coverage so that all students may participate in athletic programs.

### School Lunches

In addition to our regular food service program, students may be eligible for the no-cost or reduced lunch program. Those students should complete a new application during the first week of school each year. See the cafeteria manager or office for the application form. Students must present their student I.D. in order to obtain lunch.

### Employment of Students - Work Permit

While school and preparation for university must always be a student’s first priority, students, over the age of 14, are encouraged to consider employment to enhance their academic portfolio, to prepare for university, and to gain valuable life skills and experiences. In order for a minor (anyone under the age of 18) to work, he/she must obtain a Work Permit from the school.

In order for a student to be eligible to obtain a work permit, the student must:

- a. maintain a minimum progress toward meeting the high school graduation requirements as prescribed by Aspire's Board of Directors policy.
- b. maintain, during the previous grading period (by quarter), at least a 2.0 GPA.
- c. not receive a failing mark in any core academic subject the previous grading period (by quarter).

Any student wishing to seek employment is encouraged to meet with the Dean of Students or Academic Counselor to discuss the California legal requirements, eligibility requirements, and procedures outlined below. State law places restrictions on the amount of time minors may work and requires that it not interfere with their academic progress. In accordance with Aspire Public Schools Administrative Regulations and CA Education Code 49164 - “The CEO or designee shall revoke a student's work permit whenever he/she determines that employment is impairing the student's health or education, that any provision or condition of the permit is being violated, or that the student is performing work in violation of law.” Specific details may be found on the following websites or by talking with your school dean or counselor:

- Information on Minors and Employment , (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DLSE-CL.htm>)
- Division of Labor Standards Summary Chart, (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/MinorsSummaryCharts.pdf>)

- Child Labor Laws 2013, (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/ChildLaborLawPamphlet.pdf>) Work Permits FAQ, (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/we/wpfaq.asp>)

## **EXPANDED LEARNING/AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Aspire Public Schools’ expanded learning program during afterschool hours provides our students with additional academic supports and access to enrichment activities such as music, art, sports, and other club extracurricular activities. Academic supports focus on English Language Arts and Math instruction for students performing below grade level, as well as daily homework assistance and college readiness supports for older students. Enrichment activities are designed to foster creativity, teamwork and physical activity, while reinforcing key academic skills and giving students opportunities to explore their interests and talents – and have fun.

### *Alignment with the School Day*

All aspects of our expanded learning programming are tightly aligned with the school day. Students are expected to follow Aspire Public Schools’ student Code of Conduct and all school behavior rules and expectations apply during afterschool time. In addition, expanded learning program staff work closely with teachers to target instruction to meet your student’s learning and development needs.

### *Registration and Enrollment*

The program is open to all students. However, funding limitations may restrict the number of students the program can serve. When more students wish to enroll than the program can accommodate, priority for enrollment will be given to students with greatest academic need based on assessment data along with teacher or administrator referrals. Please refer to the Expanded Learning Time Program Handbook for more information regarding your school’s program waitlist policy.

To join the program, students and families must complete a Registration Form. If accepted for enrollment, parents and students will be required to review the program’s handbook and sign an enrollment contract indicating that you agree to the program’s attendance and behavior policies.

### *Hours of Operation and Location*

The program operates every day that school is in session from the time of school dismissal until 6:00pm, including all early release school days, student led conference days, and field trip days. The program does not operate on days when school is closed, such as staff development days, school breaks and summer. All students are offered a snack or supper every day. All students must depart campus no later than 6:00pm.

Program activities take place primarily on-campus with occasional field trips and community service activities. In addition, students may be offered opportunities to participate in off-campus enrichment activities led by partner organizations. Separate permission forms will be requested for any off-campus activities.

### *Attendance*

Elementary school students are expected to attend the program every day. Middle school students may register to attend a minimum of 3 days per week or more; priority is given to middle school students who are able to attend every day. All students are expected to attend the full program each day, unless they have a permitted reason for early release (see Early Release Policy in the Expanded Learning Time Program Handbook). Partial program attendance is not allowed as it interferes with our ability to deliver quality instruction and inhibits the ability of students to fully benefit from the program offerings. Full day attendance is also a requirement of our grant funding for the program.

### *Staff*

Expanded Learning programs are led by Afterschool Directors. Our program staff includes college students and adults from our local community. All have met Aspire’s paraprofessional qualifications and many have college degrees and prior teaching experience. We provide ongoing training to staff and encourage small group instruction and individual tutoring to ensure students get the support they need. In each classroom, we must always maintain a student-staff ratio of 20:1 or lower.

### Funding and Fees

The program is supported primarily by state grants that are specifically designated for afterschool programming. These grants determine the number of students we can serve and our hours of operation. In addition, we may charge a small fee that allows us to maintain key program features and instructional quality at a time of diminishing state support for public education. Information about fee rates is available in the Expanded Learning Time Program Handbook. In no case should fees be a barrier to participation for students who are otherwise qualified to enroll. Therefore, Scholarships are available for families for whom payment of fees poses financial hardship. Scholarship Application Forms are available from the Afterschool Director or the School Office.

## **STUDENT SUPPORTS AND PROTECTIONS**

### **SECTION 504 PLAN**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, states that no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. (29 USC 794)

- Compliance monitored by the Office of Civil Rights.
- Applies to all institutions receiving federal financial assistance, such as public schools.
- Schools are obligated to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to children with a disability.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination while assuring that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. If you would like to know more about 504 Plans or other types of assistance available to your student, please contact your Principal.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Aspire Public Schools serves all students, regardless of their disability, and provides Special Education services to students who are found eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Schools are obligated to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Referral for special education eligibility and services may come from teachers, parents, agencies, appropriate professional persons, and from other members of the public. Special Education referrals will be coordinated with school site procedures for referral of students with needs that cannot be met with modifications of the regular instructional program, including referrals from student intervention teams, such as the Student Study Team (SST). A student shall be referred for special education and services after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized. [For more information on the Special Education referral process, see the section *Child Find and Special Education Notification*]

- **Parent's Procedural Safeguards:** Procedural Safeguards (also known as Parent Rights), must be given to the parents of child with a disability at a minimum (a) Upon initial referral for evaluation; (b) Upon each notification of an IEP meeting; (c) Upon reevaluation of a child; (d) in accordance with disciplinary procedures and (e) Upon receipt of a request for due process.

### **STUDENT STUDY TEAM (SST)**

The Student Study Team is an efficient and effective way to bring together all resources, human and programmatic, to support students having difficulties in regular classes. This is a concentrated solution-seeking meeting where all the needed persons, including the student and parent, are present at the same time. The SST is an expression of the school's concern for students and provides a supportive atmosphere for students to become actively involved in determining their own needs and in implementing strategies designed to help them.

## **AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE STUDENT IN KINDERGARTEN**

Kindergarten is an important place for children to develop the pre-requisite skills they need to be successful in 1st grade. If a student is struggling to develop those pre-requisite skills, we work with families to determine if students should progress or repeat kindergarten. Students will not repeat kindergarten without the agreement of parents to postpone first grade (Education Code § 48011).

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS**

This section provides general information about the counseling services at Aspire schools. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the particular requirements for counseling at a specific school nor do all Aspire schools have the capacity to provide counseling services. Please contact your child's school to determine specific protocols at your school site. Schools without a counselor cannot provide counseling services unless otherwise stipulated in an IEP or 504 document.

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

**Counseling services are not guaranteed for students.** Additionally, students referred for services may be placed on a waiting list until such time as the counseling staff has an opening. Students may be moved on the wait-list based on school discretion and applicable State and Federal laws. There is no charge for school-based counseling support. As stated above, however, school counseling resources are limited and counseling services are not guaranteed for every referral or student.

### Referral Process

Student can be referred for counseling from a variety of avenues, but the primary referral source is through school systems such as the SST, RtI or Special Education process. These referrals take priority over other referral sources. Parent referrals, self-referrals, etc. are evaluated on a case by case basis and may not result in counseling services. In some instances, students referred to the counseling team will be referred out for services and it is the responsibility of the student/parent to follow up on these referrals. Each counseling team makes referral determinations using a variety of factors, including applicable state and federal laws.

### Referrals to Outside Resources

The counseling department maintains a list of outside agencies and resources to which parents and students can be referred for services as necessary. Parents who are interested in receiving this list should contact the school's counseling department or main office. This list reflects agencies and resources in the geographic area of the school and does not imply an endorsement of these agencies and/or resources by the school or Aspire.

### Crisis

Social-emotional crisis includes, but is not limited to, times when a student discloses or expresses homicidal or suicidal ideation, desire to hurt self or others (including self-injury) and instances of child abuse. In these instances, Aspire schools follow a crisis protocol that may end with a student being evaluated by county mental health or other crisis response agency. Aspire Public Schools will make every effort to contact parents during crisis as appropriate, but must follow crisis protocols to protect the safety of all students and staff. Please contact the Director of Student and Family Support if you have questions or concerns about crisis response at 510-434-5000.

### Consent and Confidentiality

Aspire complies with state and federal laws around consent and confidentiality for school-based counseling services. In California, students ages 12 and over hold rights to their counseling records. Please contact the school counselor if you have questions or concerns about consent for counseling and confidentiality of the counseling record.

### Alignment with the School Day

Counselors make every effort to pull students at times that are convenient for their students and are aligned with the academic needs of the student.

### Termination of Services

As stated above, school-based counseling services are not guaranteed. Services may be ended for a variety of reasons and with reasonable notice to parents/students. In these instances, referrals can be given, but the responsibility to follow up on these referrals falls with the parent/student. Additionally, students who repeatedly miss counseling service appointments for any reason may be dropped from school-based counseling services permanently. Counseling services are only available during the regular school calendar.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

All students must have an emergency information card filled out and signed by the parent or guardian at the beginning of each school year. This card delineates what care the parent desires for their child in the event of an emergency, along with noting the current medical and emergency information.

## **CONTAGIOUS OR INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND HEAD LICE**

A child may be sent home, if for a good reason, he or she is believed to be suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease. The child shall not be permitted to return until the school authority is satisfied that any contagious or infectious disease does not exist.

Head lice, while a significant social problem, do not transmit disease to humans. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to routinely screen students at home. If lice are seen on a child at school the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be called to pick up the child at the end of the school day and be given a copy of the brochure "A Parent's Guide to Head Lice." At home, all members of the family should be checked for head lice. This policy allows parent(s)/guardian(s) to treat the child overnight. The day following treatment, the child should be re-examined and admitted to class. If the child still has lice, then the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted.

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

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

## **CHILDFIND AND SPECIAL EDUCATION NOTIFICATION**

Many programs for the children in Aspire Public Schools are provided at no cost to you. Our schools offer special education programs and services such as specialized instruction, behavioral services, speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, and other special education related services. Developmental screening and or comprehensive assessments for children who are suspected of having a disability which could adversely affect their educational development are available at no cost to you.

A student must be evaluated and identified as having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to be eligible for special education programs and related services. Assessment is the process to determine a student's needs and eligibility for an Individualized Education Plan. No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs. Assessments must address all areas related to the suspected disability

and be conducted by a multi-disciplinary team, including the parent. The evaluation will result in a written report consistent with *California Education Code Section 56327*. Whenever a parent provides a request for assessment, the LEA has 15 days to review the request and respond in writing. If the LEA determines that assessment is appropriate, an assessment plan will be developed and a copy given to the parents. Parents have 15 days to respond to the proposed assessment plan. The assessment will begin upon receipt of parent's written consent to Individual Assessment Plan. The assessment must be completed and the IEP meeting held within 60 days of receipt of parent's written consent. If there is denial of the request for assessment, prior written notice will be provided to the parents, consistent with *Title 34, CFR Section 300.503*, providing *rationale* for denial of the request.

If any Aspire Public Schools family has questions or concerns with regard to an enrolled student receiving special education services, you have the right to request assistance in addition to copies of policies, procedures, evaluations, plans and reports by contacting the Aspire Special Education office. Appointments or further information can be obtained by contacting the Aspire Special Education office at 510-434-5000 or by requesting information from your local school principal.

## **MCKINNEY-VENTO REAUTHORIZATION OF 2002**

As required by Federal law (McKinney-Vento), Aspire Public Schools ensures that homeless children and youth are provided equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. For additional information concerning services for homeless children and youth, please contact the Regional Student Service Manager. Contact information for the RSSM may be obtained through your school's main office.

## **FAMILY LIFE/HIV/AIDS EDUCATION**

The Family Life Education program is designed to help students understand the biological, psychological, social, moral, and ethical aspects of human sexuality. The program provides information on human growth and development, physical and emotional changes that occur during adolescence, and responsibility.

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

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION**

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

### **VISITOR POLICY**

Guests are welcome! **Any visitor entering the school grounds must register in the Office, identify themselves and the nature of their business, and receive a Visitor's Pass.**

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit school sites and classrooms to observe and support the work of the schools. This is one of the essential vehicles for a school-parent partnership. Each school has various ways to engage with parents and make them comfortable in the school including Saturday Schools, Advisory School councils, volunteer opportunities and site specific events.

All visitors to a school site must report to the office when entering and receive authorization to visit elsewhere in the school site. A principal or designee may direct a visitor to leave the school and not return for a designated time if it is determined that the visitor has interfered with the good order or peaceful conduct of the school. Additionally, no electronic listening or recording devices may be used in the classroom without the prior consent of the teacher and principal of the school.

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

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers help enrich students' education and provide extra assistance for teachers and school staff. Potential volunteers are urged to contact the school if they can offer time or services to help with any part of the school program. All visitors, including volunteers, must sign in at the front desk and receive a "Visitor Badge" as identification. They must also sign out when leaving the premises. This is for the safety of the children and staff as well as the visitor in case of an emergency. For the safety of all students, all volunteers must have:

- A negative TB test on file in the school office within the past four years before starting to work with students.
- A background check, if working with students in unsupervised settings. Unsupervised volunteers who need to be fingerprinted include: coaches, after school program staff, business mentors, tutors, and chaperones on field trips – anyone who is working with a student(s) without supervision. The results of the background check are **confidential** and will not be discussed with other staff members and or parents.

### Volunteer Drivers

- The driver must have a valid California Driver's License.
- The parent or adult driver must have a current "**Driver's Liability Insurance Statement**" on file in the school office with the following minimum coverage: \$15,000 per person, \$30,000 per occurrence, \$5,000 property damage (15 30 5).
- Vehicles for transporting children must be in a safe and operable condition. The number of passengers in the vehicle must not exceed the number of seat belts. Cars with passenger side air bags **cannot** have a student occupying that space.
- Children weighing less than 40 pounds must ride in a car seat with seat belt.
- Drivers must have clear driving records. Drivers who have been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony drunk driving will not be authorized to drive students. Drivers cited with more than one moving violation within the past year will not be authorized to drive students.
- The sponsoring program will pay bridge tolls and admissions. No mileage will be paid to parents.

## **FAMILY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **NOTICE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION:**

Directory information is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Aspire may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised Aspire to the contrary in accordance with Aspire procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Aspire to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

Additionally, federal laws require Aspire Public Schools, because we receive assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents have advised their local schools that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want Aspire to disclose any or all of types of information designated as directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Aspire in writing.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Aspire Public Schools (APS) does not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code.

Students, parents, guardians, or any other individuals having questions or concerns regarding Aspire’s “Discrimination Harassment Policy” or who wish to file a discrimination or harassment complaint should complete Aspire’s “Community Complaint Form”, and should contact the Principal at the school or the Chief Operating Officer of Aspire at (510) 434-5000. More information on Aspire’s Community Complaint and Discrimination Harassment procedures is included later in this handbook.

## **ASPIRE STUDENT DATA PRIVACY POLICY**

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

- Aspire limits the collection, usage, and sharing of student data to only those data points which are required by law or useful in improving student outcomes.
- Student data is only made available to parties that have an immediate, legitimate need to access the data.
- Aspire ensures that both our internal systems and the systems of our vendors use proper technological safeguards to protect student data and are legally bound to prevent the use of student data for marketing or sales purposes.
- When Aspire ends our relationship with a student data vendor, we ensure that the data is removed from their systems.
- We abide by all state and federal student data regulatory laws including:
  - Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)
  - Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
  - Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

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

## **USDA CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND NOTIFICATION**

You have the right under Federal law to request information specific to teacher qualifications. In addition, *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) places an emphasis on the parents' right to know about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Parents have the right to request the following information about the instructional staff working with their child:

- (1) Has the teacher met state certification for the grades and subjects that he or she is teaching?
- (2) Is the teacher working with an emergency or conditional certificate?
- (3) What was the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held?
- (4) What are the qualifications of the para-educators working with the child?

Aspire Public Schools is committed to providing quality instruction for all students. It does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. If you would like to receive any of the information listed above, please contact the Aspire Human Resources department at 510-434-5000.

## **PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**

The public is invited to attend Aspire Public Schools public meetings. If you require any reasonable accommodation to enable you to attend and or participate, please contact the Aspire Home Office 510-434-5000, 48 hours prior to the meeting.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS TO PRIVACY ACT**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School principal 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 record that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal to clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing with the Aspire Director of Student Services regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Aspire Board of Directors; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Student records shall be released to another school district where the student has enrolled or intends to enroll, upon official request from that district. At the time of transfer of records, the parent/guardian, custodian or adult-age student may receive a copy of the records at his her expense (\$0.25 per page), if requested, and shall have an opportunity to challenge the contents of the records.
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

## **UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Aspire makes every effort to respond to parent concerns and complaints in a manner that, whenever possible, rebuilds the relationship between the family and the school site. We acknowledge that often relationships require additional support to be repaired and our Regional Offices may also engage with families in working through school site concerns. In the event that a parent is not satisfied with the disposition of their concern at the school and/or regional office level the following information details the process by which Aspire supports families in remedying those complaints.

The Board of Directors of Aspire Public Schools (“Aspire”) recognizes that Aspire is responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs.

Aspire shall follow uniform complaint procedures when addressing complaints alleging unlawful discrimination based on age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability in any program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance. Uniform complaint procedures shall also be used when addressing complaints alleging failure to comply with state and/or federal laws in adult education, consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, vocational education, child care and development programs, child nutrition programs, special education programs, federal school safety planning requirements and issues related to the imposition of pupil fees.

The Board acknowledges and respects every individual’s right to privacy. Discrimination complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the facts. This includes keeping the identity of the complainant confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation or proceedings, as determined by the CEO or CEO’s designee on a case-by-case basis.

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

The Board prohibits retaliation in any form for participating in complaint procedures, including but not limited to the filing of a complaint or the reporting of instances of discrimination. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of the complainant.

The board recognizes that a neutral mediator can often suggest a compromise that is agreeable to all parties in a dispute. In accordance with uniform complaint procedures, whenever all parties to a complaint agree to try to resolve their problem through mediation, the CEO or CEO’s designee shall initiate mediation. The CEO or CEO’s designee shall ensure that mediation results are consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.

This policy shall be disseminated annually to students, employees, parents or guardians of its students, school and district advisory committees, and other interested parties.

Aspire designates General Counsel as the compliance officer. The compliance officer shall receive and investigate complaints and ensure compliance with the law. A designee appointed by General Counsel may conduct the investigation.

### **UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCESS PROCEDURES**

The following procedures shall be used to address all complaints that allege that Aspire has violated Federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs. Compliance officers shall maintain a record of each complaint as required.

- **Complaint:** A complaint shall be presented in writing by way of an Aspire Community Complaint Form and the complaint must be initiated no later than six (6) months from the date when the alleged discrimination occurred or when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, unless the CEO or CEO’s designee grants an extension of time.

- **Mediation:** Within five (5) days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer or designee shall informally discuss with the complainant the possibility of using non-binding mediation, and if the informal mediation does not resolve the problem within the parameters of the law, the compliance officer or designee shall proceed with his or her investigation of the complaint.

## **INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINT**

The compliance officer or designee shall hold an investigative meeting within ten (10) days of receiving the complaint or an unsuccessful attempt to informally mediate the complaint. The investigative meeting shall provide an opportunity for the complainant and/or his or her representative to repeat the complaint orally. The complainant and/or his or her representative shall have an opportunity to present information relevant to the complaint. Parties to the complaint may discuss the complaint and question each other or each other's witnesses.

## **RESPONSE/RESOLUTION**

An investigation shall be completed, resolved and decision rendered within sixty (60) days after receiving a request for direct intervention or an appeal request, unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of time. The complaint officer or designee shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the investigation and decision. The written report shall contain: Findings and disposition of the complaint; corrective actions (if any); rationale for such disposition; and procedures for initiating an appeal with Aspire's Student Services Office. The Area Superintendent for Student Services will complete an additional investigation and prepare and send to the complainant a written report of his or her investigation and decision. The Area Superintendent for Student Services' written report shall contain Findings and disposition of the complaint; corrective actions (if any); rationale for such disposition; and procedures for initiating an appeal within fifteen (15) days of receiving the written report to the California Department of Education or to the Achievement School District in Tennessee, as applicable. With regards to issues concerning pupil fees, if there is a finding of merit then a remedy shall be provided to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians, including reasonable efforts for full reimbursement.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

An individual may file a complaint alleging that the school is not in compliance with IDEA policies and procedures. An individual may file the complaint by contacting the Aspire Regional Office Director of Special Education, either verbally or in writing. If the complaint is made verbally, the receiving staff should request to have the complaint in writing, and assist the parent to put the complaint in writing, if needed. Within 15 calendar days of receipt of the complaint (tolled for school breaks in excess of 5 days), the parent will be contacted and provided with a copy of Special Education Parent's Procedural Safeguards. The Regional Director of Special Education will investigate the nature of the complaint by interviewing the parent, school site team and reviewing the student's special education and cumulative file. If an Individual Education Plan meeting is appropriate to address the complaint, it will be scheduled within 30 calendar days (tolled for school breaks in excess of 5 days) of receipt of the complaint.

If the complaint is not resolved by the Regional Office, the individual may contact the Senior Director of Special Education at the Aspire Home Office. The Senior Director of Special Education will review the measures taken to address the complaint by the Regional Office, and contact the parent within 5 days of receipt of their complaint (tolled for school breaks in excess of 5 days). The Senior Director of Special Education will discuss the Parent's Procedural Safeguards with the parent which include the Informal Dispute Resolution process, state complaint procedures and due process procedures, as appropriate.

## **CIVIL LAW REMEDIES**

Nothing in this policy precludes a complainant from pursuing available civil law remedies outside of Aspire's complaint procedures. Such remedies may include mediation centers, public/private interest attorneys, injunctions, restraining orders, etc. For discrimination complaints in California, however, a complainant must wait until sixty (60) days has elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the California Department of Education before pursuing civil law remedies. The moratorium does not apply to

injunctive relief and is applicable only if Aspire has appropriately, and in a timely manner, apprised the complainant of his or her right to file a complaint.

All forms may be mailed or delivered to:

In California:  
Aspire Public Schools  
ATTN: Community Complaint Officer  
1001 – 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite 100  
Oakland, CA 94606

Aspire reserves the right to modify locations for receipt of forms as necessary.



College for Certain

## COMMUNITY COMPLAINT FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening)

School Site \_\_\_\_\_

1 Specific Person (if any) you are filing a complaint against:

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Has this been discussed with him/her? Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Has the complaint been discussed with the principal? Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Has the complaint been discussed with the Aspire Regional Office? Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Complaint:** Please include all important information such as location, names, dates, who was present, and to whom it was reported. Please use additional paper if more space is needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What remedy or action do you suggest?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date received by Aspire Home Office \_\_\_\_\_



**STUDENT FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

Our signatures below indicate that we have received, read for understanding, and agree to follow the policies and guidelines found in the Student Family Handbook 2016-2017.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date