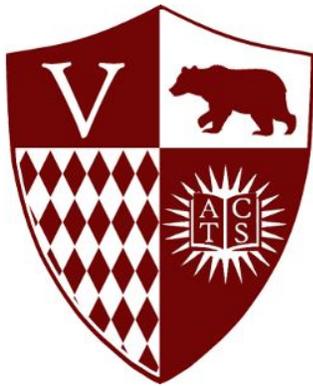


# Student and Family Handbook



**VALIENTE**  
COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

2017-18

*Leaders and Learners*

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## **Introduction: Making the Handbook Work for Valiente College Prep Families**

### ***Purpose***

The 2017-18 Valiente College Prep Student and Family Handbook is a guide to the most important policies and procedures of the school. Many of the most critical aspects of the Handbook will be reviewed with parents during the Parent Orientation and with students during their orientation. However, it is important for parents to read the Handbook in its entirety and discuss it with their student. We encourage you to ask questions throughout the year if any sections of the Handbook are unclear. Every policy and procedure was crafted with the best interest of our students in mind.

### ***Organization of Handbook***

The handbook is organized into chapters with a number of topics in each chapter. It is our intention to provide the most important topics in these chapters written in clear, concise language. A Statement of Understanding which must be signed and turned in to the school is printed on the final page.

### ***Changes to the Handbook***

Valiente College Prep's Student and Family Handbook is meant to be a useful guide to the school's operations. From time to time, policies, rules, and regulations may be changed. The Executive Director or his/her designee or the Board will provide notifications of changes and/or notice will be posted in the office of the School's facilities.

Please note that there are changes made over the summer to the handbook so when students return to our school, there may be some slight changes from prior years. Thus, using the current school year handbook is important.

## **Chapter 1: Our School**

### ***Contact Information***

8691 California Avenue, South Gate CA 90280

Phone Number: 323-744-2107

Executive Director Email: [eperez@valientecollegeprep.org](mailto:eperez@valientecollegeprep.org)

Office Hours: 7:30am to 4:00pm M-F (These are the hours that our school doors are open.)

After School Program Staff Available: 3:30-6:25pm, Program runs 3:40 to 6:25pm

Phone Hours: 7:30am to 4:00pm (These are the hours that we will be able to answer phone calls.)

### ***Mission***

The mission of Valiente College Preparatory is to educate students in grades 4-8 to lead lives of scholarship and integrity.

### **School Hours**

Opening: 7:30am

Breakfast: 7:30am-7:50am

Start of School Day: 7:50am

End of Regular School Day: 3:40pm

End of Early Release School Day (Wednesdays): 2:15pm

After School Program: Regular days: 3:40pm-6:25pm, Early Release Days: 2:15pm-6:25pm everyday

No students or visitors are permitted on campus without express permission of the Executive Director prior to 7:30am

# 2017-18 School Year Calendar

## Valiente College Preparatory Charter School 2017-18 School Year Calendar

Jul-17							Aug-17							Sep-17							
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	
						1			31	1	2	3	4	5						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	5	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	5	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31			4	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31																				

Oct-17							Nov-17							Dec-17								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4	3						1	2	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	5	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	5	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	4	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	2	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31					2	26	27	28	29	30			4	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
														31								

Jan-18							Feb-18							Mar-18								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	3				1	2	3	2					1	2	3	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	4	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	4	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	5	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	4	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				3	25	26	27	28				3	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Apr-18							May-18							Jun-18								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0			1	2	3	4	5	4						1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	5	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	5	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	5	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	5	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30						1	27	28	29	30	31			3	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

<b>July 31st - August 11 (Staff Orientation &amp; Planning)</b>
Aug 14th: First Day of School
Sept 1st: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students
Sept 4 - Labor Day
School Picture Day, September 7th
Oct 2nd: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students (Parent Conferences)
Oct 23rd: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students
Trimester 1: Aug 14-Nov 9 (Prof. Dress - Finals November 7-9)
CELDT Testing Window: Sept 12-Oct 16th
November 10 - Veteran's Day
November 22-24 Thanksgiving Break
December 18-January 2 Winter Break
January 15th, Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 16: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students
February 19th, President's Day
Trimester 2: November 13-Feb 23rd (Prof. Dress - Finals Feb 21, 22, 23)
March 5th: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students (Parent Conferences)
April 2-6 Spring Break
April 9: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students
May 7th: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students
SBAC/CAASPP Testing Window: May 9-June 1st
PFT Testing Window: May 9-June 1st
May 28th, Memorial Day
June 7: Last day of School
Trimester 3: Feb 26-June 7 (Prof. Dress - Finals May 29, 30, May 31)
June 8-12: Staff Development Day - No Classes for Students
Regular School Day
Holiday No School
Early Release Wednesday
Staff PD & Parent Conference Days
Testing Windows

### Who We Are

<b>Office</b>	323-744-2107	
<b>Administration</b>		
Executive Director	Dr. Esther Perez	eperez@valientecollegeprep.org
Operations Manager	Ms. Ashley Genie	agenie@valientecollegeprep.org
Administrative Assistant	Ms. Herlinda Hernandez	hhernandez@valientecollegeprep.org
<b>Teachers</b>		

Mrs. Kay Parker	4th Grade
Mr. Yael Jimenez Hernandez	5th/6th ELA/Humanities
Mr. Winston Chang	5th/6th Math/Science
Mr. Kevin Ng	7th Grade ELA/Humanities
Ms. Naeyon Kim	7th Grade Math/Science
Ms. Caitlin Rafferty	7th Grade ELA/Humanities & Content Lead
Ms. Bridget Carvajal	7th Grade Math/Science & Content Lead
Ashley Olvera	Resource Specialist Teacher
Ms. Gloria Garcia	Enrichment Teacher
Mr. Luis Cortes	PE Teacher
Mr. Arturo Acosta	After School Program Leader

**ACTS Values**

At the center of our culture will be the ACTS Values: Academics, Courage, Tenacity, and Service. Teachers will explicitly teach behaviors related to these values at all times, as a part of the regular academic program. Every portion of the program, including meals, classes, and enrichment activities will include activities to support the ACTS values.

Students will be evaluated on their behavior in accordance with the ACTS Values, and parents are provided with a written report of the evaluation weekly. The ACTS Report will be created by the faculty, based directly on the values statements. Students who consistently earn high scores will be entitled to special privileges and community recognition.

**Chapter 2: Attendance**

**Attendance Policy**

Students enrolled at Valiente College Prep are expected to be at school each day. The educational program offered by the school is predicated upon the presence and punctuality of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Parents must contact the school whenever a student is absent, and must do so by following the procedure below. Attendance is expected of all students enrolled at the school at dates and times which the school is in session. The resources our school receives from the State government to

provide education are directly connected to the number of students in attendance each day. Every day is essential for students to keep pace with their learning.

### ***Reporting Absences***

The primary responsibility for a student's attendance at Valiente College Prep rests with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s). Parent(s)/guardian(s) must notify the School by 8:30 a.m. on the day a student is absent unless previous notification has been given in accordance with school procedure for excused absences. When parents do not call the school, the person in charge of front desk operations will notify a student's parents, custodial parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person responsible for him/her when the student is absent from school. The parent or other responsible person shall be notified by telephone on the same day that the student is absent. Parents or other responsible persons shall provide the school with their current home and/or work telephone numbers, as well as emergency telephone numbers.

The procedure for notifying the school of an absence is as follows:

1. A parent must call Valiente College Prep to inform the school that his/her child or children will be absent from school. This phone call should take place within the first hour that School is in session.
2. If a parent fails to call the School as prescribed in the above section, Valiente College Prep personnel will call the parent to inform him/her of the student's absence.

### ***Excused Versus Unexcused***

Any day your student does not attend school is considered an absence, whether excused or unexcused. Valiente College Prep will consider an absence excused for the following five reasons with documentation:

1. Personal physical illness such as to prevent attendance at School. Absences for illness longer than two days must be verified in writing by a doctor.
2. Death in the family.
3. Observance of religious holidays.
4. Court subpoena.
5. An emergency or set of circumstances which in the judgment of the school constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence.

Emergency circumstances will be defined by the Executive Director and will be used to excuse absences on an extremely limited basis. Absences due to weather, transportation issues, parent illness, and family vacation will count as unexcused absences. Upon return to school, the student must provide to the school a written statement from a parent of the cause for absence, or the absence will be considered unexcused. The Executive Director or his/her designee reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each individual absence. Any student who, due to a medically-documented physical or mental impairment, is absent for an extended period will not be disciplined. Such students may be entitled to receive an education tailored to their individual needs or abilities as provided for under federal and/or state law.

### ***Consequences for Absences***

Included in our attendance policy are consequences for absences, both positive and negative. They are outlined below:

1. No Absences in a Trimester: The student is congratulated and recognized for exceptional attendance and commitment to their education.
2. Three Unexcused Absences: The family will receive a warning letter entitled Notice of Attendance Concern. The family must attend a mandatory school attendance meeting.
3. Five Unexcused Absences: The family will receive a warning letter entitled Notice of Habitual Absenteeism. At this point, the parent/guardian will be called to school for a mandatory meeting with the homeroom teacher & an attendance action plan will be drafted with family.
4. Seven Unexcused Absences: The family will receive a warning letter entitled Notice of Chronic Absenteeism. At this point, the parent/guardian will be called to school for a mandatory meeting with the Executive Director and an attendance action plan will be revisited with the family.
5. Nine Unexcused Absences: The family will receive a warning letter entitled Notice of Impending Truancy. The school will also notify the District of the impending Truancy and conduct a home visit with the family on a monthly basis to ensure regular student attendance.
6. Twelve Absences in a Year (any combination of excused and unexcused absences): If a student has any combination of twelve excused and unexcused absences in a year, it is considered a serious issue. At this point, the student is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade. The parent/guardian will be called to the school to meet with the Executive Director. The Executive Director reserves the right to retain any student who misses more than twelve days of school.

### ***General Policy for Tardiness and Early Dismissal***

Getting to school on time and being there for the entire day is a key to your student's success at school and in ACTS. At Valiente College Prep, the learning begins the moment students walk in the door. Students who are late miss essential instruction, disrupt the learning of other students, and risk falling behind on our rigorous curriculum. Our doors open at 7:30 a.m. each morning. Students must arrive between 7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. in order to eat breakfast. Students who are not in their classrooms at 7:50 a.m. are considered tardy. Students who leave the school before 3:40 p.m. are considered to have been dismissed early.

No excuses will be accepted for tardiness or early dismissal. There is no designation for excused or unexcused tardiness or early dismissal in the attendance system. Tardiness due to traffic, weather, transportation issues, and appointments will not excuse the attendance violation. Early dismissals related to convenience, appointments, and other similar issues will not excuse the attendance violation.

### ***Consequences for Tardiness and Early Dismissal***

The following is an outline of consequences for tardiness and early dismissal:

1. No Tardies and/or Early Dismissals in a Trimester: The student is congratulated and

recognized for exceptional attendance and commitment to their education.

2. Three Tardies and/or Early Dismissals in a School Year: The family will receive a warning letter entitled Notice of Tardiness.
3. Six Tardies and or Early Dismissals in a School Year: The family will receive a warning letter entitled Notice of Habitual Tardiness. At this point, the parent/guardian will be called to school for a mandatory meeting with the homeroom teacher and a tardiness action plan will be drafted with the family.
4. Seven or More Tardies and/or Early Dismissals in a School Years: The Executive Director will intervene in cases where attendance issues related to tardiness and/or early dismissals are disrupting the classroom environment and causing academic issues for the student. The Executive Director reserves the right to retain any student who is tardy more than seven times during the school year.

### ***Arrival and Dismissal Policies***

#### **Arrival**

1. The school officially opens to students at 7:30 a.m. each day.

#### **Dismissal**

1. The school day officially ends at 3:40 p.m. or 2:15 p.m. on Wednesday. No student will be allowed to leave school with an adult who is not his/her parent/guardian unless the guardian has submitted a signed, written note to the Office in advance which specifies the name, address, and working phone number for the adult as well as specific dates for pick-up.
2. Families must submit a release form (in August) listing the names and information for any individuals, besides parent/guardian, who regularly are authorized to pick up their student.

## Chapter 3: Dress Code

### *Dress Code Philosophy*

The purpose of the Valiente College Preparatory Charter School's dress code is to create a professional, safe, and respectful community where students can focus on learning without distractions. The dress code is in effect from the start of the school day until the end of the school day. Students are required to wear the Valiente College Prep uniform Monday-Friday, unless otherwise noted.

VCPCS dress code is non-negotiable. The dress code is intended to improve the educational environment for all students; our students' uniform is designed to prepare students to act and dress as scholars, to create school identity and community, to minimize unnecessary energy spent on brand name clothing and image, to increase security and safety in the building, and to reduce the cost of clothing families need to purchase each school year.

This uniform dress code policy has been adopted by the Board of Directors of Valiente College Preparatory in compliance with the provisions of Article IX, section 5 of the California Constitution, and Assembly Bill 1575 (effective January 1, 2013), which prohibit the charging of any student fees for participation in an educational activity at a public school. Students or parents requesting an exemption from any provision of this Uniform Dress Code policy for religious or other reasons should contact the school office directly.

### **Purchasing Uniforms**

Valiente embroidered uniform pieces can be purchased from: Carrusel Uniforms, 2321 E. Florence Ave. and/or 7017 Santa Fe Ave., Huntington Park, Ca. 90255. The telephone number is 323-277-4734. Their website is also: [www.carruseluniforms.com](http://www.carruseluniforms.com).

### **Enforcement of Dress Code:**

Infractions of the dress code will result in consequences. Infractions of the dress code that can be fixed immediately (ex: untucked shirt) will result in the students earning a demerit. Infractions of the dress code that cannot be immediately fixed (ex: missing belt) will result in students being assigned higher level consequences such as, but not limited to multiple demerits, loss of privileges (such as recess).

**Additionally, students who are out of dress code will have their families contacted and required to bring the proper attire to school.**

### ***Daily Dress Code Defined***

Students must arrive at school in the Valiente College Prep uniform every day. The uniform includes:

#### **1. Polo Shirts**

- a. Gray uniform polo shirt that is tucked in at **all** times. Students must wear unaltered, logoed school shirts each day. Shirts must always be tucked whenever students are on school grounds or during school sanctioned activities unless otherwise stated.
- b. Students may only wear solid white, black, or gray undershirts (long sleeved fitted shirts

only when it is cold). Students are not required to wear undershirts. All items may not have any logos other than the Valiente College Preparatory log.

- c. When it is cold, students may wear the school Cardigan sweater, or a sweatshirt with no hood that is gray or burgundy with the Valiente Logo only. Valiente will supply all students with a Cardigan, parents may obtain other approved sweatshirts if they feel they are needed at the uniform shop which must have Valiente's logo. Only students who have earned a Valiente Headstrong Hoodie (sweatshirt with hood) are allowed to wear a hoodie as this is the only acceptable hoodie.

## **2. Pants/skirts**

- a. Navy Blue pants/shorts with belt loops and a black or brown belt with small buckle (no designs, logos, words). Students may wear the uniform plaid burgundy and gray skirt that falls at or below the knee. Shorts and skirts must be knee length or longer. Students may not wear khaki pants that are low-rise, flare, bell-bottom, cargo (more than two front pockets and two back pockets), carpenter, wide-legged, or overly tight or baggy.
- b. Belt buckles must be solid color metal (silver, gold, etc). Buckles may not be oversized or in distracting shapes or designs (ie: glittered, heart-shaped, etc). What is over-sized or distracting is determined in the sole discretion of Valiente College Preparatory leadership and staff.
- c. Students may not wear clothing with logos, unless it is the Valiente College Preparatory logo or a small dress pant logo (i.e. Dockers) on the rear pocket. No other logos are allowed.
- d. Designs, jewels, glitter, etc on the pockets of the pants are not permitted.

## **3. Shoes and Socks**

- a. Plain all-Black, all-Gray, all-Brown, or all-White dress or tennis shoes with laces tied or velcro strapped.
- b. White or Black plain socks with no logo and must be worn over the ankle.
- c. Open-toed shoes are not permitted.
- d. Boots, flip-flops, stilettos, platform shoes, and sandals are not permitted.
- e. Shoes must be laced up, with tongue inside, and tied securely. Pant legs must be worn over the shoe.

## **4. Accessories and Makeup**

- a. Earrings may only be worn in the lower ear lobes. Earrings must be professional and smaller than the size of a US dime (\$0.10 coin). Gauges, plugs, or any sharp objects (such as spikes) are not permitted at any time.
- b. Visible body piercings, facial piercings or tongue piercings or band-aids covering piercings are **not** permitted.
- c. All necklaces must be tucked inside the shirt.
- d. No heavy makeup that is non-flesh color tones is permitted and make up, perfume, lotion or any other cosmetics are never to be applied during school times unless necessary based on approved medical reasons.

- e. Wristbands, and multiple or distracting wrist wear are prohibited.
- f. False nails are not permitted. Nails may not be painted non-flesh color tones.

## **5. Hair**

- a. Hair can be colored or highlighted only in a natural human hair color.
- b. No designs of any kind are permitted to be in the hair or on the face (including in the eyebrows).
- c. Distracting hairstyles – as determined by the sole discretion of the school – are not permitted. Examples of prohibited/distracting hairstyles include Mohawks.
- d. Hats may not be worn at any time. Hats will be confiscated if found on campus.

**IF PARENTS ARE PLANNING TO CHANGE THEIR CHILD’S HAIRSTYLE AND ARE NOT CERTAIN WHETHER IT WILL BE PERMITTED AT THE SCHOOL, PARENTS MUST CONTACT THE PRINCIPAL IN ADVANCE!**

## **Miscellaneous:**

- a. No visible (permanent or non-permanent) tattoos or body markings of any kind are permitted.
- b. No clothing or jewelry that is determined by any teacher or staff member to distract from the learning process is permitted.
- c. Clothing must be sized appropriately. What is too big or too small is determined by the sole discretion of Valiente College Preparatory leadership and staff.
- d. Students may not alter their clothing in any way (ie: writing, drawing, cutting, fraying, etc).
- e. Students may not wear clothing with significant stains (ie: large ink blots, food stains, etc).
- f. Prohibited Items: No hats, bandanas, head scarves allowed to be worn inside the school building (unless religiously required such as a hijab).

**Any student who arrives at school out of uniform will receive a demerit, an immediate phone call home, and at the discretion of VCPCS leadership based on distractibility or inappropriateness of clothing, may be prevented from participating in class until he or she is in uniform.**

During enrollment parents must sign a contract stating that they understand that no child may ever be out of uniform without written permission from the School for any reason. There is no valid excuse for students to come to school without being fully compliant with the dress code.

Any student who arrives at school in nonconforming clothes and whose parents cannot bring in the appropriate uniform may be provided with conforming clothing by Valiente College Preparatory for the day. We respectfully ask that parents help ensure our policy before the student arrives on campus each day. When students enter the school building, they must be in the proper uniform. They cannot change into the school uniform upon arrival or tuck their shirts in only after getting to class. Students also may not change out of their uniform before dismissal. Doing so may result in a demerit or other infraction.

Any complaints related to the costs of conforming clothing should be addressed to the school's Principal through the school's Uniform Complaint Procedure, set forth in Uniform Complaint Procedure Policy approved by the Valiente Board of Directors and published in the Student and Family Handbook.

### **Free Dress**

From time to time students will earn a free dress pass or will have a free dress day. In order to have a free dress day students must have a note from the school allowing them to come in with free dress. Free dress still needs to be professional

On free dress days students are NOT allowed to wear:

- 1) Skinny Jeans or Skinny Shorts
- 2) Exceptionally baggy clothes
- 3) Clothing that is revealing
- 4) Clothing with any inappropriate language/profanity
- 5) Innapropriate jewelry or makeup

Students must present a neat, professional appearance in order to be considered in uniform. Students' shirts must be tucked in and shoelaces must be tied. Students may not change out of Valiente College Prep uniform at any point during the school day. Students must wear the Valiente College Prep uniform on all school field trips.

## **Chapter 4: Conduct**

### ***Conduct Philosophy***

Valiente College Prep students will abide by a strict Code of Conduct based on the philosophy that classroom respect and order are essential for academic progress, that students benefit from the explicit teaching of acceptable behavior, and that having immediate and clear consequences for minor infractions guarantees that major infractions will not take place. Students, parents, teachers, and the Executive Director will sign the Family & School Contract, which demonstrates knowledge of the Code of Conduct. The purpose of this Code is to bring absolute clarity to the expectations and consequences of student behavior so that misunderstanding is never the reason for student misbehavior.

### ***Code of Conduct***

The Code of Conduct is the concise description of the twenty-two primary rules that govern student behavior at Valiente College Prep. All parents/guardians will review the Code of Conduct at the mandatory Parent Orientation. Students will review it during new student orientation prior to the start of school. Signing the Family & School Contract indicates that each parent/guardian and student has read, understands and agrees to abide by the Code of Conduct.

1. Students must arrive on time for the school day.
2. Students must arrive at school in the Valiente College Prep uniform every day.

3. All students treat fellow students, staff, and school property with respect.
4. Students must attend school every day. Absences are excused only for illness, religious observance, or family emergency, and must be verified in writing by a parent/guardian.
5. Students must complete all assigned homework every night.
6. Students may not disrupt class, homeroom, school assemblies or trips by talking out of turn.
7. Students may not talk during transitions or during breakfast and lunch when the expectation of silence is communicated by a staff member.
8. Students may not chew gum, eat, or drink anything other than water during class.
9. Students must keep any electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, etc.) at school off and in a backpack for the entire school day and after school program (7:30-6:25pm). The school assumes no responsibility for these devices.
10. Students must always be prepared for class.
11. Students may not behave in any way that is disruptive to their learning or the learning of others.
12. Students may not plagiarize, cheat, or copy another's work, falsify information (i.e. forge a signature), or lie to a staff member.
13. Students must always be where they are supposed to be during the school day, have a pass anytime they leave the classroom during the school day, and report promptly to classes.
14. No play-fighting, horseplay, or touching other students. Students must keep their hands to themselves at all times.
15. Absolutely no intimidation, harassment, or bullying of a classmate or staff member using threatening behavior or language.
16. No defacement of school property.
17. No profane or otherwise inappropriate language.
18. No gang activity or evidence of gang affiliation.
19. No fighting, violence, or behavior which threatens violence.
20. No possession or sale of any drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances.
21. No possession of weapons, including toy weapons.
22. Do not behave in any way that is disruptive or distracting when riding school-provided transportation during Field trips or other activities.

### ***ACTS Points and ACTS Reports***

Records of all, demerits, merits, office referrals, and suspensions will be recorded in the ACTS Report. In addition, the report will record attendance issues and missing homework assignments. Students are eligible to receive 100 points each week by following the Code of Conduct. Minor issues, such as receiving a demerit, result in the loss of two points while more significant issues such as abvn out-of-school suspension result in a demerit of twenty points.

Students can earn ACTS points for a wide variety of positive behaviors that add to their weekly score. Students will receive a daily ACTS Report detailing their point merits and demerits for the day. Families of students must sign the report when they go out weekly. At the conclusion of each trimester, students have the opportunity to use accumulated points on a variety of prizes and privileges.

Students who fail to return their reports signed by parents will receive additional demerits.

A running average of each student's ACTS Points will be recorded on the ACTS Report. Students will need to have an average of at least 80 points per week in order to participate in special events such as after school activities, field trips, and other school events. Averages will reset at the end of each trimester.

### ***General Discipline Procedures***

The purpose of disciplinary consequences is to ensure that both individual students and the school community maintain complete focus on learning and growth. Inappropriate student behavior not only impacts the individual, but also exacts a cost on the larger school community. Students must understand that they are a part of a larger whole and are accountable to their peers for adhering to the values and expectations of the community. Prompt resolution of problems and student/family solutions to inappropriate behavior is expected.

Disciplinary action, depending upon the nature of the action and/or referral, may include but is not limited to: re-teaching, demerits, detention, parent notification, a written assignment, lunch or enrichment detention, community service, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

All decisions regarding expulsion will be made by Executive Director. Valiente College Prep will make every effort to notify parents/guardians promptly of any serious disciplinary action and will do so in writing whenever possible.

### ***Progressive Discipline Ladder***

All students are expected to conform to the Student Code of Conduct at Valiente College Prep, on the school premises, and while in transit to or from school. Students are subject to the School's disciplinary process when they fail to do so.

When students violate the Code of Conduct there are associated consequences that are outlined for different levels of offenses. Consequences will be determined based on the level of offense and the number of occurrences for similar offenses during the school year. The four levels of offenses are described below:

#### ***First Level: Demerit***

A demerit is a mark for deficiency or misconduct. Three demerits during a 50-minute class period result in an office referral and a detention. Demerits result in deductions from the weekly ACTS Points which may result in the loss of privileges (i.e. field trips, special events).

#### ***Second Level: Detention***

Students earn a detention when they receive an Office Referral. Detentions are served by

students being excluded from social activities and enrichment lessons during lunch and enrichment period.

### **Third Level: Suspension**

If actions taken at Levels 1-2 have not corrected the inappropriate behavior, or, if the student has consistently engaged in lower-level infractions or in serious acts of misconduct, the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction may place the student on In-Class Suspension for one or more school days. As a part of the suspension, the student will be required to demonstrate positive behavior in order to be removed from in-class suspension.

If in-class suspension fails to correct the inappropriate behavior, or, if the student engaged in serious act(s) of misconduct, the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction may suspend the student from School, not to exceed ten School days. As a part of the suspension, the student will be required to complete all missing academic work and write an apology to the classroom or school community.

### **Fourth Level: Expulsion**

If actions taken at Levels 1-3 have not corrected the inappropriate behavior, or, if the student engaged in serious act(s) of misconduct, the Executive Director may recommend that the student be recommended for expulsion.

Progressive discipline levels may be skipped for serious acts of misconduct at the discretion of the Executive Director.

As specified in California Education Code Section 48900, a student may be recommended for suspension or expulsion if he or she:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object, unless, in the possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred on by the Executive Director or the designee of the Executive Director.
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any 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.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any 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 any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property (includes,

but is not limited to, electronic files and databases).

- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases).
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel (exception made for use or possession by a student of his or her own prescription products).
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- 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.
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases).
- Possessed an imitation firearm.
- 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.
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that student from being a witness or retaliating against that student for being a witness, or both.
- Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing, as defined in Section 32050.
- Aided or abetted, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person (suspension only).
- Committed sexual harassment
- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence.
- Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against school District personnel or students, that is 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 education environment.
- Made terrorist threats against school officials, school property, or both.
- Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

Students will receive a mandatory recommendation for expulsion for any of the following reasons, as specified in Education Code Section 48915, unless the Executive Director finds that expulsion is inappropriate, due to the particular circumstance:

- Causing serious physical injury to another person.
- Possession of any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
- Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- Robbery or extortion.
- Assault or battery upon any school employee.
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery as defined in Section 48900 of the Education Code.

Students are subject to mandatory expulsion from Valiente College Prep for any of the reasons as specified in the Education Code Section 48915(c) and the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994. It is a federal mandate that a school expel, for a period of not less than one year (except on a case-by-case basis), any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school.

### ***Process for Suspension/Expulsion***

Valiente College Prep believes very strongly in establishing a school culture in which all students are safe and able to learn. We also believe that learning time is sacred, and that many misbehaviors can be corrected in class. However, behavior that is continually disruptive or listed among those detailed above may warrant suspension or expulsion, which occurs through the following steps:

#### **Step 1: Informal Conference.**

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction with the student and the student's parents. The conference may be omitted if the school administration determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear danger to the safety or health of students or school personnel. If the student is suspended without a conference, the parents will be notified of the suspension and a conference will be conducted as soon as possible.

#### **Step 2: Determination of Length and Placement of Suspension.**

The length and placement of the student's suspension will be determined by the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction, based on the severity of the offense(s), as evidenced by witness statements, physical evidence, and other relevant factors.

Valiente College Prep believes that a student should not be removed from the general class environment unless his or her presence is a continual distraction to others or they are at risk of harming themselves or others. In-Class Suspension allows students to access to the curriculum in the classroom environment while being separated from the school community. A student assigned to In-School Suspension will sit at a designated desk in the classroom, physically separated from his or her peers. In addition, a student assigned to In-Class Suspension must:

- Check in with the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum and Instruction prior to the start of each day.
- Attend all classes, receive academic instruction, and complete all classwork and homework.
- Not communicate with any other students throughout the day, including during breaks and lunch.
- Not participate in class activities.
- Not attend field trips, dances, or other school activities if these occur during the suspension period.
- Write a letter of apology to his or her class and read it aloud to his or her classmates on the final day of In-Class Suspension.

The number of days a student must serve In-Class Suspension will be aligned with the severity of the behavior, but will not exceed ten days.

If a student is a continual distraction to others or poses a risk to self or others, that student may be assigned Out-of-School Suspension. The length of suspension for students may not exceed a period of five continuous days unless an administrative recommendation has been made and agreed to by the student's parent/guardian. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding five continuous days, a second conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian and the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the tenth day of suspension. A student may be suspended from school for not more than twenty school days in any school year; however, this restriction on the number of days of suspension does not apply when the suspension is extended pending an expulsion.

Arrangements shall be made to provide the student with classroom material and current assignments to be completed at home during the length of the suspension.

### **Step 3: Notice to Parents**

Parents and Students have due process rights with regards to suspensions and expulsions. At the time of the student's suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parents by telephone or in person. Initial contact will be followed by a written notice, which will state the specific offense committed by the student, as well as the date and time the student may return to school. If the school officials wish to confer with the parents regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the school may require that parents must respond without delay, and that a violation of school rules can result in expulsion from school.

### **Step 4: Recommendation for Expulsion**

If the Executive Director recommends expulsion, the student and the student's parents will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Executive Director upon either of the following findings:

- The student's presence will likely be disruptive to the educational process.

- The student poses a threat or danger to others.

Upon this determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing. Students will be recommended for expulsion if the Executive Director finds that at least one of the following findings may be substantiated:

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

### **Step 5: Expulsion Hearing**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing will be held within 30 days after the Executive Director determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The hearing will be presided over by the governing Board. The expulsion hearing will be recorded and made available as part of the public record and a Fact and Findings document will be prepared to summarize the evidence adduced at the hearing, to substantiate the expulsion decision. Written notice of the hearing will be forwarded to the student and the student's parents at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:

- Date and place of the hearing.
- Statement of the specific facts, charges and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
- Copy of the disciplinary rules that relate to the alleged violation.
- Opportunity for the student or the student's parents to appear in person at the hearing.
- Opportunity for the student to be represented by counsel.
- Right to examine and acquire copies of all documents to be used at the hearing.
- Opportunity to cross-examine all witnesses that testify at the hearing.
- Opportunity to present evidence and witnesses on behalf of the student.

Upon expulsion, written notice will be sent by the Executive Director to the parents of any student who is expelled. This notice will be sent within 24 hours of the hearing, through certified over-night postal delivery, and will include:

- The specific offense committed by the student for any of the acts listed in "Reasons for Suspension and/or Expulsion."
- Notice of the student or parent obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Valiente.

In the event of a decision to expel a student, the school will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county and/or private schools to assist with the appropriate educational placement of the student who has been expelled. Any incident of violent and/or serious student behavior shall be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

If the decision is not to expel, the student will return to classes at Valiente College Prep.

### ***Appeal of Suspension or Expulsion***

Parents will be notified in advance to enactment of the suspension or expulsion and can appeal a student's suspension or expulsion.

The suspension of a student will be at the discretion of the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction. A suspension appeal may be made to the Executive Director within the term of the suspension. Following due consideration, the Executive Director's decision regarding student suspension will be considered final.

An expulsion may be appealed within ten business days and must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director; the appeal may be sent via the United States Postal Service or brought, in-person, to the school. The student will be considered suspended until a meeting is convened to hear the appeal (within 10 business days), at which time the parents must attend to present their appeal. Per *California Education Code 48918*, a student may be represented by legal counsel or a non-attorney adviser.<sup>1</sup>

The appeal will be heard by a fair and impartial administrative hearing panel comprised of three or more individuals who are not members of the Board or employees of Valiente College Preparatory. An expulsion appeals hearing is convened to determine whether due process was followed in the original expulsion decision. Neither the hearing officer, nor any member of the administrative panel, hearing the appeal shall have been the hearing officer or a member of the Governing Board that conducted the pupil's expulsion hearing. The appeal hearing will be conducted in a closed session unless otherwise requested by the appellant. An appeal before the administrative hearing panel is not a rehearing, but a procedural review of the transcripts of the hearing before Charter School's board of directors to determine if all concerned have received a fair hearing and if due process was followed.

Any new materials (such as evidence or testimony) which may inform the appeal will be reviewed by the administrative panel. The student and parents will have the right to counsel and will be asked to give a statement. The Executive Director will also give a statement. The impartial panel will question the appellant and the Executive Director. The impartial administrative panel shall prepare a recommended decision, including any findings or conclusions required for that decision.

The appeals panel can decide to reinstate the student or terminate enrollment at Valiente College Preparatory. The appeals administrative panel's final decision shall be delivered by the Executive Director using the most expedient means of communication identified by the Parent/Guardian or student at the hearing (telephone, e-mail, etc.) and shall also be delivered, in writing, by certified mail.

For a student who is not reinstated upon appeal, the family will be sent via postal mail a written notification signed by the administrative panel of such within three business days of the hearing, including specific reasons why reinstatement was denied, and will be given a new eligibility review date.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=edc&group=48001-49000&file=48900-48927>.

The decision of the panel of representatives will be final.

Students expelled from Valiente College Preparatory are eligible for readmission after a minimum of six months time. Expelled students must apply through the school's standard admissions process and will receive no preferential treatment in admission. Placement tests may be administered upon re-enrollment and students will be placed according to results of these exams.

### ***Habitually Disruptive Students***

Any student who is suspended for disruptive behavior for the first time during any one school year while in school or on school grounds, at a school-sanctioned activity or event, or on school-sponsored transportation will receive a remedial discipline plan. The plan will be reviewed and modified after the second suspension and the student will be placed on disciplinary probation. In all such cases, the student and his/her parent/guardian will be notified in writing. If the student receives a third such suspension, the student will be declared habitually disruptive, and Valiente College Prep may recommend expulsion.

### ***Corporal Punishment and Student Restraint***

All teachers, administrators, non-licensed School employees and School bus drivers are prohibited from inflicting or causing to be inflicted corporal punishment as a means of discipline upon a pupil attending the School. However, they may, within the scope of their employment, use and apply such amount of force and restraint as is reasonable and necessary to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil, for the purpose of self-defense or for the protection of persons or property.

### ***Discipline for Students with Special Needs***

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program ("IEP"), or a student who has a 504 Plan, the Charter School will ensure that it follows the correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. In instances of serious misconduct by a student with an IEP, the IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, the Charter School's administrator will convene a Link Determination or Manifestation Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

1. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability?
2. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School's failure to implement 504?

### ***Complaints about Student Discipline***

**The primary contact for student discipline is the Executive Director. In the event of a complaint regarding student discipline, the parent should schedule a meeting with the Executive Director. If an individual believes that the school has violated any applicable laws or regulations, or if he or she is unsatisfied with the results of the above process, he or she**

may file a formal, written complaint with the Board of Directors. After receiving the complaint, the Board will respond in writing to the individual within 30 days.

## **Chapter 5: Academics**

### ***Academic Standards***

As a college-preparatory middle school, Valiente College Prep has the highest academic standards for all students. It is expected that students will take challenging classes, complete high-quality work promptly both at school and at home, study for and perform well on exams, and receive excellent support from the teaching staff through tutoring and summer school if necessary. The highest effort from students, teachers, and parents/guardians is necessary to reach this goal.

### ***Academic Schedule***

During the 2017-2018 school year, school will be in session from August 14, 2017 to June 7, 2018. The year will be divided into three trimesters. During the last week of each trimester, students will take comprehensive exams. These exams will be designed by teachers in collaboration with the Executive Director and Director of Curriculum & Instruction and will directly evaluate students' mastery of the curriculum.

### ***Student Grade Placement, Acceleration, Promotion, or Retention***

The Executive Director and Directors of Curriculum & Instruction are authorized to make the initial grade placement of a student and to promote, accelerate or retain students after initial grade placement. On occasion, it may be in the best interest of the student to have a new grade placement, be accelerated more than one grade, or be retained in the current grade.

If a student's parent or teacher believes one of these grade changes should be considered, a written request for consideration should be provided to the Director of Curriculum & Instruction including the reasons for such consideration. The final decision regarding placement, acceleration, promotion, or retention of a student rests solely with the Executive Director.

Evidence considered in making retention and acceleration decisions include the following:

1. The education record of the student, including but not limited to a student's grades, standardized test scores, attendance, discipline, reading, speaking and math skills, the curriculum of each grade, and available programs.
2. The physical, social & emotional readiness of the student for the curriculum of each grade.
3. The current research on grade placement, promotion, acceleration and retention.
4. The recommendation of the student's parents and teachers.

### ***Appeal Process***

Parents/guardians do not have the right to unilaterally make the decision to promote or retain

their child, but do have the right to appeal the Executive Director's and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction decision to the Board of Directors. The appealing party bears the burden of showing why such decision should be overruled.

### ***Special Education Students***

The decision to retain a special education student is determined by the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) team. Special education students may not be retained based solely on their disability, but may be retained, as determined by the IEP team, with consideration given to factors such as their ability to fit in socially and emotionally with their present grade level.

If the IEP team cannot come to an agreement on retention, the Executive Director and/or Director of Curriculum & Instruction will make the decision. The parent of the student with an IEP may choose to have the student leave the school, appeal the decision to the school board of directors, or request mediation/due process. If a parent either appeals the IEP team decision to the school board or requests mediation/due process, the school's special education supervisor must be contacted for consultation.

### ***Homework and Homework Club***

Valiente College Prep will assign homework to students on a nightly basis. The homework will be meaningful and will serve an important purpose of extending the learning that goes on in the classroom. Homework has developmental benefits as well as academic benefits. It helps develop students' responsibility, time management, and independent problem solving skills. The development of these skills is essential to a student's success at Valiente College Prep and to excelling in college.

Each night, students are expected to complete all homework in a thorough manner paying attention to detail and quality. Every morning during homeroom, student homework assignments will be checked. Students with incomplete or missing homework assignments receive demerits on their ACTS Report and will be automatically assigned for Homework Club for that day.

Parents/guardians must be aware and supportive of their child's efforts with homework. Parents/guardians are expected to actively check and review their child's homework each night and to let teachers know if their child is struggling. Parents may assist students with their homework, but should never do it for them. Parents should review their child's homework for quality and completeness.

Parents of students who miss three homework assignments during a trimester will be notified by the school. If a fourth homework assignment is missed, parents will be required to participate in a conference to develop a plan for ensuring homework completion.

### ***Plagiarism, Cheating, and other Academic Infractions***

The consequence for lying and academic dishonesty on homework assignments is a detention and a 0 on the assignment. The consequence for academic dishonesty related to tests, essays, projects and other more significant assignments is a detention for the first offense and a

suspension for the second offense. When the academic dishonesty involves plagiarizing, cheating, copying another's work, or falsifying information, the student will also receive an automatic Zero (0) on the assignment. The student is not entitled to a make up or "re-do" of any cheated, plagiarized, academically dishonest-completed assignment. Make ups or "re-do" are at the sole discretion of the teacher with approval from the Executive Director.

### **Assessments**

In addition to the comprehensive exams described above, Valiente College Prep will use regular, external assessments to support its educational program. These assessments will include, but are not limited to:

- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) in applicable grade levels and subjects
- NWEA Measures of Academic Progress in the fall, winter, and spring of each year.
- Other placement tests which may be necessary at the discretion of the school.

### **Grades**

Students will receive letter grades for each completed class. The letter grades represent a performance descriptor (like outstanding, good, etc.) and are assigned to the quality of work a student completes. Grades of 64 or below are marked as a course Failure and indicate that a class has not been completed for credit.

The following grades describe a percentage of successful work from each student:

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Numerical Scale</b>
<b>90-100</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>80-89</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>70-79</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>65-69</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Warning</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>0-64</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Failure</b>	<b>0.0</b>

### **Report Cards**

Students receive a report card for each trimester, which includes a summary of their academic work. Report cards may be provided to parents/guardians at the parent conference night, to be held within ten days following the conclusion of trimester one and two. The trimester three report card will be mailed the week following the last day of school, unless a student is in summer school (if offered by Valiente College Prep).

Parent/Guardian attendance at the Parent Conference nights is required to receive the report card.

Progress reports will be issued to all students three times each trimester. Students bring progress reports home, and they must be reviewed with parents/guardians, signed to indicate they have been discussed, and returned to school. Students who do not return the Progress Report Signature Card will receive a five point demerit on their ACTS Report each day the Signature Card is not returned.

## **Chapter 6: Family Communication**

It is vitally important that the school have methods of contacting parents or other family members at all times. This is of critical importance in case of emergency, illness, or behavior requiring immediate family contact. Parents are advised to notify the office of moves, changes of home or emergency telephone numbers, and/or places of employment.

### ***Home Visits***

Throughout the summer and school year, families of all new students may receive a home visit by a member of the leadership team or their teacher. This opportunity will allow families to spend time to speak directly with school leadership about the upcoming school year and school expectations.

### ***Visiting Classes***

Our school has an open door policy that allows parents to sit in on class during any time after the first three weeks of school. During the beginning of school, it is critical for students to transition into their new setting, and parental presence in the classroom can slow this process. We encourage parents to come into the classroom and see our amazing teachers and students at work. When observing in the classroom, parents are asked not to disrupt the education of their child or of other children or to attempt to conduct individual conversations with the teacher during instructional time. Parents who are disruptive to the educational process will be asked to leave. Parents must sign in at the office before visiting a classroom and wear a visitor badge at all times while in the school. After the first three weeks of school, parents must request to visit their child's classes with at least 24 hours notice and approval from the Executive Director.

### ***Student Orientation***

Prior to the start of school all families will be asked to bring their students to Student Orientation. During this time the school will review school information and school-wide expectations. Students and families may meet their teachers and tour the school. Important updates between each year as well as key areas to focus in for the school year will be highlighted at each orientation.

### ***Open House***

Throughout the year, Valiente College Prep will hold Family Nights. All parents are invited to attend Valiente College Prep Family Night and are asked to bring their children to this event. On the first Valiente College Prep Family Night teachers explain vital information about class

rules and discipline systems, class specific policies, give an overview of the general daily schedule, and answer any general questions that parents have about the classroom. It is also an opportunity for children to give parents a tour of their child's classroom. It will also give parents a chance to meet parents of other students in the school. We will send out a calendar at the start of the year that has all of the dates for the Valiente College Prep Parent Nights.

### ***Parent Conferences***

Parent Conferences are a crucial component of our educational program. Parents are expected to attend conferences after each of the first two report cards and at other times as requested by the classroom teacher or Executive Director. Parent conference days are scheduled for the end of each trimester. Parents should plan on attending a 15 to 30 minute conference during that school day or at a pre-arranged time before or after school during that week.

## **Chapter 7: Safety and Security**

### ***Closed Campus***

Valiente College Prep is a closed campus. Valiente College Prep's hours are between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and 7:30 am and 2:30 pm on Wednesdays. During school hours, all students must remain on the campus unless supervised by a staff member. Students who are excused at dismissal time may leave campus if they do not have other obligations.

Students who need to leave campus early must be picked up by a parent/guardian or authorized individual. The parent must sign the student out of the school's attendance log before the student will be released. Valiente will not release students earlier than thirty minutes before dismissal without evidence based, valid medical or family emergencies. The reasoning for this is to ensure that classrooms are not disrupted.

### ***Visitor Policy***

Valiente College Prep welcomes and encourages visits to school programs by parents, other adults, and interested educators.

All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must report to the School office upon entering the school building, sign the guest register, and receive a visitor pass. This procedure has been adopted for the safety of our students and staff. Children from other schools may not visit during the school day. Exceptions may be made at the Executive Director's discretion for families who are considering enrollment.

The Executive Director has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person, including but not limited to parents, other adults and/ or educators, to a program of the school or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such person would be detrimental to the good order of the program. If such an individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, the Executive Director is authorized to request from the local law enforcement agency whatever assistance is required to remove the individual.

The Executive Director may implement such administrative guidelines as are necessary for the protection of students and staff from disruption to the educational program or the efficient conduct of their assigned tasks. This includes setting up an appointment to speak with school

personnel or if you would like to visit a classroom.

### ***Student Emergencies***

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the office either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact students in their classrooms or attempt to withdraw students from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the office.

### ***Accident or Medical Emergency***

If a medical emergency occurs to a student at school, first aid will be administered and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that student will be contacted immediately. If parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, a person listed on the student's health form (or emergency contact card) or the family physician will be contacted. If the situation warrants, the school will call Emergency Medical Services (911). If there is a serious accident at school, parent(s)/guardian(s) of the affected students will be notified immediately. In the event that the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached, the family physician or persons indicated on health forms will be contacted. First Aid will be administered as needed.

### ***Medication Policy***

To protect your child's safety, school administrators will adhere to the following medication policy. It is required that either parent's and physician's signature are on file before any prescription or non-prescription medication is administered. This includes all medications including such over-the-counter products as Tylenol, Advil, Dimetapp, etc.. If we do not have the written permission of the parent/guardian AND the written permission of the student's physician, the medication will not be given.

Although this may cause some inconvenience, we feel that this policy is best for the continued protection of your child, and must be followed. Permission forms can be obtained by contacting the Operations Manager.

### ***Fire Safety Procedures***

In case of an emergency – if a student or staff member sees fire or smells smoke—he or she should close the door and pull the nearest fire alarm. Upon hearing the alarm, school staff will assemble students in their rooms and proceed out of the building according to the fire evacuation plan posted in each room. Students should follow the direction of staff members who will lead students outside the building to the designated locations, where school staff will line up students by class and take attendance.

During the first week of school and frequently throughout the school year, students and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency. In case of a more serious emergency, should it be necessary to evacuate the school before, during, or after the school day—and it appears that we will be unable to return to the school for an extended period of time—school staff and students will evacuate from the school's buildings. A copy of each evacuation plan is available from the Operations Manager upon a family's written request.

## ***Crisis Plan***

If there is an immediate threat to the school due to an emergency outside of the building, an intruder or threat of violence within the building, the Executive Director may enact a school-wide lockdown. In these instances, the Executive Director will announce the lockdown; all students, staff and identified visitors must immediately move to the nearest classroom, office or secure room and lock all doors, close windows and turn off all lights. All students should remain quiet, away from doors and windows and crouch below furniture for their safety. Students will remain in the locked classroom until the Executive Director or law enforcement personnel has announced that the lockdown has ended due to the threat being removed, or until the school can be safely evacuated. During this time, parents will not be able to enter the school building and may not be able to contact their child. Students who fail to follow staff instructions during a lockdown pose a serious threat to themselves and school safety and may receive a serious consequence.

## **Chapter 8: General School Information**

### ***Non-Discrimination Statement***

It is the policy of Valiente College Prep to recruit, hire, train, educate, promote, and administer all personnel and instructional actions without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, national origin, disability, need for special education services, marital status, or use of public assistance. We will not tolerate any discrimination, and any such conduct is prohibited. The school also prohibits any form of discipline or retaliation for reporting incidents.

### ***Anti-harassment, Intimidation, Dating Violence, and Bullying***

The School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, dating violence or bullying (including cyber-bullying) of any student on school property or at school-sponsored events (any event conducted on or off school property, including School buses and other School related vehicles, that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board). A safe and civil environment in the school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, dating violence, and bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, are conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and the School's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Since students learn by example, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate bullying.

Harassment, intimidation, dating violence, or bullying means either of the following: 1) any intentional, written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student; or 2) violence within a dating relationship. The definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying also includes the above described acts which are electronically generated, stored or transmitted.

The School reserves the right to discipline students' off campus behavior which substantially disrupts the School's educational process or mission, or threatens the safety or well-being of a

Student or Staff member. Factors which may be considered in determining whether the behavior warrants discipline include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) whether the behavior created material and substantial disruption to the educational process or the School's mission due to the stress on the individual(s) victimized or the time invested by Staff in dealing with the behavior or its consequences; (2) whether a nexus to on-campus activities exists; (3) whether the behavior creates a substantial interference with a Student's or Staff member's security or right to educate and receive education; (4) whether the behavior invades the privacy of others; or (5) whether any threat is deemed to be a true threat by the administration or Board, using factors and guidelines set out by the courts or by common sense, reasonable person standards.

Some acts of harassment, intimidation, dating violence, bullying and cyber-bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation, dating violence, bullying or cyber-bullying that they require a response either in the classroom, School building, or by law enforcement officials. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for students who commit an act of harassment, intimidation, dating violence, bullying or cyber-bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Due process procedures for suspension and expulsion will be followed.

The School may form a prevention task force and/ or programs to educate students about this policy, such as holding an assembly on harassment, intimidation, dating violence, and bullying for Parents and Students, to raise the level of awareness and help prevent the prohibited conduct. The School may also provide training, workshops, or courses on this policy to Staff and volunteers who have direct contact with students.

### ***Internet Acceptable Use Policy***

The use of technology and computer resources at Valiente College Prep is a revocable privilege. Failure to abide by this policy may render you ineligible to use the computer facilities and may bring additional disciplinary action.

All users are expected to use the technology available at Valiente College Prep in a manner appropriate to the school's academic and moral goals. Technology includes, but is not limited to, cellular telephones, radios, CD/MP3/DVD players, video recorders, video games, personal data devices, computers, other hardware, electronic devices, software, Internet, e-mail and all other similar networks and devices. Users are expected to be responsible and use Technology to which they have access appropriately. Obscene, pornographic, threatening, or other inappropriate use of Technology, including, but not limited to, e-mail, instant messaging, web pages, and the use of hardware and/or software which disrupts or interferes with the safety and welfare of the Valiente College Prep community, is prohibited, even if such uses take place after or off School property (i.e., home, business, private property, etc.).

Failure to adhere to this policy and the guidelines will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the discipline charts in Appendix G. See these charts for details on the definition of and related consequences for "Electronic Access", "Intimidation, Menacing, Bullying, Cyber bullying", "Misuse of Electronic Online Hardware or Software", "Offensive Material", "School Property", and "Technology Misuse".

### ***School Closings***

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency school closures, Valiente College Prep will follow the decision to close schools made by Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). If LAUSD schools are closed, then Valiente College Prep is closed. School closings for LAUSD are announced on both the local news channels and local radio stations. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians and students to access this information.

### ***Food Service***

Valiente College Prep provides breakfast, lunch, and snack food service for its students. The school participates in the National School Lunch Program, which provides free or reduced price breakfasts and lunches as well as free milk to eligible students. Tables describing eligibility and applications to participate in the program will be provided at the mandatory Parent Orientation. Breakfast is served from 7:30-7:45 a.m. and is optional for all students. Students must arrive at school by 7:45 a.m. in order to receive school breakfast.

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) E-mail: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### ***Transportation***

Student transportation to and from Valiente College Prep is the responsibility of the students' parents/guardians. Parents and Students are to obey all posted signs and instructions from Valiente College Prep staff during drop-off (morning arrival) and pick-up (dismissal) procedures. Students will not be allowed to walk home alone, without their parent/guardian, or approved family contact without prior written approval.

### ***School Property***

Valiente College Prep expects students to treat school property and equipment with care and responsibility. School property includes the building and grounds, equipment including all

technology, books and any other material possessions of Valiente College Prep. Intentional actions to damage or harm school property may lead to suspension or expulsion. Should the damage be deemed as an unintentional act, students may be given the option of reimbursing the school and/or completing community service determined at the discretion of Valiente College Prep and the Executive Director.

### ***Personal Property***

All property brought to school is brought at the owner's risk. Valiente College Prep does not assume responsibility for any property belonging to students. Distracting or inappropriate objects will be taken from a student and a parent will be required to pick up the item from the school office. Students should not bring large sums of money to school.

### ***Cell Phones and Electronic Devices***

While on School property, in a School vehicle, or while attending School-sponsored or School-related activities, whether on or off School property, Students shall be prohibited from using electronic communication devices, including, but not limited to, cellular phones, beepers, I-Pods, pagers, radios, CD/MP3/DVD players, video recorders, video games, personal data devices or other devices deemed to be distracting. Students may leave the devices in their backpack in the off position.

Any student found with an electronic device in their possession or the electronic device goes off during the school day, the device will be taken and the parent/guardian will be contacted to notify the parent/guardian of the infraction. The student will receive a detention, a 20 ACTS point demerit on their ACTS Report and the parent/guardian will be required to come to school to retain possession of the device. Valiente College Prep is not responsible for any electronic devices possessed by a student.

### ***Classroom Parties, Birthdays, and Other Events***

Because of food allergies and federal guidelines around healthy eating, Valiente College Prep will not permit birthday cakes or other treats to be brought to school. In addition, students should not bring party invitations to be distributed at school. We thank you in advance for your cooperation with this policy.

### ***School Supplies***

It is the responsibility of students to come with appropriate materials to school. The school supply list will be provided for parents during parent orientation. If circumstances make purchasing supplies challenging or impossible, parents/guardians should speak with the child's teacher(s).

### ***Student Records***

Upon enrollment at the School, a student must present a birth certificate or may substitute any of the following documents for a birth certificate: 1) a passport or attested transcript showing the date and place of birth of the child; 2) an attested transcript of a birth certificate; 3) an attested transcript of a baptism certificate or other religious record showing the date and place of birth of the child; 4) an attested transcript of a hospital record showing date and place of

birth, or 5) a birth affidavit.

In addition to a birth certificate or comparable certificate, the child must also present proof of an immunization record, and the records given to him or her by the elementary or secondary school he or she most recently attended. Within 24 hours of the student's entry into the school, a school official shall request a student's official records from the elementary or secondary school he or she most recently attended. If the school the student claims to have most recently attended indicates that it has no records of the student's attendance or the records are not received within 14 days of the date of the request, or the student does not present a certification of birth or comparable certificate, the school shall notify the law enforcement agency that the student may be a missing child.

Students enrolled in the School are required to have, at the time of initial entry into School and at the beginning of each School year thereafter, written evidence on file that they have been immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, chicken pox and rubella, as required by California law and applicable California Department of Health regulations and guidelines (collectively "Laws"). Adequate written evidence of such required immunizations shall consist of: 1) a signed physician's statement indicating that the Student has received the required immunizations, including the immunizations received and the date of receipt; or 2) a signed statement by the Parent indicating that the Student has received the required immunizations, including the immunizations received and the date of receipt. In the case of a Parent's statement, the Executive Director, in his/her sole discretion, may require any other evidence as s/he believes is needed to determine compliance with this policy including, but not limited to, a physician's statement.

Students who do not comply with this policy and any other immunization requirements of Laws, shall be excluded from School no later than the fifteenth day after admission or, for students not being initially admitted, no later than the fifteenth day after the beginning of the school year.

Any Student who is admitted or commences a school year who is "in the process" of receiving the required immunizations, pursuant to Laws, and who does not complete the required immunizations, shall be excluded from School no later than the fifteenth day of the following school year.

Any Student who is excluded for failure to comply with this policy shall be readmitted upon submission, to the Executive Director, of adequate written evidence, as set forth above, of compliance with this policy and the Laws.

### ***Release of Photographs and Other Information***

Valiente College Prep will periodically publish materials to highlight student achievement, school ACTS and school events and will maintain a regular website with this information. These publications and websites will be developed for the purposes of admissions, public relations, fundraising, and other uses that promote the school. From time to time, the school may also get media requests to highlight the school and its students.

During the registration process, each parent/guardian will be provided with a Student Photo/Information Release form. The school will honor these forms, such that student photographs will be included in publications only if the parent/guardian has granted

permission.

***Distribution of Published Materials or Documents***

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed to the greater community, with prior approval by the Executive Director. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the Executive Director.

Unless a student obtains specific prior approval from the Executive Director, written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed at school or on campus. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

### ***Statement of Understanding***

Signing this form acknowledges that the parent/guardian has received a copy of Valiente College Prep's Student and Family Handbook, has had the opportunity to discuss the policies and have questions answered, and understands all of the provisions in the handbook. Although it reflects Valiente College Prep's current policies, it may be necessary to make changes from time-to-time to best serve the needs of our students. However, any changes deemed necessary will be made in writing and the modified policy will be shared with every family.

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Student and Family Handbook of Valiente College Prep. I understand that it is my obligation to read, understand, comply with, and convey the importance of these procedures and policies to my son/daughter.

---

Student Name (please print)

---

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

---

Parent/ Guardian Signature

---

Date

## Uniform Complaint Policy & Procedures

Valiente College Preparatory Charter School (“VCPCS”) will follow and comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. VCPCS is the local agency primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing educational programs. Pursuant to this policy, persons responsible for conducting investigations shall be knowledgeable about any applicable laws and programs which they are assigned to investigate. This complaint procedure is adopted to provide a uniform system of complaint processing for the following types of complaints:

(1) Complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying against any protected group, including actual or perceived discrimination, on the basis of the actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information or on the basis of a person’s association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any of VCPCS school programs or activities.

(2) Complaints of violations of state or federal law and regulations governing the following programs including but not limited to: Adult Education Programs, After School Education and Safety Programs, Consolidated Categorical Aid Programs, Child Care and Development Programs, Child Nutrition Programs, Foster and Homeless Youth Services, Migrant Education Programs, No Child Left Behind Act (2001) Programs (Titles I-VII), including improving academic achievement, compensatory education, limited English proficiency and migrant education, Regional Occupational Centers and Programs, Special Education Programs, State Preschool, and Tobacco-Use Prevention Education.

(3) A complaint may also be filed alleging that a pupil enrolled in a public school was required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity as those terms are defined below.

a. “Educational activity” means an activity offered by a school, school district, charter school or county office of education that constitutes an integral fundamental part of elementary and secondary education, including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities.

b. “Pupil fee” means a fee, deposit or other charge imposed on pupils, or a pupil’s parents or guardians, in violation of Section 49011 of the Education Code and Section 5 of Article IX of the California Constitution, which require educational activities to be provided free of charge to all pupils without regard to their families’ ability or willingness to pay fees or request special waivers, as provided for in *Hartzell v. Connell* (1984) 35 Cal.3d 899. A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

i. A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.

ii. A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock,

locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, uniform or other materials or equipment.

iii. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms associated with an educational activity.

c. A pupil's fees complaint(s) may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees.

d. If VCPCS finds merit in a pupil fees complaint, the Charter School shall provide a remedy to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians that, where applicable, includes reasonable efforts by the Charter School to ensure full reimbursement to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians, subject to procedures established through regulations adopted by the state board.

e. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to prohibit solicitation of voluntary donations of funds or property, voluntary participation in fundraising activities, or school districts, school, and other entities from providing pupils prizes or other recognition for voluntarily participating in fundraising activities.

(4) Complaints of noncompliance with the requirements governing the Local Control Funding Formula Sections 47606.5 and 47607.3 in the Education Code, as applicable.

(5) Complaints of noncompliance with the requirements of Education Code Section 222 regarding the rights of lactating pupils on a school campus. If the Charter School finds merit in a complaint, or if the Superintendent finds merit in an appeal, the Charter School shall provide a remedy to the affected pupil.

VCPCS acknowledges and respects every individual's rights to privacy. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects [to the greatest extent reasonably possible] the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process. The Charter School cannot guarantee anonymity of the complainant. This includes keeping the identity of the complainant confidential. However, the Charter School will attempt to do so as appropriate. VCPCS may find it necessary to disclose information regarding the complaint/complainant to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation or proceedings, as determined by the Executive Director or designee on a case-by-case basis.

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

### **Compliance Officers**

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

Esther Perez, Ed.D., Executive Director

[eperez@valientecollegeprep.org](mailto:eperez@valientecollegeprep.org)

Ashley Genie, Operations Manager

[agenie@valientecollegeprep.org](mailto:agenie@valientecollegeprep.org)

Valiente College Preparatory

8691 California Ave, South Gate, CA 90280

323-744-2107

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

Should a complaint be filed against the Executive Director, the compliance officer for that case shall be the President or Chair of the Charter School Board of Directors.

#### Notifications

The Executive Director or designee shall annually provide written notification of the Charter School's uniform complaint procedures to employees, students, parents and/or guardians, advisory committees, private school officials and other interested parties (e.g., Adult Education).

The annual notice shall be in English, and when necessary, in the primary language, pursuant to section 48985 of the Education Code if fifteen (15) percent or more of the pupils enrolled in the Charter School speak a single primary language other than English.

The Executive Director shall make available copies of the Charter School's uniform complaint procedures free of charge.

#### The annual notice shall include the following:

- (a) A statement that the Charter School is primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.
- (b) A statement that a pupil enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity.
- (c) A statement identifying the responsible staff member, position, or unit designated to receive complaints.
- (d) A statement that the complainant has a right to appeal the Charter School's decision to the CDE by filing a written appeal within 15 days of receiving the Charter School's decision.
- (e) A statement advising the complainant of any civil law remedies that may be available under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying laws, if applicable, and of the appeal pursuant to Education Code § 262.3.
- (f) A statement that copies of the local educational agency complaint procedures shall be available free of charge.

#### Procedures

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

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

### **Step 1: Filing of Complaint**

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

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying may be filed by a person who alleges that he/she personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying. The complaint shall be initiated no later than six (6) months from the date when the alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or six (6) months from the date when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying. The complaint shall be presented to the Compliance Officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a date stamp.

Pupil fee complaints shall be filed not later than one (1) year from the date the alleged violation occurred.

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

### **Step 2: Mediation**

Within three (3) days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer may informally discuss with all the complainant the possibility of using mediation. If the complainant agree to mediation, the compliance officer shall make all arrangements for this process.

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

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

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

### **Step 3: Investigation of Complaint**

The compliance officer is encouraged to hold an investigative meeting within five (5) days of receiving the complaint or an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the complaint. This meeting shall provide an opportunity for the complainant and/or his/her representative to repeat the complaint orally.

The complainant and/or his/her representative shall have an opportunity to present the

complaint and evidence or information leading to evidence to support the allegations in the complaint.

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

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

#### **Step 4: Response**

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

#### **Step 5: Final Written Response**

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

For all complaints, the decision shall include:

1. The findings of fact based on the evidence gathered;
2. The conclusion(s) of law;
3. Disposition of the complaint;
4. Rationale for such disposition;
5. Corrective actions, if any are warranted; and
6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal the Charter School's decision within fifteen (15) days to the CDE, and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.
7. For unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints arising under state law, notice that the complainant must wait until sixty (60) days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies.
8. For unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints arising under federal law such complaint may be made at any time to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

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

#### **Appeals to the California Department of Education**

If dissatisfied with the Charter School's decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the CDE within fifteen (15) days of receiving the Charter School's decision. When appealing to the CDE, the complainant must specify the basis for the appeal of the decision and whether the facts are incorrect and/or the law has been misapplied. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the locally filed complaint and a copy of the Charter School's decision.

Upon notification by the CDE that the complainant has appealed the Charter School's decision, the Executive Senior Director of Operations or designee shall forward the following documents to the CDE:

1. A copy of the original complaint;
2. A copy of the decision;
3. A summary of the nature and extent of the investigation conducted by the Charter, if not covered by the decision;
4. A copy of the investigation file, including but not limited to all notes, interviews and documents submitted by all parties and gathered by the investigator;
5. A report of any action taken to resolve the complaint;
6. A copy of the Charter School's complaint procedures; and
7. Other relevant information requested by CDE.

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

### **Civil Law Remedies**

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside the Charter School's complaint procedures. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders.

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

**UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FORM**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name/MI: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/Apt. #:

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip  
Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Office of Alleged Violation:

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

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education            | <input type="checkbox"/> After School Education and Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster/Homeless Youth            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian Education  | <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Categorical Aid      | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Occupational Programs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Nutrition                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco-Use Prevention Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant Education          | <input type="checkbox"/> No Child Left Behind Programs     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lactating Pupils                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education          | <input type="checkbox"/> State Preschool                   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil Fees                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Control Funding Formula     |   |

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

- |                                   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age      | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender / Gender Expression / Gender Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex (Actual or Perceived) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color    |   |  |



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

I have attached supporting documents.

Yes

No

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail complaint and any relevant documents to:

Esther Perez, Executive Director, [eperez@valientecollegeprep.org](mailto:eperez@valientecollegeprep.org)

Ashley Genie, Operations Manager, [agenie@valientecollegeprep.org](mailto:agenie@valientecollegeprep.org)

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