

Student/Parent Handbook 2016-2017



Aurora Charter School

2103 E 26th St
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Teléfono: (612) 870-3891
Fax: (612) 722-2441

Aurora Middle School

2101 E 26th St
Minneapolis, MN 55404
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Revisada 06/08/2015

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Introduction

Mission

“To operate a center of learning that embraces academic excellence and celebrates the gift of Latino culture.”

Aurora Charter School is a K-8, dual language (English and Spanish) public school that was founded in 2000 to serve the educational needs concerning the alarming drop-out rates and achievement gaps of immigrant students in the area. Ninety-eight percent of Aurora students are Hispanic/Latino and live in Twin-Cities metro area. The majority of the families who are part of our school’s population are Spanish speakers who have immigrated from different Latin American countries. Our school offers a unique education model that helps reinforce academic excellence and the gift of Latino culture by offering instruction and curriculum in the students’ native language through the fifth grade with a smooth transition to English starting in Kindergarten and steadily increasing until reaching a 50/50 model. All subjects at the Middle school are taught in English except for a rigorous Spanish Language Arts class that all students take in grades 6th-8th. Aurora Charter School has 52 staff members of which 30 are highly qualified teachers.

***Executive Director: Matthew Cisewski
Business Administrator: Naomi Christianson***

Aurora Charter School
Preschool through 5th Gr
2103 E 26th St
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone #: (612) 870-3891
Fax: (612)-722-2441

School Hours: 7:45 AM- 2:45 PM
Office Hours: 6:50 AM- 4:00 PM

Aurora Middle School
6th through 8th Gr
2101 E 26th St
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone #: (612) 722-1999
Fax: (612) 722-2441

Our Goals are that students will be able to:

- Demonstrate oral fluency and literacy in Spanish and English
- Develop a strong academic language base in both languages.
- Demonstrate a positive and self-esteem through application for their own home language and culture.
- Develop skills and respect for the cultural diversity in our society.
- Meet Aurora Charter School and Minnesota State standards.

School Board

The school board is made up of parents, teachers and community members. The function of the board is to provide guidance and accountability for the implementation of the schools founding principles and standards. Board meeting dates are available online, and are posted in the reception area of both schools. Meeting Minutes are available online at Auroracharterschool.org.

Current Board Members

<i>Ex Officio, Executive Director</i>	Matthew Cisewski	mcisewski@auroracharterschool.org
<i>Board Chair</i>	Romulo Nieto	Rnieto@auroracharterschool.org
<i>Vice-Chair</i>	Melanie Seiser	Melanie.Seiser@MLSsoccer.com
<i>Secretary</i>	Diana Armenta	darmenta@auroracharterschool.org
<i>Treasurer</i>	Maribel Zuñiga	Fzunigam@yahoo.com
<i>Community Member</i>	Guadalupe Quintero	Guadalupe.quintero@mnsu.edu
<i>Member</i>	Adrian Hernandez	adrianhernandezsan@msn.com

Enrollment Policy and procedure

Currently enrolled students

Students who are currently enrolled at Aurora Charter School will indicate their intent to return during 3rd Quarter conferences. If parents indicate that their son/daughter will not be returning to Aurora the upcoming school year, parents only have until the day before the lottery process to change their minds. If parents change their mind after the lottery process, which takes place in April, the student can only re-enroll if there are spots available. Otherwise, the student will be placed on the waiting list.

Early Childhood Screening

According to Minnesota Statute 121A.17, Subd.2 states that a parent or guardian of a child entering a public school Preschool or Kindergarten program must provide proof that the student received developmental screening (Preschool Screening). The parent(s) have no more than 30 days from the first day of school to submit this information.

Screening can assist your child to be ready for School. Any health or developmental concerns may be found earlier and that allows us to provide help sooner. The Minneapolis Public School District provides these evaluations at no cost to Aurora Charter School. Simply call or email to schedule an appointment. Parents should take the birth certificate and immunization records to the appointment. During this evaluation trained staff will assess your child's: vision and hearing, growth and development, and immunizations and family history.

Call (612) 668-3715 or send an email to earlychildhoodscreening@mpls.k12.mn.us

Website: http://ece.mpls.k12.mn.us/early_childhood_screening

Preschool Program and Application

Our school is pleased to offer its families a high-quality preschool program for 4 year-old students. Students who turn 4 years old by September 1 of that school year will be given first priority for enrollment. If there are more than twenty applicants, the preschool enrollment will be determined by a lottery system. Potential applicants can apply to the preschool using the same application that is used for the rest of the school and must be turned in before the last business day in January to be included in the lottery process in April.

The lottery process will also determine the student's position on the waitlist. Applications must be complete, with a copy of birth certificate and immunizations, to begin the enrollment process. You can find a copy of this application on our website auroracharterschool.org.

Preschool Tuition/ Late Charges

A sliding scale tuition structure is available to families who can prove financial need. If you are interested in financial assistance, please let us know. Scholarship applications are available. Tuition is due on the first business day of the month. Otherwise arrangements can be made with administration to have tuition paid weekly as long as full month tuition is paid before the following month's due date.

If a student is expected to begin school at the beginning of the school year, parents must pay the first two payments before the start date. If a family does not pay that amount by the start date, the school will only hold that student's spot for one week. After that time, the school will fill the open spot with a student on the wait list. The next payment will be due on October 1st.

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten applications for the school year 2016-2017, may be turned in as early as September of 2015. All applications must be completed with the birth certificate, immunization records and Early Childhood Evaluation. The parent(s) have no more than 30 days from the first day of school to submit this information.

If a child is transferred from another kindergarten program to Aurora Charter School, the parent or guardian of the child will be allowed 30 days to submit the child's record, during which time the child may attend school. All applications must be received by the last business day in January to be included in the lottery process. The lottery process will also determine the student's position on waitlist. Students who are siblings of currently enrolled students and the children of staff members will have priority.

Early Admission to Kindergarten

Aurora Charter School District's policy is that if your child will turn 5 years old between September 1st and October 31st, your child is eligible for consideration for early admission into Kindergarten. Children must complete an early childhood screening and other assessments before your request for early admission is accepted.

Policy: 103 Early Entrance Kindergarten is available on our website for your reference

For students to succeed in the unique dual-language program of ACS, the languages of instruction must be supported and reinforced. Students should receive consistent academic assistance outside the school environment in the languages of instruction. ACS accepts student applications for enrollment year round.

For any admission questions you may directly call
Ana Soria (Administrative Assistant) to our admissions line at (612)-200-9585

Attendance

Aurora Charter School believes regular attendance is directly related to the success in academic work. This is a joint responsibility shared by the student, parent and administrators. As required by Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minn. Stat. 120.22, the students are required to attend all assigned classes every day school is in session, unless the student has been excused. All absences & tardies are recorded in the system. In the event of a student's absence, the parent/guardian should call the school by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. If the absence is not reported, office staff will make every attempt to locate the whereabouts of the student.

Excused absence

To be considered an excused absence, the student's parents or legal guardian may be asked to verify, in writing, the reason for the student's absence. For example, a note from a physician stating the student could not attend would be considered an excused absence.

Excused absence would include the following:

1. Illness
2. Medical/Dental Appointment
3. Death in family
4. Court Appearance
5. Religious instruction that does not exceed 3 hours in any week.

Unexcused absence

TRUANCY: Any absence that does not fall under the previously stated reasons or not approved by school administration. Vacation or personal trips are considered unexcused absences. School must be notified immediately, if there are any plans for a trip or vacation. As well as 3 unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence.

Continuing Truant

Minn. Stat. § 120.A requires schools to notify parents of student attendance obligation as previously stated.

1. **Elementary age child** is considered continuing truant, if absent 3 days (unexcused) from a single school year.
2. **Middle school age child**, is considered continuing truant, if 3 or more class periods are missed (unexcused) on any three days during a single school year

Student Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to attend all assigned classes every day that school is in session. It is also the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to any absence and turn them in within 3 days of absence. This applies to both elementary and middle school.

School Uniform Requirements

Preschool - 4th Grade:

1. Navy Pants/Skirt
2. Blue/White Shirt with school logo only
3. Navy sweater with school logo only (**Hoodies or other sweaters are not allowed**)
4. White/Grey/Black tennis shoes

5th-8th Grade:

1. Beige Pants (No Baggy pants for boys/No "skinny" or leggings style for girls)
2. White/Blue shirt with school logo only
3. Navy sweater with school logo only (**hoodies or other sweaters are not allowed**)
4. White/Grey/Black tennis shoes

No Uniform Procedure

Elementary	1) Students have the responsibility to keep track of their gym schedules so that they are properly dressed for gym.
Middle School	2) Any student not meeting the uniform requirement will be sent to the office.
	3) *1st Warning: The office receptionist will speak to the student and enter the uniform violation in the JMC system. Parents will be notified and reminded of the uniform requirements for Aurora. 2nd Warning: . The office receptionist will record the uniform violation on our JMC system and parents will be called. At this time parents must bring the proper uniform for the student. The student will remain in the office working on school items until the parent arrives. 3rd Warning: The student will meet with the Executive Director and parents will also be called by the Executive Director. The student will be serving a day of in-school suspension as a consequence.
	4) The follow-up/process will be completed by the Executive Director. *It is very important to complete the verbal interaction between parents and receptionists, since this is the last warning without consequences.

Donald's Uniform is our uniform provider, you may check out their website at:

www.donaldsuniform.com

Discipline

K-8th Grade Behavioral Procedure Plan

Students must be sent immediately to Reception for the following behaviors.

- Violence
 - Fighting/Physical aggression
 - Defiance
 - Anger outbursts
 - Bullying
 - Threats and intimidation
 - Destroying/defacing property
 - Theft
 - Abusive language and actions
 - Possession of a weapon
-

Elementary

- 1) All teachers should have a behavior pass in their classroom.
 - 2) Student will be sent to the office with a detailed explanation written on behavior pass.
 - 3) 1st Incident/Violation – Reception will speak to student and enter incident on JMC. Teachers are to send a note or email to parents, this note must be returned by parents signed.
2nd Violation-Student will be sent to the office. Reception will then enter the incident in JMC and call parents to notify them. Reception will inform the parents that they will receive a call from the teacher with a detailed explanation. Teacher Must* call parents to report incident.
3rd Violation- Student will speak to Director/s and parents will be called by Director/s.
 - 4) Director/s will evaluate the situation and determine the consequence. Director/s will ensure parents and teachers are notified, this is additional to co-developing a plan with parents, teachers and students.

*It is very important that verbal exchange is completed between parents and teachers, seeing that this is the last warning without consequences.
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Middle School

- 1) All teachers should have a behavior pass in their classroom.
 - 2) Student will be sent to the office with a detailed explanation written on behavior pass.
 - 3) 1st Incident/Violation – Teacher must send a detailed email to reception so that the receptionist may enter this violation into JMC. Teachers are to send a note or email to parents, this note must be returned by parents signed.
2nd Violation-Teacher must find time to report incident directly to Reception. This is additional to sending a note home or sending an email to parents. Reception will then call parent and make entry into JMC.
3rd Violation- Student will speak to Director/s and parents will be called by Director/s.
 - 4) Director/s will evaluate the situation and determine the consequence. Director/s will ensure parents and teachers are notified, this is additional to co-developing a plan with parents, teachers and students.

* Once student speaks to Director/s student may be sent back to class. When incident is fully assessed then consequences will be communicated to parents and teachers.
-

Sending student to the office outside classroom: (i.e. cafeteria, hallway)

- 1) All teachers should have a behavior pass in their classroom.
 - 2) Teacher will communicate to the office the reason for the referral either by the use of a behavior pass, phone call, email or communication via Walkie Talkie.
 - 3) 1st Incident/Violation – Reception will call students parent and enter visit on JMC. Teachers are to send a note or email to parents, this note must be returned by parents signed.
2nd Violation- Teacher must find time to report incident directly to Reception. This is additional to sending a note home or sending an email to parents. Reception will then call parent and make entry into JMC.
3rd Violation- Student will speak to Director/s and parents will be called by Director/s.
 - 4) Director/s will evaluate the situation and determine the consequence. Director/s will ensure parents and teachers are notified, this is additional to co-developing a plan with parents, teachers and students.
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Student Bullying Prohibition Policy

Consult Appendix A at the end of this manual for Policy #304: Student Bullying Prohibition

Bullying Prevention

Aurora Charter School strives to provide safe, secure and respectful learning environments for all students in school buildings, on school grounds, school buses and at school-sponsored activities. Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to educate.

Bullying of a student or group of students is prohibited:

1. During any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned programs, activities, events or trips.
2. In school buildings, school property, on school buses or other school district-provided transportation, and at designated locations for students to wait for buses and other school district-provided transportation.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school district computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment.
4. When communicated through any electronic technology or personal electronic device while on school property, on school buses or other school-provided transportation, at bus stops, and at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
5. Off campus communication and use of electronic technology which seriously disrupts any student's education.
6. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are also prohibited

Student Transportation and bus routes

Riding the bus is a privilege not a right. Students who ride the bus must be aware of the bus rules and follow them at all times. If a student fails to follow the bus rules it will result in a bus write up. The first time, is a warning; second time is a meeting with the director, and the third time they will get suspended from the bus for one day. If the student continues not to follow the bus rules, they will lose their privilege of riding the bus.

Bus rules: Stay seated and keep voices down. Keep hands, arms, and head in the vehicle at all times. Students must use appropriate respectful language on the bus. Students must respect others at all time while riding the bus.

Students are required to wear bus tags every day. If your child needs a new bus tag, contact the school office.

Be sure to be allow 10 minutes before and after your pick-up/drop-off time for bus to arrive.

Feel free to contact Bus Company, only if bus has not arrived. The school offices are authorized to make any changes to the bus routes.

Bille Bus Transportation Dispatch: 612-270-2605

**If your child is attending preschool, he/she is not allowed to ride the bus without an older sibling. If the child has no older sibling getting on/off the same bus stop, there will be no bus transportation given. Parents will be responsible to pick-up/drop-off child daily.*

Wellness Program

ACS understands that for certain occasions students would like to bring treats to share with the class. Any food brought to school, must be commercially prepared and in a sealed, unopened package. Please check with the class teacher/school office for approval or to receive notification of any students with present food allergies. Aurora Charter School is a proud participant of the WELLNESS program. We have a list of approved snacks that will support students building healthy habits. This list will be available in the office of both schools.

Lunch Procedures

The Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program is a state and federally funded plan to help student/s who reside with families whose financial situation might prevent the student/s from receiving a healthy meal. ACS offers Free and Reduced lunches for families that qualify.

During the summer, the school will send home letters or applications for educational benefits to families that have students enrolled at the school for the coming school year. In order to qualify for Free or Reduced meal status, this letter/application must be completed, signed, and returned to the school two weeks prior to the first day of school. Applications that are illegible, missing information, do not include the applicant’s social security number or statement that the applicant does not have one, or are not signed will be automatically declined. If this happens, the families can reapply with completed applications, but they would still be responsible to pay for any meals purchased before the completed application was submitted.

This year, Aurora Charter School is changing the way families who qualify for Reduced or Paid meals pay for their child’s meals. **Before the first day of school, families who receive letters stating that their child qualifies for Reduced meals or must pay for their meals must submit a \$50 deposit per student to the school before the first day of school.** Families will be notified when their meal accounts are low on funds and must deposit more to their meal accounts. If their child continues to eat school meals when their accounts have a negative balance, the school will continue to contact the families, and a meeting with a Director might be required. Please contact the school office if you need an application or have any questions

Morning and After School Program

ACS provides a Morning and After school Program for those parents that work earlier or later then our school hours. Be aware that there will be no bus transportation provided; parents have the responsibility to drop-off/pick-up their son/daughter.

Morning Program

6:30 AM- 7:20 AM

(Available on early release days)

After School Program

2:45 PM- 4:30 PM

(Not available on early release days)

Cost	\$4.00 per hour. If your child stays 5 minutes past 2:45 PM, there will be a charge of \$4.00 per hour regardless of whether they stay for five minutes or for one hour. This also applies for the Morning Program, when child arrives before 7:20 AM.
Payments	Payments are due every Friday for that current week. <i>Any payments made after that will receive a \$5.00 late charge</i>
Acceptable forms of payment	Cash or check (Write checks out to Aurora Charter School)
Late Charges	We close at 4:30 PM prompt. (after school program is not available on early release days) <i>There will be a late charge of \$1.00/per minute/per child after 4:30 PM. Payment is due immediately.</i>

Fees and NSF

For families who do not qualify for Reduced or Paid meals pay for their child's meals, will receive a bill every two weeks. Parents will also be contacted by the office when balances are low on their breakfast/lunch account.

The charge for our Morning and Afterschool Program will be due on a weekly basis.

NSF(Non-sufficient Funds Fee)

In the event your check is returned for non-payment, the face value may be recovered electronically along with state allowed recovery fee. If the check is returned two times for non-payment, checks will no longer be a form of payment for the remainder of the year. Every returned check will incur a \$30 fee check, plus any late charges.

School Closing and Early Releases

Since Aurora Charter School is located within Minneapolis Public School District, our school will not open if they are closed. Due to severe weather our school may close throughout the year. If this were to occur it please check on KSTP 5 and our website, Auroracharterschool.org. Apart from this, parents/guardians will also receive a recorded message or text by phone announcing the school closure.

To see this current years early release days, please check your school calendar or request it from the office.

Emergency and Health Forms

Parents have received Emergency and Health forms to be filled out and returned to the school office by the first day of school. It is very important that the information we have is accurate. Immediately notify the school with any changes.

In the event it becomes necessary for the district staff in charge to obtain emergency care for your child, neither he/she or Aurora Charter School assumes financial liability for the expenses incurred because of an accident, injury, illness and/or unforeseen circumstances.

Medication and Immunizations

Students requiring administration of prescribed medication during school hours need to have a signed consent form by parent/guardians and licensed medical provider. The school will not be able to provide over the counter medicine for students.

In order to attend ACS, it is required by law to show that the student has had his/her immunizations. The student has to have all necessary immunizations completed within 18 months or they cannot attend school.

Change of Address/ Phone Numbers

Please immediately inform the school of any change in address, emergency contact number and home phone number. If the change of address falls outside school range bus transportation will not be available. Allow up to two weeks for bus route changes, if they fall within our district boundaries for transportation.

Visitors and Volunteers

At Aurora, we take the safety of the students very seriously. As a safety measure, we are asking that ALL visitors to the building stop at the office and make your presence known to staff. You will be issued a visitors pass when you check in. We encourage parents and others volunteers to come into our building and work in classrooms. All volunteers must complete a background check with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

Please note the following: Parents/Guardians- If you are dropping off a student after classes have started, you must check in with the office and drop off your child at the office. To go past reception into the school you must have a visitors pass. Also, if you are picking up a student before school is dismissed please come to the office and ask the office to call the child from his/her classroom. Please do not go directly to the classroom, as this may also distract the children. Anyone seen in the school that we do not know will be questioned.

Field Trips and Chaperones

Your child's class will be participating in educational field trips during the year. ACS requires to have parental permission before allowing a student to travel with members of his/her class. If your child has a medical condition, which the school should be aware of before allowing your child to participate on a field trip, you must notify the school and inform them of the nature of the medical condition.

****In the event it becomes necessary for the district staff in charge to obtain emergency care for your child, neither he/she or Aurora Charter School assumes financial liability for the expenses incurred because of an accident, injury, illness and/or unforeseen circumstances.***

Parents who wish to assist in chaperoning a field trip may volunteer by contacting the teacher of the class or the executive director. All children participating in field trips must ride school-provided transportation to and from the field trip site.

Families may be asked to contribute a small contribution to their child's field trip entry fee.

Conferences

Conferences provide opportunities for teachers to share information with parents about their child's progress in school. These conferences are scheduled at the end of every quarter. Additional conferences may be held at the request of the parent or teacher anytime during the year. Elementary age students have conferences based on appointments; the school office will contact you two weeks prior to the conference date to schedule those appointments. Additional reminders are sent home with students. Middle school aged children do not require appointments. There will be slotted time designated for middle school conferences during which parents may come to speak with teachers.

Lost and Found

Throughout the year a large amount of sweaters, hats, coats and gloves are often accumulated. Please mark the child's name on all items. Also encourage your child to check the lost and found for any items. ***The school does not make itself responsible for any lost items.***

Lockers

Aurora Charter School ensures to provide a safe and healthy educational environment. In the presence of the student, ACS has the right to search a student's locker, desks, personal possessions or person if ACS official have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules.

Cell Phones and other electronics

Use of a cell phone/other electronics in building or during class time will result in the phone being confiscated and held in the office until parent picks it up personally. We encourage students to leave phones/electronic devices at home. If they are brought, they are to be left in the office for the day. At dismissal time, the phones/electronic devices will be returned to students. Students are not to loan their cell phones to others to use.

Technology Acceptable Use

New technologies are changing the ways that information may be accessed, communicated, and transferred. These technological shifts also offer the opportunity to enhance instruction and student learning. Aurora Charter School (ACS) will provide access to various computerized information resources consisting of software, hardware, computer networks and electronic communications systems. This may include access to electronic mail, so called "on-line services" and the "Internet." It may include the opportunity to have independent access to the ACS Network. All use of the ACS Network shall be subject to this policy and accompanying regulations. Further, all such use must be in support of education and/or research and consistent with the goals and purposes of the Aurora Charter School District. District staff, students, and visitors are authorized to use the District's on-line services in accordance with acceptable uses outlined below.

Acceptable Uses of Technology

The following actions, which are not exhaustive, constitute acceptable use of the Internet, whether that use is initiated from a school or any other site:

1. All Internet or computer equipment use shall be consistent with the purposes, goals, and policies of the School District.
2. Use of computers, software, on-line services and other information resources to support learning and to complete school assignments.
3. Sending and receiving electronic files using e-mail for academic purposes.

Equal Opportunity Policy

ACS, in compliance with current state and federal statutes and regulations, and in recognition of its obligations to provide equal opportunity for education and employment for all persons, affirms that will not discriminate on basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability or any other ACS's

Executive Director at Aurora Charter School, 2101 26th St. Minneapolis, MN 55404
Aurora Charter Middle School, 2103 26th St. Minneapolis, MN 55404.
Phone: 612-200-9580.

ACS recognizes its obligation under Section of 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. No discrimination against any person with at handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices at ACS. If there are questions regarding 504, Executive Director at Aurora Charter School, 2101 26th St. Minneapolis, MN 55404
Aurora Charter Middle School, 2103 26th St. Minneapolis, MN 55404.
Phone: 612-200-9580

Tennessee Notice

When allegations of violations of ACS rules, ACS Behavior Guidelines or ACS Policy or Procedure have been brought to the administration's attention, the ACS will conduct an investigation to find out the facts regarding the allegations and determine what action, if any, ACS will take. Action may include disciplinary action against the individual(s) involved. Students are not required to speak to the administrator, however, refusal to do so could be considered insubordination and could lead to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion/exclusion. Any information that is provided will be used to determine the facts and the subsequent action the ACS will take. The information that is provided may also be shared with other ACS officials, the ACS's attorney, law enforcement, other responsible agencies and/or the public as required by law.

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Aurora Charter School

Policy #: 304

Policy Name: Student Bullying Prohibition Policy

Adopted: 08/18/2014

Revised: 09/18/2014

Reviewed:

1. PURPOSE

Aurora Charter School strives to provide safe, secure and respectful learning environments for all students in school buildings, on school grounds, school buses and at school-sponsored activities. Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to educate.

This policy protects students against bullying and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, status with regard to public assistance, age, military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic defined in Chapter 363A. This policy also protects any student who voluntarily participates in any district function or activity, whether the student is enrolled in the district or not.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Prohibited conduct ("bullying") means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students creating an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in bullying and the target of bullying that has or can be reasonably predicted by repeated forms or pattern to have one or more of the following effects:
 - 2.1.1. Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
 - 2.1.2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
 - 2.1.3. Substantially interfering with the student's educational opportunities and performance.
 - 2.1.4. Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- 2.2. Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.
- 2.3. "Cyberbullying" means using electronic information and communication technologies to bully. This may include, but is not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network, Internet, website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.
- 2.4. "Remedial response" means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of the student who is the target of the prohibited conduct. Remedial response also means a measure to stop and correct retaliation for asserting, alleging, reporting or providing information about prohibited conduct (retaliation) or knowingly making a false report about prohibited conduct (false report), prevent retaliation or false reports from recurring and protect, support and intervene on behalf of the student who is the target of the prohibited conduct.
- 2.5. "Immediately" means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.
- 2.6. "District employee" includes school board members, administrators, educators, aids, school counselors, social workers, psychologists, other school mental health professionals, nurses and other school-based/linked medical providers/health professionals, cafeteria workers, custodians,

bus drivers, athletic coaches, extracurricular activities advisors, paraprofessionals, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district and its students.

3. PROHIBITIONS

- 3.1. Bullying of a student or group of students is prohibited:
 - 3.1.1. During any school-sponsored or school-sanctioned programs, activities, events or trips.
 - 3.1.2. In school buildings, school property, on school buses or other school district-provided transportation, and at designated locations for students to wait for buses and other school district-provided transportation.
 - 3.1.3. Through the transmission of information from a school district computer or computer network, or other electronic school equipment.
 - 3.1.4. When communicated through any electronic technology or personal electronic device while on school property, on school buses or other school-provided transportation, at bus stops, and at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
 - 3.1.5. Off campus communication and use of electronic technology which seriously disrupts any student's education.
- 3.2. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are also prohibited.

4. RESPONSE

- 4.1. School director or designee (hereinafter director/designee) is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying at the building level. They will ensure this policy and its procedures are fairly and fully implemented and serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters implicating both the district or school and department. If the complaint involves the director/designee, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the Director.
- 4.2. When investigating a complaint, director/designee may take into account the following factors:
 - 4.2.1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved.
 - 4.2.2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior.
 - 4.2.3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior.
 - 4.2.4. The relationship between the parties involved.
 - 4.2.5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Investigation of a bullying incident shall be initiated within three school days of receipt of a report and be completed within 10 school days, unless the director/designee grants in writing an additional five-day extension due to extenuating circumstances. ***See Attachment A for a template investigation process.***
- 4.3. **Consequences** - Many student conflicts can be resolved immediately and do not require reporting or creation of an incident report. Schools must respond to bullying in a manner tailored to the individual incident, considering the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance. Appropriate responses and consequences are outlined in either the Student Handbook or in ***Attachment B.***
- 4.4. **Appeal** - Any party who is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal to the district's human rights officer within 10 school days of notification of the director/designee's decision. The human rights officer will conduct a review of the appeal and, within 10 school days of receipt of the appeal, will affirm, reverse or modify the findings of the report. The human rights officer shall notify the party requesting the appeal and the director that its decision is final and shall document that notification in the incident report.
- 4.5. **District Employees** - When it is determined that a district employee was aware prohibited conduct was taking place but failed to report it, the employee will be considered to have violated this policy. The principal shall consider employee discipline for such violations, making reference to any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Remedies for offending contractors should be imposed according to their district contracts.
- 4.6. **Reprisal** - The school district will take appropriate action against any student or district employee who retaliates against any person who reports alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment or intentional disparate treatment.

5. NOTICE AND DISSEMINATION OF REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1. The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and district employees, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook and posted in an electronic format in the languages appearing on its district/school website. This policy should also be:
 - 5.1.1. Posted in the district and school building administrative offices and throughout each school building in areas accessible to students and district employees.
 - 5.1.2. Included in each school's student handbook on school policies.
 - 5.1.3. Be given to each school district employee and independent contractor at the time of entering into the person's employment contract.

6. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

- 6.1. **Staff** - Professional development will be offered annually to build the skills of all district employees to implement this policy. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:
 - 6.1.1. Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent incidents of bullying and to intervene immediately and effectively to stop them in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim.
 - 6.1.2. Information about the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an actor, target and witness to the bullying.
 - 6.1.3. Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk, and any specific interventions that may be particularly effective for addressing bias-based bullying.
 - 6.1.4. Recognizing, responding to and reporting bullying.
 - 6.1.5. Information about the incidence and nature of cyberbullying.
 - 6.1.6. Information about Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.
 - 6.1.7. A review of the district's reporting requirements related to bullying and cyberbullying.
- 6.2. **Student Education** - Each school shall incorporate into the school curriculum developmentally appropriate programmatic instruction to help students identify, prevent and reduce bullying and create a safe learning environment. The superintendent or designee shall determine the scope and duration of the units of instruction and topics covered but should include evidence-based social-emotional learning to prevent and reduce discrimination and other improper conduct to engage all students in creating a safe and supportive school environment. ***See Attachment C for more information on student instruction.***

Attachment A – Investigation process AURORA CHARTER SCHOOL ACTION

The director/designee shall perform the investigation.

- 1) Investigation of a bullying incident shall be initiated within three school days of receipt of a report and be completed within 10 school days, unless the director /designee grants in writing an additional five-day extension due to extenuating circumstances. The director/designee shall document the extension in the investigation report and shall notify the parties involved. The director/designee will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who report bullying incidents and are responsible for keeping and protecting access to any written records of the investigation.
- 2) Prior to the investigation of an incident, the director/designee will take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the alleged actor(s), target(s), bystander(s) or reporter pending completion of an investigation. Once an investigation is concluded, further steps will be taken as needed to assure the continued safety of the complainant from additional incidents of bullying or retaliation.
- 3) The purpose of the investigation is to make a determination as to whether a reported incident constitutes a case of bullying. These determinations will be made in consideration of the totality of the facts and the circumstances surrounding the incident, such as the nature of the behavior, past incidents or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationship between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incident occurred.
- 4) **AURORA CHARTER SCHOOL ACTION**
 - a) Identifying the alleged actor(s), target(s) and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the

incident or may have reliable information about it.

- b) Conducting an individual interview in a private setting with the alleged actor and target. The alleged actor and target should never be interviewed together or in public. Individual interviews shall also be conducted in private with student and adult bystanders. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the director/designee.
- c) Determining how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior, and whether the target's education, including but not limited to, a negative impact on academic performance, educational opportunities and participation in school activities was affected.
- d) Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety, and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan to prevent the recurrence of an incidence that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted.
- e) If the director/designee determines the reported incident may involve criminal activity or the basis for criminal charges, information about the incident must be conveyed to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. As part of making this determination, the director/designee may wish to consult with either a law enforcement officer or legal counsel. Law enforcement shall only be contacted if all other available remedies have been exhausted.
- f) When appropriate, preparing a report identifying his/her recommendation for individual consequences.
- g) Comprehensively documenting the details of the investigation.
- h) When the investigation is complete, the director/designee shall ensure the investigation report is attached to the incident report.

Attachment B – Response and Consequences

For the student harmed:

Aurora Charter School will protect, support and intervene on behalf of the student who is the target of the prohibited conduct.

Support may include: referral to student support staff for one-to-one support or social skills training; daily check-in and check-out with a trusted adult in the school; choice to participate in a restorative process, facilitated by a trained facilitator.

For the student who violated the prohibited conduct policy:

When an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the principal/designee shall explain the consequences in a non-hostile manner, and shall impose any consequence immediately and consistently. The director/designee shall keep communicating and working with all parties involved until the situation is resolved. Some key indicators of resolution include:

- The actor is no longer bullying and is interacting civilly with the target.
- The target reports feeling safe and is interacting civilly with the actor.
- School staff observes an increase in positive behavior and social-emotional competency in the actor and/or the target.
- School staff observes a more positive climate in the physical location where bullying incidents were high.

REMEDIAL RESPONSE AND REFERRALS

The director/designee shall design and implement remedial measures to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem, protect and provide support for the target of the bullying, and take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to bullying. The principal/designee shall refer students who bully to positive-behavior small-group interventions (for anger management, trauma or social skills) within the school; if possible, to reinforce the behavioral expectation they violated and increase their social-emotional competency. The principal/designee shall ask a school mental health professional to refer targets of bullying to individual or group therapy where they can openly express their feelings about

their bullying experience, or social-skills training and/or groups where they can practice assertiveness and coping mechanisms.

Attachment C – Student Instruction

Administration is encouraged to take such actions as deemed appropriate to accomplish the following goals:

- 1) Engage students in creating a safe and supportive school environment.
- 2) Partner with parents and other community members to develop and implement prevention and intervention programs.
- 3) Engage all students and adults in integrating education, intervention and other remedial responses into the school environment.
- 4) Train student bystanders to intervene in and report incidents of bullying and other prohibited conduct.
- 5) Teach students to advocate for themselves and others.
- 6) Prevent inappropriate referrals to special education of students who may engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct.
- 7) Foster student collaborations to create a more conducive environment for a supportive school climate.

Possible units of instruction could include:

- a) Social emotional learning.
- b) Appropriate behavior online/on social media and cyberbullying awareness and response.
- c) Valuing diversity in school and society.
- d) Advocacy skills for themselves and others.
- e) Skills for solving problems, managing conflict, engaging in civil discourse, and recognizing, responding to, and reporting bullying.
- f) The age-appropriate unit of instruction may be incorporated into the current courses of study regularly taught. Schools shall satisfy the documentation requirements established by the superintendent or designee to ensure compliance with this curricular requirement.