

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF LEARNING CHARTER SCHOOL



**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK AND
CODE OF CONDUCT**

**2026-2027
ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR**

I. General Information

CONTACT INFORMATION

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LEADERSHIP TEAM

Gia Edwards, Guidance Counselor

Katie Black, Social Work

Marissa Lowe, Teacher

Brenda Fetsko, Office Administrator

Lorawn Dupree, Administrative Assistant

Olivia Christopher, CFO

Bethany Gibson, Special Education Coordinator/Principal K-12

Dr. Erica Kolat, Director of Learning and Innovation

Heather Nicholson, CEO

INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

The mission of California Academy of Learning Charter School is to prepare all students for their individual capabilities to become lifelong learners ready to meet the challenges of the future. In partnership with families and the community, our goal is to create relevant learning experiences for each individual student that develop the knowledge, skills, and character necessary for a technically advanced future.

Vision

Our vision is an innovative educational experience designed for students as individuals that equips them with the skills and mindset to take on the world.

Staff Directory

Jennifer Walsh	Kindergarten	walshj@calcharteracademy.org
Rebecca Berdine	1st Grade	berdiner@calcharteracademy.org
Stacy Neff	2nd Grade	neffs@calcharteracademy.org
Amber Bonelli	3rd Grade	bonellia@calcharteracademy.org
Jessica Ashmore	4th Grade	ashmorej@calcharteracademy.org
Marissa Lowe	5th Grade	lowem@calcharteracademy.org
Zalie Skolyak	6-8th ELA	skolyakz@calcharteracademy.org
Scott Cooper	6-8th Social Studies	coopers@calcharteracademy.org
Kelsey Allsopp	6-8th Math	allsoppk@calcharteracademy.org
Ryan Way	6-8th Science	wayr@calcharteracademy.org
Madison Tournay	9-12 ELA	tournaym@calcharteracademy.org
Katie Cosalter	9-12 Science	cosalterk@calcharteracademy.org
Brooke Lincoski	9-12 Social Studies	lincoskib@calcharteracademy.org
Anthony Bieliski	9-12 Math	bieliskia@calcharteracademy.org
Brooke Evans	Special Education 6-12	evansb@calcharteracademy.org

Dina Crockett	Special Education 6-12	crockett@calcharteracademy.org
DJ Thomas	Special Education K-6	thomasd@calcharteracademy.org
Gianna Oakes	Interventionist and Gifted Teacher	oakesg@calcharteracademy.org
Jay Davis	Expressions Lab	davisj@calcharteracademy.org
Victoria Wellington	STEAM	wellingtonv@calcharteracademy.org
Gia Edwards	Guidance	edwardsg@calcharteracademy.org
Katie Black	Social Worker	blackk@calcharteracademy.org
Brittanie Kanoff	Aide - elementary K-5	kanoffb@calcharteracademy.org
Michelle McCoy	Paraprofessional	mccoym@calcharteracademy.org
Tyhesha Biddings	Paraprofessional	biddingst@calcharteracademy.org
Lisa Roberts	Nurse K-12	robertsl@calcharteracademy.org
Roderick Wilson	Security	wilsonr@calcharteracademy.org
Cody Christopher	Head of Maintenance	christopherc@calcharteracademy.org
Missy Beck	Cafeteria/custodial	beckm@calcharteracademy.org
Breanna Miller	Speech	millerb@calcharteracademy.org
Amory Merriman	Substitute/Music K-5	merrimana@calcharteracademy.org

Right to Know and Appropriate State Certifications

The California Academy of Learning Charter School receives Federal Title I funding to assist all students in meeting state achievement standards. Throughout the school year, we will provide you with important information and opportunities to learn more about this law and to partner in providing your child with engaging, meaningful learning experiences.

Under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), parents of children attending Title I schools have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. At any time you may ask:

- Whether the teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and/or subject he/she is teaching;
- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived; and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher hold, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which was signed into law in December 2015 and reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1956 (ESEA), includes opportunities for additional right-to-know requests. At any time, parents can request:

- Information on policies regarding student participation in assessments and procedures for opting out; and
- Information on required assessments that include
 - Subject matter tested,
 - Purpose of the test,
 - Source of the requirement (if applicable),
 - Amount of time it takes students to complete the test, and
 - Time and format for disseminating results.

We are committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking he/she needs to succeed in school and beyond. If you have questions related to teacher certification and qualifications of paraprofessionals who might be working with your child, please contact Dr. Erica L. Kolat, Director of Learning & Innovation, kolate@calcharteracademy.org.

Address/Telephone Changes

It is very important that every student maintain an up-to-date address and telephone number record at the school office. If you have a change in address, email, or telephone number during the school year, notify the school immediately to assure efficient communication between school and home and to update your child's transportation services.

Arrival

Arrival Time of Elementary K-3 School:

Students are permitted in the building at 8:00 am and are late at 8:20 am. They are to report directly to their homerooms. Breakfast will be available in the charter hallway at 8:00 am if they wish to have breakfast. Students who arrive after 8:20 am must enter through the side / main doors of the Charter School, with a parent, and report to the office. Parents must sign their child in for a late admission slip. Excessive tardies may result in holding an attendance meeting with parents, guidance counselor, and administration and the tardies may accrue as illegal absences.

Arrival Time of Phillipsburg 4-10 School:

Students are permitted in the building at 7:50 am and are late at 8:10 am. They are to report directly to the cafeteria area if they wish to have breakfast. Students who arrive late must report to the office with a parent. Parents must sign their child in for a late admission slip. Students with four or more unexcused tardies may receive disciplinary action and/or loss of privileges. Privileges included, but are not limited to driving to and from school, after school activities, field trips. Excessive tardies may result in holding an attendance meeting with parents, guidance counselor, and administration and the tardies may accrue as illegal absences.

Cancellations, Snow Days, Emergencies, or Delays:

The California Academy of Learning Charter School utilizes a notification system, which allows us to reach parents, students, and staff members instantly via ParentSquare. Additionally, information will be posted on the school website and social media. Any parent who feels that local road conditions are not safe for travel should feel free to keep a child at home. Students may be excused from missing school in this circumstance, if approved by administration. Parents must notify the school via phone or email the morning of the absence.

Communication with Parents/Guardians:

Parents/guardians shall receive regular contact from teachers for every student relative to academic or behavioral occurrences. This correspondence can occur in person, by phone, email, ParentSquare, or letter.

Computer Use:

All students and parents must sign off on a separate Acceptable Use of Computer Agreement form each year, outlining in further detail the expectations of computer use at California Academy of Learning Charter School. Failure to return this form will result in loss of computer privileges. Computer misuse will result in disciplinary action. Information and programs stored on CAL computers, storage systems, or peripherals are the private property of the individual creator of California Academy of Learning Charter School, and shall not be duplicated.

Conferences

Parent Teacher conferences will be held two (2) times throughout the school year. Both are pre-scheduled on our calendar. Information will be sent out prior to the conference dates for parents to electronically sign up for a conference with their

child's teacher. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to arrange and attend conferences, with their students, as necessary throughout the year. Please contact your child's teacher if a conference is needed outside of the two (2) regularly scheduled conferences.

Custody/Court Orders

At times, there are legal papers in the form of custody agreements or court orders that pertain to students and their specific circumstances. Parents must provide custody agreements/court orders to the school office. If parents/guardians are aware of modification of existing paperwork, it is their responsibility to provide the updated paperwork to the school office. After the initial submission of this paperwork, any revisions to paperwork or newly issued documents must be presented to the school office. Paperwork that is on file in the school office will be considered up-to-date unless a parent presents new paperwork or revisions to these legal documents.

Dismissal Times:

Student dismissal times are as follows:

Phillipsburg (4-12) School: 2:40 pm

Elementary School: 2:50 pm

Students are not permitted to leave the building once they have entered nor will loitering be permitted in the halls. Students must be in attendance 4-1/2 hours to be considered present for a full day. Anything less than 4-1/2 hours is considered a half-day attendance unless prior arrangements have been made with the school administration.

Students requesting an early dismissal should stop in the main office when they arrive in the building to turn in written permission from a parent and to receive an early dismissal slip. No student may leave the building without written permission from parent/guardian. If it is necessary to be dismissed from school (other than a school related function), the student must have a written note that contains:

- Dismissal time
- Reason
- Parent phone number
- Parent signature

**We may contact parents or guardians for verification.*

Students who are signed out or leave school prior to 2:30 pm on three (3) or more occasions within a quarter for reasons such as employment, sports

practices, family activities, or other non-school-related purposes may accumulate unexcused missed instructional minutes. These missed instructional minutes will be included in attendance calculations and may contribute toward truancy determinations in accordance with Pennsylvania attendance laws and school policy.

FERPA Notification-Confidentiality of Student Records:

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

- *The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the California Academy of Learning Charter School receives a request for access.* The parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the building principal, or appropriate CAL official, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- *The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.* Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the school principal or appropriate school official, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be changed, and specify why it should be changed. If California Academy of Learning Charter School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- *The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.* One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate

educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit

personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the California Academy of Learning Charter School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

- *The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.*

The name and address of the federal office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

With concern or to register a complaint please contact:

California Academy of Learning Charter School
Attn: Mrs. Heather Nicholson
750 Orchard Street
California, PA 15419
724-963-9000

Financial Obligations:

The school believes that students must respect property and develop feelings

of pride in community institutions. Any destruction, accidental or intentional, must be paid for by the family at the main office. Any student that is enrolled in a CTE program, must complete the entire semester of work. If a student

moves, wants to unenroll in the program, or is removed because of behaviors or academic performance, it will be the families responsibility to pay CAL Charter for the cost of the program they were enrolled in.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), California Academy of Learning Charter School attempts to identify all children who may be experiencing homelessness.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes individuals: •

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or campground due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations or similar settings
- Living in substandard housing (no running water or working utilities, infestations, etc.)

Children who are experiencing homelessness may qualify for assistance with school supplies/materials, tutoring, and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin throughout the duration of their homeless episode.

If you believe your child(ren) may qualify for this service, please contact:

Mrs. Katie Black, homeless liaison
724-963-9000
blackk@calcharteracademy.org

If your living situation changes during the school year, and you and your children become homeless, please be sure to contact the school. We will work with you so that your child(ren)'s education is disrupted as little as possible.

Parents' Rights

General

California Academy of Learning Charter School is required each year to provide you with notice of your rights with respect to your child's educational records. The purpose is to advise you of the types of information that may be disclosed to the public throughout the course of the school year. The following

information may be disclosed to the public:

- Academic Honors
- Students of Honor
- Other Academic Accolades

You will be sent a letter notifying you of your rights. This letter will also advise you of your right to review your child's educational records pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Should you have any questions regarding the information contained in the letter, please feel free to call the office.

Directory Information:

During the course of the school year, directory information (defined below) relating to California Academy of Learning Charter School students may be disclosed to individuals and/or the media. For example, individual and/or group interviews, photographs or videos of the students may be taken for use by the school in various publications, or for use in local newspapers. This publicity provides the community with information about various school programs and achievements. "Directory information" means information contained in an education record of a student, which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

The school may also disclose additional directory information relating to students for various reasons throughout the school year without prior parental consent. Interviews, photographs, and videos, as described above, are also considered to be directory information. (34 CFR §99.3). Directory information does not include disciplinary information, medical records, evaluation records, grades, special education records, or other information that would be

You have the right to refuse to let the school release directory information pertaining to your child. **If you refuse to permit the school to release any or all directory information pertaining to your child, your objection must be in writing. Telephone calls or voice messages will not be sufficient. Should you desire to exercise this right, please write a letter indicating your objection to your school's office within 14 calendar days of the date of this notification.** If you do not provide other written objections, directory information as identified above may be released.

PBIS

The Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Program provides realistic expectations necessary to take a proactive rather than a reactive approach when responding to behavioral and social issues. We maintain an inclusive environment for all students. Expectations are taught, modeled, and communicated to all students throughout the school day.

Students receive "SOAR Tickets" after being recognized by a staff member. Parents are integral in the process. Please see the PBIS Expectations poster in the appendix. Talking with your child about expectations will help foster a greater understanding and a stronger parent/school relationship.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a criterion referenced test used to measure students' progress toward mastering the Pennsylvania Academic Standards in grades 3 through 8. The academic standards identify proficiency levels in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for grades 3 through 8; and starting 2024-25 school year, Science in grade 5 and 8. The dates for the PSSA tests are listed in the school calendar, and notifications will be sent from the school. Students must be in school during the district assessments and PSSA testing, except in cases of illnesses. As these tests are important, vacations will rarely be approved for the weeks of these tests. Due to the necessity to complete the tests within a given window for all students as mandated by the Pennsylvania State Department of Education, make-ups will occur for students during instructional time if missed.

School Counseling and Social Work Services:

Counseling services are part of the regular educational program for all California Academy of Learning Charter School students. Students are supported either individually or in small groups. Students receiving counseling

are assisted in making decisions, setting goals to improve class performance, and discussing personal or social issues. The School Counselor and the Social Worker work closely with teachers, parents, and other school staff. They may also work with people from other local agencies. The goal of the counseling staff is to make school experiences rewarding and meaningful. These counseling services do not take the place of traditional outpatient counseling therapy.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

Students may be referred to Student Assistance Program (SAP) if they experience behavioral difficulties that impede their learning or the learning of others. When appropriate, referrals of a student to SAP may result in the SAP team assisting the classroom teacher in developing individualized positive behavior interventions.

Visitors

The only daytime entrance to school is the main office entrance. All other doors are locked during the school day. All visitors must provide a driver's license or some form of identification to enter the building. Visitors must buzz in through the office and receive a "Visitor's Badge." Visitors must wear their badge prominently and must remember to sign out in the office and return their badge when exiting.

To ensure the safety of the children, visitors will not be permitted to wander through the building. Messages for students or teachers may be given to the secretary in the office so that classroom instruction is not interrupted. No one will be permitted to go to a classroom unless prior arrangements have been made with the classroom teachers and school office.

Volunteer Clearances

All volunteers must have current clearances. A copy of the clearances will be kept on file in the school offices. Clearances must be updated at least every five (5) years. The following clearances are required under law:

- Criminal Record Clearance
- Child Abuse Clearance
- FBI Criminal History Record Information

A volunteer may locate applications for clearances on the following websites:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse (Act 151)

– <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/resources/keep-kids-safe/child-abuse-clearances/pa-child-abuse-history-clearance>

- Criminal Record (Act 34)

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/resources/keep-kids-safe/child-abuse-clearance/criminal-background-check>

- Federal Criminal History (Act 114) – <https://identigo.com> School Code: IKG6Y3
(Additional information at

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dhs/resources/keep-kids-safe/child-abuse-clearances/fbi-fingerprinting>)

II. Health, Safety, and Security

Medication:

Medication Administration:

The administration of any medication by school personnel requires written instructions from the student's provider and written permission from the parent/guardian. This includes prescriptions and over-the-counter medications (Tylenol, Motrin, Tums, etc.).

Medication orders may be faxed directly to the school from the physician's office to (724) 719-9041. Students are not permitted to carry or self-administer any medication in school without prior authorization. Students with an Asthma Inhaler, Epinephrine Injector, or Insulin may keep the medication with them to self-administer only if the prescribing provider determines it is a medical necessity and the appropriate portion of the medication administration consent form is completed.

Medication Drop Off Procedure and Information:

- All medication shall be brought to the nurse's office, or the main office if the nurse is in another building, by the parent/guardian or by another responsible adult designated by the parent/guardian.
- Prescription medications must be brought to school in their original container with the pharmacy label attached.
- Over-the-counter medications must be brought in their original, unopened packaging and labeled with the student's name and date of birth.
- If a medication is delivered to the school in a bag, envelope, or other container, it will not be accepted or administered by school personnel.
- Medication confiscated from a student during bag checks will be forfeited to the nurse and the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the medication or opt for disposal.
- The medication will be counted in front of the parent/adult and recorded on the designated log and signed by the school employee and the parent /guardian.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for picking up any unused medication at the end of the school year. All expired medication will be properly disposed of by the school nurse.

- Weather delays often disrupt the student's medication time at home and therefore the school dose must be adjusted accordingly. For your student's safety, no medication will be given to a student on a delayed day without first communicating with the nurse regarding what time the medication is to be taken in school.

A NEW Medication Administration Consent is required each school year.

NO MEDICATION WILL BE ADMINISTERED WITHOUT A PHYSICIAN'S WRITTEN ORDER

The school nurse is trained and authorized to administer emergency medical care when a student experiences a health crisis during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of emergency epinephrine (EpiPen) for severe allergic reactions, administration of emergency seizure medications or overdose reversal agents such as naloxone (Narcan), and the provision of basic first aid and CPR as needed. These procedures are performed in accordance with state laws, standing orders, and district health protocols to ensure student safety. Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify the school nurse of any known medical conditions or emergency medications prescribed for their child.

Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors/Emergency Medical Situations:

Students may possess and self-administer asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors in compliance with state law and board policy # 210.1. Written requests for such medications from the parent/guardian and the licensed medical personnel are required to be submitted annually to the nurse's office.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills will be held on a regularly scheduled basis during the course of the school year. The following is a listing of drills and their scheduled frequency:

- Fire Drills - Monthly
- Emergency Weather Drill – Annually
- Lockdown Drills - Semester
- Bus Evacuation Drill - August and March

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based on the response to any given situation using common clear language - not codes or code words.

The following are common vocabulary terms and symbols used by staff, students, parents, and emergency responders:

- **Soft Lockdown or Hold** is a response that would clear the hallways, close and lock doors until the situation has been cleared. This is a safety response that brings everyone inside the building and the perimeter is secured. No one is permitted in or out of the building during this time.
- **Lockdown** is a safety response procedure that contains students and staff in safe locations within the building in the event of a threat to safety.
- If there is a need to **evacuate** the building, several locations are identified pending the emergency situation. Procedures are in place.
- **Shelter** is used in situations like weather related incidents such as tornadoes or earthquakes.

School Security:

California Academy of Learning Charter School maintains a safe environment for students, staff, and community. Security cameras are installed in public areas to alert administration of any potential misconduct. School Security Personnel are on site daily to address security.

Outside doors must remain closed/locked during the school day. Visitors must enter only through the main entrance and must provide identification.

III. Student Policies and Procedures

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and cheating on examinations and individual/group submitted work or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools in a manner that misrepresents a student's knowledge, understanding, or effort. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another's words or ideas. Whether such borrowing is intentional or unintentional, it constitutes plagiarism.

There are three common forms of plagiarism:

- The duplication of an author's words without quotation marks or proper footnotes or other appropriate reference.
- The duplication of an author's words or phrases with footnotes (or other appropriate reference) but without quotation marks.
- The use of an author's ideas in paraphrase without proper footnotes or other appropriate reference.

A student who helps another student cheat, or provides answers, is considered equally guilty and will be subject to appropriate discipline. Any student caught cheating on a test or assignment will receive a grade of "zero" for that test or assignment.

Details of the incident will be submitted by the teacher to the administration. Parents will be notified. Restorative Practice/Disciplinary action will be taken.

After School Programs

California Academy of Learning Charter School and California Area School District offer several after-school programs for students. For these programs, students will be called to their assigned area at dismissal. Transportation home is ***always*** the responsibility of the family. Information regarding these programs will be shared from the school.

Backpacks

Students are permitted to carry backpacks, but are not *required* to bring backpacks to school, as CAL Charter does not assign traditional homework and all necessary instructional materials are provided during the school day. All backpacks and student belongings are subject to search.

Bus Behavior

Proper behavior is an absolute necessity while riding on the school bus. The bus driver is in charge and will enforce discipline on the bus. Students involved in misconduct, including showing disrespect for the driver or fellow students, and/or causing damage to the bus, may lose their bus riding privileges. California Academy of Learning Charter School has established the following rules to maintain bus safety.

Students' responsibilities are as follows:

1. Report to your bus stop no earlier than 5 to 10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
2. While waiting for the bus, stay a safe distance from the roadway. Inappropriate behavior at the bus stop will not be tolerated.
3. Board the bus in a safe, orderly manner and go directly to your seat.
4. Cross fifteen feet in front of the bus only when the red lights are flashing and traffic has come to a complete stop.
5. Never cross behind or reach under a bus. Remain visible to the driver at all times. Stand clear of the danger zone.
6. Talk in a normal tone of voice so the driver can concentrate and hear warning sounds.
7. Ask the driver for permission to open windows. You must keep your entire body and all objects inside the bus at all times.

8. Eating, drinking, smoking, vaping, or chewing gum is prohibited on the bus.
9. Help keep your bus clean. No littering. Throwing objects inside or outside is prohibited
10. When the bus arrives at school, exit in an orderly fashion and go directly to your assigned area.

NOTE: Students must ride their assigned bus.

Any request for a permanent change of a bus stop must be approved through the **student's home school district**.

Students may be given assigned seats on the bus. Changes to the seating chart can be made by the driver or principal.

Bus Discipline

Bus discipline is a topic of serious conversation at California Academy of Learning Charter School. When a child acts inappropriately on a school bus, the safety of every person on the bus is in jeopardy. Discipline will depend on the seriousness of a child's inappropriate behavior. For example, first time offenders may receive more than a warning from the bus driver, bus monitor, or administrator. Should he/she continue to misbehave, the transportation privilege which is normally extended to CAL Charter's students will be revoked for that child.

First Offense - Warning

Second Offense - Guidance meeting

Third Offense - lunch/recess detention

Fourth Offense - Parent/Guardian Conference

Fifth Offense - Bus Suspension* - up to 1 week

Sixth Offense - Bus Suspension* - amount of time to be determined by parents and school officials.

Nothing in this policy requires that the school follow a progressive discipline model. Serious infractions may result in suspension conferences for the first offense. Home school districts have the right to suspend a student off of the bus at any time.

Cell Phone/Smartwatch/Headphones (Earbuds):

While we recognize that cell phones are an important part of students' lives and can be valuable tools for learning and communication, we have found that frequent phone usage during instructional time has led to distractions, impacting academic performance and engagement, and contributing to unwanted behaviors. To address this issue, the following enforcement measures will be used:

Cell Phone Usage During School Hours:

Students will be expected to place their cell phones in school sanctioned containers in accordance with PA Senate Bill 1014, that mandates a “bell-to-bell phone-free policy”. These containers are locked for the students' security of items.

Consequences for Non-Compliance:

If a student is found using a phone, smart watch, or other electronic device without prior permission, the following consequences will be enforced:

- **First offense:** The phone, smart watch, or other device will be confiscated by the staff member and a parent or guardian will be required to pick it up from the school.
- **Second offense:** The phone, smart watch, or other device will be confiscated, in-school suspension or other restorative practice will occur and students will turn items into the school office upon entry for 1 month from the incident. Parents/guardians will be notified.
- **Third offense:** Privileges for bringing a phone, smart watch or other electronic devices to school will be lost for no less than nine weeks and no more than the remainder of the school year.

Nothing in this policy requires that the school follow a progressive discipline model. Serious infractions may result in suspension conferences for the first offense.

Students are encouraged to leave valuable possessions (such as cell phones, smart watches, headphones, earbuds, etc.) at home. The school assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged devices. Photo, video, and audio recording (for any reason) using electronic devices is strictly prohibited. The usage of social media on personal devices during school hours is prohibited.

Students are considered in possession of a prohibited electronic device if the device is on their person, in a pocket, backpack, purse, or otherwise accessible during the school day rather than secured in the school's approved cell phone locker or with school personnel.

Emergency Situations:

We understand there may be times when students need access to a phone for urgent

matters. In such cases, students **MUST** communicate with their teacher or school staff, who can call the parents or facilitate access to a phone when necessary.

Students who require a medical accommodation to carry and access a phone or smartwatch (e.g., to monitor blood sugar) must request the accommodation.

Dress Code:

The Dress Code Policy is intended to support the creation of an educational environment promoting self-respect while not inhibiting self-expression. Faculty and administration have the right to question a student's dress if perceived as inappropriate and/or offensive. Dress should be appropriate for a school environment as preparation for appropriate dress in the workplace.

Parents will be notified and be required to bring a change of clothing if the student cannot make adequate adjustments. Classes missed by the student as a result of the dress code violation will count against the school's attendance/discipline policy.

Students are not permitted to wear sunglasses in the building during the school day. No clothing, including coats, which interferes with the function of the class is to be worn.

Clothing that is obscene and vulgar or promotes the use of illegal substances (alcohol, drugs, tobacco, guns and/or gangs/violence), contains sexual innuendo or promotes discrimination may not be worn.

Tops exposing the chest or a bare midriff are not permitted. Tops must meet the top of the student's pants, shorts or skirt while standing up. Shorts and skirts must be of a length that does not expose the buttocks. Tops with spaghetti straps or no straps are not permitted unless it is under a jacket or other top that will remain in place all day.

Students who, for medical or religious reasons, require an adjustment to the Dress Code must request an accommodation from the administration.

Lockers:

For those buildings that have lockers, the lockers are the property of the school. Therefore, students should have no expectation of privacy regarding items placed in school lockers. The California Academy of Learning Charter School will not be held responsible for articles missing from or destroyed in/from a student's locker.

The administration reserves the right to open and search lockers in case of an emergency or reasonable suspicion. School officials may conduct random, periodic sweeping searches, including canine drug searches of all lockers. In non-emergency situations, students will be notified and may be present when their lockers are searched.

The main office will assign lockers to students in their first period class/homeroom. No trash is to be stored in lockers. Accumulation of trash will result in a loss of locker privileges. The administration will not tolerate entering, destroying or stealing from lockers. Any student entering a locker, other than their own, destroying locker contents and/or stealing will be prosecuted to the fullest limit of the law. Action will be taken by the administration through the local police department.

Personal Search:

The California Academy of Learning Charter School recognizes that all people want and expect the security and privacy of their persons, that there should be clear and good reasons to violate this expectation, and that the violation should be as unobtrusive as possible to protect the safety and order of the schools.

Pennsylvania Code Title 22, Chapter 12.14 allows schools to adopt reasonable policies and procedures regarding student searches. Searches will be conducted when the school determines through reliable information that a student had or has illegal or prohibited material on school property or on his/her person.

Any personal search will be reasonable (that is, it will not be more invasive than necessary) relative to the reason for the search. The school must be able to articulate the need for the search, and the search will not be retaliatory, discriminatory, or capricious. The administration will develop standardized search procedures taking into account the age, needs and personal dignity of students. Any person authorized to conduct searches will receive appropriate training in how to do so.

In no circumstance will a school employee searching a student reach under the student's clothing to such an extent that the searcher comes in contact with the student's bare skin or undergarments or expose the student's bare skin or undergarments above the knees and/or below the neck.

Student Driving:

Driving and parking on California Academy of Learning Charter School property is a **privilege**, not a right. This privilege may be granted to 11th and 12th grade students who demonstrate responsible behavior and comply with all school rules, state laws, and the conditions outlined below. The school reserves the right to deny, suspend, or revoke driving privileges at any time.

Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible to drive and park on school property, a student must:

- Possess a valid driver's license.
- Maintain current vehicle registration and insurance.
- Be in good academic standing.
- Demonstrate appropriate school behavior.
- Arrive at school before class starts at 8:10. Having more than **four** tardies a semester, unexcused absences, or truancy violations will result in holding an attendance meeting with parents, guidance counselor, and administration.
- Obtain written approval from the school administration before driving or parking on school property. You can obtain a student driving application from the office.

Driving privileges may be revoked if these standards are no longer met.

Student Responsibilities:

Students who receive permission to drive agree to:

1. Comply with all federal, state, and local motor vehicle laws.
2. Operate their vehicle safely and responsibly at all times.
3. Park only in designated student parking areas.
4. Obey all traffic signs, speed limits, and staff directions while on school property.
5. Enter and leave campus safely without reckless driving, speeding, racing, excessive noise, or other unsafe behavior.
6. Lock their vehicle while it is parked on school property.
7. Wait to be dismissed at the end of the day. Drivers will be able to leave school as soon as the buses and parent pick-up departs.
8. Not use their vehicle during the school day without prior administrative permission.
9. Notify the school immediately if a new vehicle is being driven to school.

Passenger Expectations:

- Student driving privileges are limited to **one approved student driver and one student passenger** unless otherwise authorized by administration.
- The driver is responsible for the conduct of every passenger transported to or from school.
- Both the driver and passenger may be subject to disciplinary action for behavioral violations occurring in or around the vehicle.

Parking and Liability:

- Parking on school property is entirely at the owner's risk.
- California Academy of Learning Charter School assumes no responsibility for theft, vandalism, fire, collision, weather damage, or any other loss or damage involving a student's vehicle or its contents.

- Vehicles parked illegally or in unauthorized locations may be ticketed, relocated, or towed at the owner's expense.

Vehicle Search Consent:

As a condition of receiving permission to drive and park on school property, the student and parent/guardian acknowledge and agree that:

- The student's vehicle may be searched by school administration or its designee when there is reasonable suspicion that the vehicle contains evidence of a violation of school policy, law, or poses a threat to the safety of students or staff.
- Refusal to permit a search may result in the denial or revocation of driving privileges and may result in additional disciplinary action consistent with school policy.

Revocation of Driving Privileges

Driving and parking privileges may be suspended or permanently revoked for, including but not limited to:

- Violating school rules or policies.
- Reckless or unsafe driving.
- Speeding or careless operation of a vehicle.
- Unauthorized use of a vehicle during school hours.
- More than **four** tardies or unexcused absences per semester.
- Poor academic or behavioral standing.
- Transporting unauthorized passengers.
- Violations of state motor vehicle laws.
- Failure to comply with staff directions.
- Any conduct determined by school administration to jeopardize the safety of students, staff, or visitors.

Revocation of driving privileges does not limit the school's authority to impose additional disciplinary consequences when appropriate.

IV. Attendance

Attendance

The parent or guardian is responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance and appropriate behavior while enrolled at California Academy of Learning Charter School. Students will only be released during the school day following direct communication with a parent or an authorized guardian **prior** to the student being picked up.

Consistent attendance and active participation are essential to the learning process. Patterns of absenteeism, unexcused absences, or tardiness become part of a student's permanent academic record. Families and students will receive notification—either by letter, phone call, or email—when attendance issues arise.

Students are required to attend school each day in the designated instructional format assigned to them. This may include virtual or in-person attendance, depending on the

student's enrollment and the instructional options made available by the school. Regular and punctual attendance at school is important to a successful school career.

Attendance Policy

In Pennsylvania, school attendance is mandatory for students from at least 6 years of age until the child reaches 18 years of age, unless the child has graduated from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered or approved high school or meets one of the exceptions in the Pennsylvania School Code. When a student misses school, they must bring in a written note from a parent/guardian or medical professional. Excuses may also be emailed to excuses@calcharteracademy.org or faxed to 724-719-9041. All excuses must be returned to school within three (3) days of their return to school.

If a written excuse is not turned in within three (3) days of a student's return to school or the reason for the absence is not among the listed acceptable excuses, then the absence will be recorded as unexcused. The school will contact parents once a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences. If a student accumulates six (6) unexcused absences, then they are considered, by law, to be habitually truant. A "Student Attendance Improvement Plan" must then be put into place that clearly outlines consequences for further absences. Consequences may include loss of credit or a citation to the magistrate.

According to California Academy of Learning Charter School Policy, once a student accumulates ten (10) absences (whether they are excused or unexcused), medical excuses are required for any further absences. If a student has a planned trip, an approved absence form must be completed and turned in to the main office **BEFORE** they leave. Students must have a healthcare provider's excuse upon return if he/she is out for more than three (3) consecutive days. If a note is not received within three days, all days out will be considered unexcused. Ten (10) or more unexcused absences in a semester may result in a referral to a community resource or the magistrate.

Every effort should be made to schedule medical or dental appointments during non-school hours. If appointments must be made during school hours, the student must present a signed parental note or email (with phone number of where parents can be reached) prior to being excused. **Students must check out in the main office before leaving in order for an early dismissal to be excused. Failure to do so will result in consequences for cutting class or leaving school grounds without permission.** Students are responsible for all class work missed due to an appointment. Students are not permitted to contact family members to be picked up early without permission from administration and done so in the office area. If a student calls/texts home to get picked up early without administration permission, the absence will be unexcused and could result in the student being habitually truant.

Absences fall into one of two categories: **EXCUSED** and **UNEXCUSED**.

Absences, tardies or early dismissal are **EXCUSED**, as determined by the PA School Code, for the following reasons:

- Personal: Student's own illness or quarantine; death in family
- Tutorial programs and/or counseling programs, which are not available in the school and which do not conflict with the regular school program
- Observance of religious holidays
- Educational tours and trips conducted under the supervision of an adult acceptable to the CEO/designee and to the parent or guardian.
- Closure of their home district because of inclement weather.
- Van or bus assigned to them did not come to pick them up.
- Medical/dental appointments
- Preplanned education tours or trips (including college visits). One (1) week advance notice is required. Educational Trip/Tour forms are available in each building office or on the school website.

Unless legally required, no absences will be approved during standardized testing windows.

To request approval for a Family Educational Trip, parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a written request for excusal at least five (5) school days prior to the absence and the absence must be for ten (10) or less school days. Students who will be participating in an extended absence due to a request for an educational tour or trip for more than ten (10) days will be withdrawn after the tenth consecutive day (on day 11) and the withdrawal date will be dated the first day of the consecutive absence. These days are considered legal absences when approved.

Absences, tardies or early dismissals are **UNEXCUSED**, for the following reasons:

- Missed Bus
- Oversleeping/missed alarm
- Childcare for another sibling and/or family member
- Frequent/excessive transportation issues (transportation not provided by the student's home school district)
- Suspension

Consequences for Unexcused Absences, Tardies:

The California Academy of Learning Charter School believes that regular school attendance is critical to student success. This policy outlines procedures for excused and unexcused absences, excessive absences, tardiness, and required interventions in compliance with Safe Schools reporting requirements.

Unexcused (Illegal) Absences Definition: An absence is marked as illegal if a written excuse is not received within 3 school days of the absence.

Progressive Interventions:

- ***3 Illegal Absences***
 - *Marked as truant*
 - *Phone call / email home*
- ***5 Illegal Absences***
 - *First letter sent*
 - *Attendance meeting scheduled*
 - *SAP referral or guidance check-in*
- ***6 Illegal Absences***
 - *Marked as habitually truant*
 - *Incident report filed in PowerSchool*
- ***9 Illegal Absences***
 - *Citation filed with magistrate*
 - *Letter from CEO*
 - *CYS notified*
 - *Habitually truant report entered in PowerSchool*

Excused Absences Definition: Absences documented with a valid excuse, such as illness, medical appointments, religious holidays, or court appearances.

Progressive Interventions:

- ***11th Excused Absence***
 - *Counted as the first illegal absence*
- ***13th Excused Absence***
 - *Marked as truant*
 - *Phone call / email home*
- ***15th Excused Absence***
 - *Letter sent*
 - *Attendance meeting scheduled*
 - *SAP referral or guidance check-in*
- ***16th Excused Absence***
 - *Marked as habitually truant*
 - *Incident report filed in PowerSchool*

- **19th Excused Absence**
- Citation filed with magistrate
- Letter from CEO
- CYS notified
- Habitually truant report entered in PowerSchool

Tardiness Definition: Arrival more than 30 minutes late without a valid excuse will be marked as unexcused tardy.

Excessive Tardiness: More than 10 unexcused tardies in a quarter will follow the illegal absence intervention process.

Progressive Interventions:

- **13th Tardy in a Semester (3rd Tardy Illegal)**
 - Phone call / email home
 - Teacher/student check-in or informal counseling
 - Review of academic/behavioral records
- **14th Tardy in a Semester (4th Tardy Illegal)**
 - Letter sent
 - SAP referral or guidance check-in
 - Attendance meeting scheduled
 - Attendance Success Plan created
- **16th Tardy in a Semester (6th Tardy Illegal)**
 - Second letter sent
 - Call home by administrator
 - Marked as habitually truant
- **19th Tardy in a Semester (8th Tardy Illegal)**
 - Citation issued if interventions have been exhausted and educational impact has occurred

This policy is designed to provide early intervention and support to improve student attendance and ensure educational success. All actions and interventions will be documented in accordance with district guidelines and state reporting requirements.

Truancy (Act 29)

Truancy is defined as the act of staying out of school without permission or excuse. Pennsylvania legislation Act 29 increased to \$300 the fine for truancy placed on parents and requires them to pay court costs or be sentenced to complete a parenting education program. Both the truant child and parents must appear at a hearing by the district justice. If the parents show that they took reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of the child, they will not be convicted of a summary offense. If the parents are not convicted and the child continues to

be truant, the child can be fined up to \$300 or be assigned to an adjudication alternative program. The law also grants school attendance officers and home and school visitors arrest powers.

Act 29 also removes from truant juveniles, driving privileges for 90 days for a first offense and six months for a second, while juveniles who are unlicensed are prohibited from applying for a learner's permit for 90 days (first offense).

V. Discipline

Philosophy of Discipline and Student Conduct

At CAL Charter, we hold that the highest aim of education is to cultivate responsible, respectful, and productive citizens. To give every learner the chance to grow intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, and physically, we insist on a positive, respectful school climate.

Throughout their time with us, students are guided toward self-discipline and accountability. Courtesy, respect, and consideration form the bedrock of healthy relationships, and students are expected to model these qualities each day.

Actions that harm others, damage property, or disrupt learning violate our standards and will be addressed according to the school's discipline guidelines.

Families are crucial partners in student success. We ask parents and guardians to affirm the value of education, reinforce respectful behavior, ensure prompt, regular attendance, and support students as they complete assignments, prepare for assessments, and conduct themselves appropriately at school and in the wider community.

Discipline guidelines apply during the school day, on campus, on school transportation, and at all school-sponsored events. Discipline guidelines also will apply to off-campus and/or out of school behavior (such as cyberbullying) that affects the educational experience of students or interferes with the ability of the faculty and staff to perform their duties. The Leadership Team retains final authority over disciplinary actions and may refer serious cases to the Chief Executive Officer or

Board of Trustees. Major offenses can lead to legal action or expulsion.

Every situation is reviewed individually. Our restorative, progressive discipline system—where successive infractions carry increasingly serious consequences—aims to foster rehabilitation, self-control, and intrinsic motivation. Penalties are applied fairly and consistently, with regard to each student's age and behavior record. Nothing in the policy, however, requires the school to follow progressive discipline if the infraction is serious enough to require more serious consequences. Questions about the discipline system may be directed to the Leadership Team.

Restorative Practice:

Restorative practice seeks to repair relationships. Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim. Restorative Practices can be assigned by teacher, principal, or a member of our Student Services team.

Detention Policy and Procedures:

All school personnel have the authority to assign lunch detention to students for infractions in accordance with the school's discipline policy. Detentions may be assigned for a single day or multiple days, depending on the nature and frequency of the behavior.

When a lunch detention is assigned, staff are required to notify the student's parent or guardian by phone. If phone contact is unsuccessful, an email or a written notice will be sent home with the student.

- Detention must be served within one week of the assigned date. Failure to do so, without approved arrangements from the principal, may result in additional detentions or in-school suspension.
- Students assigned multiple detentions are expected to serve them on consecutive days. Skipping days may result in in-school or out-of-school suspension.

Discipline Infractions and Penalties

Level I: Level I offenses impede classroom procedures, infringe upon the rights of others to learn, and interfere with the orderly operation of the school. Classroom teachers, substitute teachers, and other school personnel may assign Level I consequences. If the student's misbehavior is chronic and/or does not cease with initial corrective actions, the teacher may then send the student to the leadership team. If the behavior persists, consequences from Level II can be assigned and enforced.

A. Level I student misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:

Misconduct:	Possible Disciplinary Options:
● Classroom disturbance ● Cheating and/or lying ● Failure to complete assignments ● Sleeping ● Violation of classroom rules ● Minor disrespectful speech or actions ● Unprepared for class ● Failure to follow reasonable directions ● Loud, boisterous noise	● Warning ● Confiscation of personal items ● Personal conference ● Parental conference ● Loss of privileges ● Lunch detention ● Change in classroom seating

Level II: Level II infractions typically arise when Level I misbehaviors persist despite previous interventions. These infractions require administrative involvement, as initial disciplinary measures have proven ineffective. Acts against persons and/or property are also included. Since some of these infractions have consequences that might endanger the health or safety of others in school, they are considered serious and most frequently result in the immediate attention of administration.

A. Level II student misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:

Misconduct:	Possible Disciplinary Options:
• Continued, unmodified Level 1 behaviors • Continued disrespectful speech or actions including obscene and racist comments • Throwing objects • Horseplay including slapping, hitting, or other “playing” around • Fighting • Failure to follow established procedures • Leaving class/area without permission • Use of cell phone or smartwatch without permission • Refusal to surrender electronic devices upon staff request • Bullying or cyberbullying • Instigating or attempting to engage students in an altercation or fight • Failure to report to office as directed by staff • Disrespectful or confrontational behavior • Vandalism • Smoking, vaping, or possessing of drug/tobacco paraphernalia	• All level 1 options may be considered • Referral to SAP team • Referral to outside agency • Hall pass restrictions • In-school suspension • Out-of-school suspension • Temporary removal from class • Loss of privileges to bring personal items including bags • Loss of privileges including extra-curricular activities • School based anger management • Restitution of property and damages • Charges filed with California Borough Police • Charges filed with District Magistrate • Revocation of driving privileges

● Stealing ● Gambling ● Unacceptable public displays of affection	
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Level III: Infractions under Level III misbehavior could result from the continuation of Levels I through II. Acts that result in violence to another person(s) or property, and that pose a direct threat to the safety of others, are also included. These acts are clearly criminal in nature and are so serious that they always require administrative action resulting in the immediate removal of the student from school. The intervention of the California Police Department may also be warranted.

All Level III consequences are in the form of out-of-school suspension (OSS). Most violations under Level III are five (5) days but can extend to nine (9) days in extreme cases or per specific policy guidelines.

A. Level III student misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:

Misconduct: ● Continued, unmodified Level I or Level II behaviors ● Fighting ● Possession/use (under the influence)/furnishing/selling of controlled substances or alcohol per drug and alcohol policy ● Vandalism or destroying of personal or school property ● Assault on another student and/or school personnel ● Sexual harassment/assault ● Racial intimidation/threat to a student or school personnel	Possible Disciplinary Options: ● All Level I and II options may be considered ● Charges filed with the California Borough Police ● Immediate removal from class ● Expulsion ● Referral to administrative review board ● Referral to CEO ● Formal hearing with the Board of Trustees ● Alternative school placement
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwarranted pulling of fire alarm • Bomb or terroristic threat • Arson • Possession of a weapon or look a like weapon per weapons policy • Any criminal conduct (as defined by the state criminal code) on school property (at any time) or at a school sponsored activity | |
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Important Definitions Relating to the Discipline Procedures:

Aggravated Assault: An unlawful attack by one person upon another in which the offender uses a weapon or displays it in a threatening manner; or the victim suffers obvious severe bodily injury such as broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe lacerations, or loss of consciousness.

This also includes assault with disease when the offender knows that he/she is infected with a disease and intentionally bites, spits, etc.

Assault: An unlawful attack by one person upon another. The act intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury or serious bodily injury upon another person.

Bullying/Cyberbullying: An intentional , written, oral, mental or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in and/or outside of the school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive, and has the effect of doing any of the following: (a) substantially interfering with a student's education; (b) creating a threatening and hostile learning environment; and/or (c) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. Cyberbullying involves the use of electronic media (including but not limited to social media) to bully as defined above. Bullying/cyberbullying can also involve one or more students acting with the intent to intimidate or overpower other student(s).

Disorderly Conduct: An intentional act(s) intended to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk to the orderly operation of the school environment. Disorderly conduct includes engaging in fighting, threatening, or violent or tumultuous behavior; making unreasonable noise; using obscene language or making an obscene gesture; or creating a

hazardous or physically offensive condition by an act which serves no legitimate purpose.

Fighting (Mutual Altercation): A student confrontation with another student in which the altercation is mutual, requiring physical restraint or resulting in injury or property damage. The physical contact may consist of punching, hitting, slapping and/or kicking with the willful intent to mutually harm one another. While students have the right to defend themselves from being assaulted, once they become an active participant, they are considered a combatant.

The use of fighting words, such as racial, cultural, or ethnic slurs, or other confrontational language associated with hate speech, or used to instigate or provoke a physical response will be treated in the same manner as physically participating in a fight.

Harassment: An intentional unwelcome act(s), usually based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status, or pregnancy), national origin, or disability, designed to annoy or alarm another person. Harassment can be in the form of any of the following: unwelcome physical contact, or threats to do the same; following the other person in or about the school building/school grounds with the intent to intimidate; engaging in a course of conduct or repeatedly committing acts that serve no legitimate purpose; communicating to or about other persons any lewd, threatening or obscene words, language, or drawings; communicating repeatedly in an anonymous manner or at inconvenient hours with the intent to annoy or frighten.

Hazing: Behavior that happens when someone joins a group, such as a sports team, club, or school organization; typically characterized as an initiation process. Hazing behavior can include making the person do something embarrassing or dangerous, or can include physical violence. Hazing may create a risk of putting someone under physical or emotional duress.

Minor Altercation: A disagreement or dispute, often involving heated words or a physical tussle, but without significant injury. It can be a verbal dispute or a physical one where contact is made, but no serious harm results. Examples include tripping or bumping.

Public Displays of Affection: Acts of physical intimacy between two people that are visible to others in public spaces. These acts can range from simple gestures like holding hands and hugging to more intimate actions like kissing or cuddling. Kissing and close physical contact are examples of behavior prohibited at school.

Reasonable Force: The amount of physical force that is deemed necessary and appropriate to protect oneself, others, or property from harm or a threat, and is not excessive or disproportionate to the situation. There

are circumstances in which employees are permitted to use reasonable force in order to maintain a safe and orderly school environment, to administer first aid, and to attend to health needs. Typical examples of reasonable force include: intervening in fights, preventing accidental injury, protecting oneself, providing care to disabled students, and moving through a crowd to address an emergency.

Sexual Assault: An unauthorized and unwanted, intentional, or forcible touching of a sex organ of a person of either sex. Sex organs are the breasts of females and the genital areas of males and females. This includes unwanted kissing, forcibly and intentionally grabbing the clothed or unclothed breast or genitals of a person without their consent.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive, and which effectively denies a person equal access to an educational program or activity. Sexual harassment includes quid pro quo harassment, where an employee conditions educational benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking are also forms of sexual harassment.

Alcohol and Drug Policy:

The California Academy of Learning Charter School Board of Trustees recognizes the abuse of alcohol and/or chemical substances as a serious problem with legal, physical, emotional and social implications for the whole school community and adopts the position that a student must be free of illegal and harmful substances.

These substances include, but are not limited to beer, wine, liquor, any other alcoholic beverages, anabolic steroids, marijuana, hashish, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, opioids, chemical solvents, look alike substances, paraphernalia, and any capsules or pills not registered with the nurse and/or given in accordance with school policy.

The school's policy is to prevent and prohibit the possession, use and/or mimic of use, sale and/or mimic of sale, distribution of any illegal or controlled mind-altering chemical medication or chemical substance not approved by the nurse's office, on school property, at school-sponsored events or functions including athletic events (even at another school), on school buses, en route to and from school by any mode of travel. This policy applies anywhere that students are under the jurisdiction of the school. If a violation occurs at a school event, the student involved may

be prohibited from attending any extracurricular or co-curricular school activities to include, but not limited to clubs, sports, tutoring and theater production and rehearsals, for a specified amount of time, determined by administration.

In the event of any violation of this policy, the School Resource Officer will be notified, as well as police from the Municipality in which the school event takes place. Charges may be filed on any student involved in the violation. During an investigation, students will be asked to complete a written student statement. This statement will be requested by Administration and/or the Resource Officer/police. The student/parent/guardian will receive written notice (by regular mail, electronic mail and/or hand delivery) of the suspension and the scheduling of an informal hearing.

Tobacco and Smoking Policy (PA Act 145 of 1996):

Smoking and use of tobacco or nicotine products (including smokeless tobacco products, pipes, cigars, lighters, vaping mods/pens, e-cigarettes, vaping oils/liquids/juice) will not be permitted in any building, indoor or outdoor school area, stadium and field areas, or any school property, including busses and bus stops. "School property," as used here, includes property owned, leased or under the control of the school. This restriction applies to students, employees, and all school facilities users.

Once Administration has determined that a student has used or is in possession of an item in violation of this policy, the prohibited items will be confiscated and given to the local police department. If such a substance is detected, then the Drug & Alcohol Policy will apply.

If no illegal substance is indicated, then the following consequences will apply:

First Offense: A student possessing, using, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance(s) shall be initially suspended by the building Principal or Administrator on site for a period of not less than three (3) school days and not more than ten (10) days. If a suspension, either by way of initial imposition or extension, exceeds three days, an informal hearing will be held with the building principal, the student, and the student's parents within five (5) days of the suspension. At the informal hearing, consideration will be given to the nature of the offense and any mitigating or compounding circumstances, including other contemporaneous violations by the student of District policy and the Pennsylvania School Code, a student's prior disciplinary record, and a student's defiance and lack of cooperation through an investigation. Following the informal hearing, a suspension may be extended by the building Principal but not to exceed a total

of ten (10) school days. Also, in addition to the mandated minimum requirements applicable for a 1st offense violation, the student may be recommended to the Administration and School Board for other further discipline, including expulsion.

Mandated minimum requirements of student for 1st Offense violation:

- Expulsion for minimum of balance of the school year
- Undergoes a drug and alcohol evaluation by a licensed practitioner who specializes in drug and alcohol evaluations and treatment; at cost of student and/or family
 - Follows any recommendation of the drug and alcohol evaluation
 - The student and a parent authorize release of compliance with the drug and alcohol evaluation to the California Academy of Learning Charter School Administration for purposes of verifying successful completion of same
- Educational Teen Outreach Program (or other consistent program approved by (Charter Administration); at cost of student and/or family.
- Referral to the Student Assistance Program Team
- Referral to the Magistrate's Office for Citation

A transition team meeting will occur prior to the student's return from suspension and participation in any extracurricular or co-curricular school activities to include, but not limited to clubs, sports, tutoring and theater production and rehearsal.

Academic work will be completed for credit while suspended, but students must coordinate that work with teachers. Students may not be on school grounds during the suspension. Exclusion from all school activities is a condition of suspension.

The above mandated minimum requirements for a 1st offense violation of the drug and alcohol policy does not limit or preclude the imposition of further discipline. As stated above, other contemporaneous violations by the student of District policy and the Pennsylvania School Code, a student's prior disciplinary record, and a student's defiance and lack of cooperation through an investigation may lead to further disciplinary actions, including expulsion.

Subsequent Drug & Alcohol Offenses:

If a student violates the drug and alcohol policy more than once, the student will be suspended for 10 days and an informal hearing will be held with the building principal, the student, and the student's parents within five (5) days of the suspension. The student will be recommended for expulsion to the Board of Trustees.

Distribution:

In the case of drugs and alcohol distributed through sale, exchange or other consideration, a recommendation will be made to the Board of Trustees for possible expulsion. If a student is apprehended distributing drugs or alcohol at school or at a school-sponsored event, without a sale, exchange or other consideration, the process and discipline relating to a student possessing, using, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance(s) will apply, as set above, with such distribution being an additional factor as to the scope of disciplinary action.

Bullying and Harassment:

The Board declares it to be the policy of this school to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation/identity, ancestry, national origin or handicap/disability.

Complaints of bullying will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will take place when allegations are verified. Students who have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, mandatory counseling, parental conference, loss of school privileges, detentions, exclusion from school or school-sponsored activities (including bus transportation), or referral to law enforcement.

Harassment, as more fully defined above, means intentional unwelcome act(s), usually based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status, or pregnancy), national origin, or disability, designed to annoy or alarm another person. Sexual harassment, as more fully defined above, means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive, and which effectively denies a person equal access to an educational program or activity.

Complaints of harassment or sexual harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations. Staff and administration will contact and show support to parents/guardians in the event that a student has been hurt either by physical or emotional aggression while in school.

Counselors, administrators, teachers and/or other staff members will follow-up as necessary with parents/guardians/students to ensure a level of comfort and a safe environment for students who have been bullied, harassed, or sexually harassed.

Anti-Bullying Policy:

The California Academy of Learning Charter School believes that all students have the right to a safe and healthy school environment. We promote mutual respect, acceptance, and tolerance, and will not permit behavior that infringes upon these principles. No student shall harass, intimidate, or verbally abuse another student. Hitting, shoving, teasing, name-calling, manipulating, or shunning other students is prohibited. This policy is in effect when a student is at school, en route to or from school, or at any school-sponsored event. Also

prohibited is behavior that occurs outside of school that the school reasonably believes would materially interfere with or substantially disrupt the educational process or program in the school, and the outside-of-school conduct does in fact materially interfere with or substantially disrupt the educational process or program in the school.

Bullying is defined as: unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves real or perceived power imbalance that occurs more than once and is repeated over time. Bullying can include, but is not limited to:

- Teasing or name calling
- Threatening to cause harm
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Telling others not to be friends with someone
- Embarrassing someone publicly
- Spreading rumors
- Hitting, punching, kicking
- Breaking of other people's property
- Mean or rude hand gestures.

Complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the school's legal and investigative obligations outlined in Unlawful Harassment Policy.

Staff and administration will contact and show support to families in the event that a student has been hurt either by physical or emotional aggression while in school. The counselor, social worker, administrators, teachers, and/or other staff members will follow-up as necessary with families/students to ensure a level of comfort and a safe environment for students who have been bullied or physically hurt.

Vandalism:

Students who willfully or carelessly damage school property (books, equipment, lockers, school buses) will first be required to attempt to restore the damage done, if possible. If there is a financial cost associated with the vandalism, the student will be assessed the cost of the repair. School records will be withheld until all debts resulting from damage or destruction are paid.

Weapons Policy:

No person shall possess, handle or transmit any knife, cutting instrument or tool, brass or metal knuckles, cane, machete, firearm, shotgun, rifle, B.B. or pellet gun, look-alike gun, chemical agent, explosive device, and/or other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury in any school building, on any school premises, or on any school bus, on or off the school grounds at any school activity, event or function.

Any person discovered to have any weapon or other prohibited item in violation of this policy in his/her possession (including locker or car) or who threatens to use a weapon on another person shall not be permitted to remain in any school building, or on any school bus, or at any school activity, event or function. Where any person violates this policy, the police department of the appropriate jurisdiction shall be notified.

As required by state law, the school shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. The state also requires schools to maintain records on acts of violence and weapons possession, and the school must forward student discipline records should a student transfer to another school. Any violation of this weapons policy will result in an initial exclusion from school.

Wellness:

California Academy of Learning Charter School recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn in accordance with federal and state laws.

Student Acceptable Use Policy: Access & Use of Technology Systems Policy:

Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with school policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and state law. Specifically, the following uses are prohibited:

1. Illegal activity
2. Commercial or for-profit purposes
3. Non-work or non-school related work
4. Product advertisement or political lobbying
5. Bullying/Cyberbullying
6. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive or inflammatory communication.
7. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction, or use of

copyrighted materials.

8. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal materials, images or photographs.
9. Access by students and minors to material that is harmful to minors or is determined inappropriate for minors in accordance with Board policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
10. Inappropriate language or profanity.
11. Transmission of material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients.
12. Intentionally obtaining or modifying files, passwords, and data belonging to other users.
13. Impersonating another user, posting anonymously, or using pseudonyms.
14. Fraudulent copying, communications, or modification of materials in violation of copyright laws.
15. Loading or using unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media.
16. Disrupting the work of other users.
17. Destruction, modification, abuse or unauthorized access to network hardware, software and files.
18. Accessing the Internet, school computers or other network resources without authorization.
19. Disabling or bypassing the Internet blocking/filtering software without authorization.
20. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading confidential information without authorization.

VI. APPENDICES & FORMS



Title I School - Parent - Student Compact

Together, we commit to working as a team to ensure every student reaches their highest potential!

This School-Parent-Student Compact is a joint agreement developed with families, school staff, and students. It explains how we will work together to support student achievement and build strong partnerships to help every child succeed (ESSA, Section 1116(d)).

School Responsibilities

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment (required).
- Hold at least one annual parent-teacher conference to discuss the compact (required).
- Provide frequent reports on student progress (required).
- Offer reasonable access to staff and opportunities for volunteering, classroom visits, and participation (required).
- Ensure two-way, meaningful communication in a language families can understand (required).
- Treat each child with dignity and respect.
- Strive to meet the individual needs of students.
- Provide a safe, positive, and healthy learning environment.
- Set and communicate clear expectations for performance.

Parent/Family Responsibilities

- Volunteer in the classroom when possible (required).
- Support their child's learning

at home (required).

- Participate in decisions related to their child’s education and support positive extracurricular use of time (required).
- Create a home atmosphere that supports learning.
- Ensure their child arrives on time, well-fed, and well-rested. · Attend school events and conferences.
- Encourage respect for school staff, students, and property. · Review school communications and respond promptly.

Student Responsibilities

- Arrive to school on time every day.
- Maintain a positive attitude toward learning.
- Complete homework on time and with best effort.
- Follow teacher directions and ask for help when needed. Keep work neat and take pride in learning.
- Show respect for all members of the school community and property.

Parent/Family Involvement Policy 917

Section	900 Community
Title	Parental/Family Involvement
Code	917
Status	Active
Legal	24 P.S. 510
Adopted	October 7, 2025

Purpose

The Board recognizes the vital role parents/guardians and family play in the education, welfare and values of their children. The district is committed to the belief that all students can learn and acknowledges that schools and families share a commitment to the educational success of students.

Definition

Parental and family involvement shall be defined as an ongoing process that assists parents/guardians and families to meet their basic obligation as a child's first educator, promotes clear two-way dialogue between home and school, and supports parents/guardians as leaders and decision-makers concerning the education of their children at all levels.

Authority

The Board recognizes that the responsibility for each student's education is shared by the school and the family and acknowledges that schools and families must work as knowledgeable, cooperative partners to effectively educate all students. To this end, the Board shall support the development, implementation, and continuing

evaluation of a parental and family involvement program that will involve parents/guardians at all grade levels in a variety of roles.

Delegation of Responsibility

The CEO or designee shall regularly evaluate and report to the Board on the effectiveness of the district's parental involvement efforts, including, but not limited to, input from parents/guardians and district staff on the adequacy of parental involvement opportunities and barriers that may inhibit parent/guardian participation.

Guidelines

Because parents/guardians are familiar with the needs, problems and abilities of their children, staff should communicate with and seek their input throughout the school year.

The parental and family involvement program may include the following:

1. Support for parents/guardians as school leaders and decision-makers, in addition to serving in advisory roles
2. Promotion of clear two-way communication between the school and the family about school programs and student progress.
3. Assistance to parents/guardians and families in developing parenting skills to foster positive relationships at home, to support children's educational efforts, and to assist their children with learning at home.
4. Involvement of parents/guardians, with appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school.

Parent/Family Involvement Title I Policy 918

Section	900 Community
Title	Parental/Family Involvement Title 1
Code	918
Status	Active
Legal	1. 20 U.S.C. 6318 2. Pol. 102 3. 20 U.S.C. 6312 4. 24 P.S. 510.2 5. Pol. 138 6. Pol. 916 7. Pol. 127 8. Pol. 814 9. Pol. 333 10. 20 U.S.C. 7845 11. 29 U.S.C. 3271 et seq 12. 29 U.S.C. 701 et seq 13. 42 U.S.C. 11301 et seq 14. 42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq 15. Pol. 212
Adopted	April 7, 2026

Purpose

The Board recognizes that meaningful parent and family engagement contributes to the achievement of state academic standards by students participating in Title I programs. The Board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents and family members, and community. [1][2]

Definition

Parent and Family (Family Member) - these terms are used interchangeably and shall include caregivers, a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare, or a legally appointed Education Decision Maker of a child participating in a Title I program.

Authority

The Board directs the charter and each of its schools with a Title I program to: [1]

1. Conduct outreach to all parents and family members.
2. Include parents and family members in development of the district's overall Title I Plan and process for school review and improvement. [3]
3. Include parents and family members in the development of the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Following adoption of the policy by the Board, the policy shall be:
 - a. Distributed in writing to all parents and family members.
 - b. Incorporated into the charter's Title I Plan. [3]
 - c. Posted to the charter's publicly accessible website. [4]
 - d. Evaluated annually with parent and family involvement.
4. Provide opportunities and conduct meaningful collaborations with parents and family members in the planning and implementation of Title I programs, activities and procedures

Accessibility

The charter and each of its schools with a Title I program shall provide communications, information and school reports to parents and family members who are migrants or who have limited English proficiency, a disability, limited literacy, or racial and ethnic minority backgrounds, in a language they can understand. [1][5]

Delegation of Responsibility

The CEO or designee shall ensure that the district's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, plan and programs comply with the requirements of federal law.[1][3]

The CEO or designee shall ensure that the charter and its schools with Title I programs provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members by providing resources, information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format or, upon request, in another format. Such efforts shall include:

1. Providing communications in clear and simple language.
2. Posting information for parents and family members on the district's website.
3. Including a telephone number for parents and family members to call with questions.
4. Partnering with community agencies which may include libraries, recreation centers, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations to assist in sharing information.
5. Provide language access services to families with limited English proficiency through on-site or telephonic translation and interpretation services, as appropriate. [5]

The building principal and/or Title I staff shall notify parents and family members of the existence of the Title I programs and provide:

1. An explanation of the reasons supporting their child's selection for the program.

2. A set of goals and expectations to be addressed.
3. A description of the services to be provided.
4. A copy of this policy and the School-Parent and Family Compact. [1]

Parents and family members shall actively carry out their responsibilities in accordance with this policy and the School-Parent and Family Compact. At a minimum, parents and family members shall be expected to: [1]

1. Volunteer in their child's classroom. [6]
2. Support their child's learning.
3. Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use of extracurricular time.

Guidelines

Each charter school operating a Title I program shall hold an annual meeting of parents and family members at a convenient time, to explain the goals and purposes of Title I programs and to inform them of their right to be involved. Parents and family members shall be given the opportunity to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program. Parents and family members shall be encouraged to participate in planning activities, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions regarding policies and programs. [1]

The schools with Title I programs shall offer a flexible number of meetings which shall be held at various times of the morning and evening. Title I funds may be used to enable parent and family member attendance at meetings through payment of transportation, child care costs or home visits.[1]

The schools shall involve parents and family members in an organized, ongoing and timely way, in the planning, review and improvement of Title I programs, the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the joint development of the Title I Plan. [1][3]

At these meetings, parents and family members shall be provided: [1]

1. Timely information about programs provided under Title I.
2. Description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the academic standards.
3. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children.

To ensure the continuous engagement of parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I Plan and with the school support and improvement process, the charter shall:

Establish meaningful, ongoing two-way communication between the district, staff and parents and family members.

Communicate with parents and family members about the plan and seek their input and participation through the use of newsletters, the district website, email, telephone, parent and teacher conferences, and home visits if needed.

Train personnel on how to collaborate effectively with parents and family members with diverse backgrounds that may impede their participation, such as limited literacy or language difficulty.

Analyze and share the results of the Title I Parent/Family Survey.

Post school performance data on the district's website.

Distribute and discuss the School-Parent and Family Compact.

Host various parent and family nights at each school building with a Title I program.

Establish and support active and engaged Title I parent and family advisory councils. The council will include a majority of parents and family members of students participating in Title I programs, as well as the building principal, teachers or other appropriate staff, students and community members. The purpose of the council shall be to focus on improved student achievement, effective classroom teaching, parent/family/community engagement in the educational process, and to facilitate communications and support.

Actively recruit parents and family members to participate in school review and improvement planning.

Assign charter representatives to be available to work collaboratively with parents and family members, and to conduct school-level trainings to promote understanding of school data, comprehensive plans and the budgeting process.

Invite participation of parents and family members at the regular comprehensive planning committee meetings, Title I budget meetings and school improvement plan meetings to obtain input and propose school improvement initiatives.

If the Title I Plan is not satisfactory to parents and family members, the charter shall submit any parent or family member comments with the plan when the school makes the plan available to the Board. [11][3]

Building Capacity for Parent and Family Engagement

The charter shall provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve academic achievement and school performance through: [1]

1. Providing assistance to parents and family members in understanding such topics as the academic standards, state and local academic assessments, the requirements of parent and family involvement, how to monitor a child's progress and work with teachers to improve the achievement of their children. [2][7]
2. Providing material and training to help parents and family members work with their children to improve academic achievement and to foster parent and family engagement, such as:
 - a. Scheduling training in different locations on a variety of topics including how to support their child in school, literacy, school safety, cultural diversity and conflict resolution.
 - b. Using technology, including education about the harms of copyright piracy, as appropriate.[8]
 - c. Providing information, resources and materials in a user friendly format.
 - d. Providing, as requested by a parent or family member, other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities.
 - e. { } Training on how to use the Parent Portal as a tool to monitor grades and achievement.
3. Educating teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders and staff, with the assistance of parents and family members, on the value and usefulness of contributions of parents and family members and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with them as equal

partners, implement and coordinate parent and family programs, and build ties between parents and family members and the school. [9]

4. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinating and integrating Title I parent and family involvement efforts and activities with other federal, state and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents and family members in more fully participating in the education of their children. [1][5][10][11][12][13][14][15]
5. Engage the PTA/PTO to actively seek out and involve parents and family members through regular updates, information sessions and assistance with the identification of effective communication strategies.
6. Train parents and family members to enhance the involvement of other parents and family members.
7. Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parent and family engagement.
8. Establish a district-wide parent and family advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I programs.
9. Engage community-based organizations and businesses in parent and family engagement activities.

Coordinating Parent and Family Engagement Strategies

The charter shall coordinate and integrate Title I parent and family engagement strategies with other parent and family engagement strategies required by federal, state, and local laws by: [1][5][10][11][12][13][14][15]

1. Involving charter and program representatives to assist in identifying specific parent and family member needs.
2. Sharing data from other programs to assist in developing initiatives to advance academic achievement and school improvement.

Annual Parent and Family Engagement Policy Evaluation

The charter shall conduct, with meaningful participation of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this policy in improving the academic quality of all district schools with a Title I program. [1]

The evaluation shall identify:[1]

1. Barriers to parent and family member participation, with particular attention to those who are migrants, are economically disadvantaged, have a disability, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority.
2. The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers.
3. Strategies to support successful school and parent and family interactions.

The evaluation shall be conducted through:

Establishment of a schedule and process for the policy review and revision by parents and family members.

A parent and family member and teacher survey designed to collect data on school level and district-wide parent and family engagement outcomes.

The district shall use the findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the district's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. [1]

School-Parent and Family Compact

Each school in the charter receiving Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents and family members a School-Parent and Family Compact outlining the manner in which parents and family members, the entire school staff and students will share responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents and family members will build and develop partnerships to help children achieve the state's academic standards. The compact shall: [1]

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, enabling students in Title I programs to meet the academic standards.
2. Describe the ways in which parents and family members will be responsible for supporting their child's learning; volunteering in the classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extracurricular time. [6]
3. Address the importance of ongoing two-way, meaningful communication between parents/family members and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences at the elementary level, frequent reports to parents and family members on their child's progress, reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities. [6]

Title I Funds

Unless exempt by law, the district shall reserve at least one percent (1%) of its Title I funds to assist schools in conducting p a r e n t a n d family e n g a g e m e n t activities. Parents a n d family m e m b e r s shall be involved in the decisions regarding how the Title I reserved funds are used for parent and family engagement activities.[1]

Not less than ninety percent (90%) of the reserved funds shall be distributed to charter schools with a Title I program, with priority given to high need schools. The charter shall use the Title I reserved funds to conduct activities and strategies consistent with this policy, including: [1]

Supporting schools and nonprofit organizations in providing professional development for the district and school personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents and family members. [9]

Engaging in any other activities and strategies that the district determines are appropriate and consistent with this policy.

Documentation of Parent and Family Engagement Practices

Documentation to track the implementation of this policy is an essential part of compliance and may include, but not be limited to, sign-in sheets at workshops, meetings and conferences; schedules, training and informational materials; communications and brochures; and meeting notes.

PBIS Expectations

Area	Safe	Organized	Accountable	Respectful
Hallways & Stairs	- Hands to yourself - Walk at all times - One stair at a time	- Walk on the right side - Keep all belongings together	- Go directly to your destination - Keep school clear of trash	- Inside voices - Quiet feet - Quietly wait in line to go into classroom
Assemblies	- Hands to yourself - Walk to seat - Sit in seat appropriately	- Sit in designated area - Raise hand for assistance	- Follow directions of adults - "Let's Get Set"	- Listen attentively - Voices off - Stay in personal bubble - Wait your turn to share
Bus	- Sit properly in designated seat for the entire ride - Hands to yourself - Walk when exiting or entering - Keep the bus ride calm and quiet	- Keep all belongings in backpack - Backpack stays in seat or between your feet	- Report unsafe behaviors to bus driver at safest opportunity	- Use inside voices - Listen to bus driver instructions - Use appropriate and kind words
Dismissal	- Walk directly to destination - Follow hallway & stairs procedures - Hands to yourself	- Be packed and ready to go - Keep materials in backpack until you get home	- Listen attentively for your transportation method to be called - Get activity pass before dismissal if needed	- Inside voices - Follow adult directions - Maintain personal space
Recess	- Inform adult of any unsafe or suspicious behaviors - Stay in sight of an adult - Pause and look both ways before crossing street - Keep shoes on your feet	- Put equipment away when finished - Establish and follow game rules	- Report any stray animals or unsafe objects - Line up quickly when called - Listen for instructions - Be responsible for jackets and belongings	- Respect school and community properties - Share equipment - Show good sportsmanship - Use kind words and keep hands to yourself
Restroom	- Use restrooms appropriately - Keep water in the sink - Walk at all times - One person in bathroom at a time	- Wait in main hallway when restroom is full - Return to classroom if 3 people are waiting	- Dispose of waste properly - Flush toilet - Wash hands - Report any problems to an adult - Return directly to class when finished	- Respect others' privacy - Lock doors before use and unlock before exiting - Hands to yourself in waiting area - Quietly wait for your turn
Cafeteria	- Hands to yourself - Walk at all times - Raise hand for assistance - Eat only your food	- Stay seated at table until called for the line - Only 3 people per side of table - Stay in cafeteria at all times - Use downstairs restroom only	- Follow directions of adults - Use table manners - Clear up after yourself - Ask teacher to use the restroom	- Inside voices - Listen attentively - Follow directions promptly

Remote Learning

The use of video conferencing can help connect teachers to their students while learning from home. California Academy of Learning Charter School teachers will be using this resource to meet with classes, small groups, and individual students. The school is using two video conferencing platforms: Google Meet or Zoom. The school has taken several precautions to ensure the privacy of these video conferences, but we rely on our partnership with parents to ensure these tools are used appropriately by students while they learn from home. Students and parents are expected to follow these video conferencing guidelines:

- Students' ability to use video conferencing with or without parents' direct supervision is a decision parents need to make based on the age and independence of the child. For example, while K-3 students may require an

adult's direct assistance while using video conferencing tools, older students may be able to use these learning resources independently.

- Parents/guardians should be mindful of the family activities and images that are or heard/seen during a student's use of video conferencing. Please have

your children use these tools in a space that you can monitor, that is also private enough for them to minimize distractions from household activities.

- Students need to ensure that video conferencing devices are fully charged in advance of the video conference session, and they should know how to turn off the camera or microphone as needed.
- Please remind students to dress and behave appropriately when video conferencing. The same expectations of conduct and behavior that apply to the classroom apply to video conferencing. Please refer to the School's Code of Conduct to review behavior expectations.
- Students/parents/guardians are not permitted to take photos, screenshots, or recordings of any video or audio from these video conference sessions. Participants do not have permission to do so and should be aware that this is a violation of the Student Acceptable Use of Technology policy. Such recordings may also violate state law.
- Teachers may choose to record instructional video conferencing sessions and share them with students who cannot attend the live session. Recordings of sessions will not be publicly available and will only be shared within a secure resource such as Google Classroom or Seesaw, or as a link in an email to the class or individual students. Students and parents are not permitted to share links provided by teachers with anyone. Faculty will announce their intention to record the session giving students/parents/guardians the opportunity to turn off their camera and/or microphone if privacy is of concern.

STUDENT DEVICE USER AGREEMENT

The purpose of this document is to delineate the terms and responsibilities for families taking possession of a California Academy of Learning Charter School issued device. Although families will take temporary possession of the device, the device remains the property of the California Academy of Learning Charter School. All equipment must be returned or made available to California Academy of Learning Charter School upon request or upon the student's separation from California Academy of Learning Charter School, including graduation or withdrawal. The option to purchase insurance for the device will be made available annually, at the beginning of the school year, through

the school.

Students in the California Academy of Learning Charter School are being provided access to technology for educational purposes. Students must follow the California

Academy of Learning Charter School Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy for responsible use of technology in order to maintain the privilege of accessing such technology. The student and parent/guardian(s) will be responsible for taking the necessary precautions to safeguard the device. If the California Academy of Learning Charter School determines that loss and/or damage is the result of negligence, the parent/guardian(s) may be held financially responsible for the repair or replacement of the device. California Academy of Learning Charter School reserves the right to review, monitor, and restrict information stored on or transmitted via the California

Academy of Learning Charter School owned device and to investigate inappropriate use of resources. The school will provide filtered Internet access to its students in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Students will be educated in the proper use of the device and options for data storage.

This information is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with efficient, ethical, and lawful use of the school's technological resources. If a student violates the California Academy of Learning Charter School Code of Conduct or Responsible Use Policy, privileges may be denied and appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion for students. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

2026–2027 Student & Parent Technology Agreement
California Academy of Learning Charter School



Student Information:

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____

Homeroom/Teacher: _____ **Grade:** _____

Technology Use Agreement

I, _____, agree to the following:

(Please print student's first and last name)

- I have read the CALCS Internet Acceptable Use Policy and understand that I must follow all school rules when using school technology.
- I will use my school-issued iPad or laptop and the internet for learning and school-related activities only, and I will use them responsibly.
- I understand that I need to take good care of the iPad, charger, and any accessories. If the device is lost, stolen, or damaged—whether at school, at home, or somewhere else—I may be responsible for the cost to repair or replace it.
- I know that the iPad belongs to the school and that anything on it may be reviewed by the school at any time.
- If something happens to the device (it breaks, is lost, or is stolen), I will let the CALCS Technology Team know right away.
- I agree to return the iPad when the school asks for it, when I leave CALCS, or by the collection date at the end of the school year.
- I understand that if I don't return the iPad or it is intentionally damaged, the device may be locked and I may need to pay a fee.
- I understand that even if I don't sign and return this form, I am still responsible for giving back all school-owned technology if I leave the school or graduate.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Please return this completed page to the **California Academy of Learning Charter School**.

The Student and Parent/Guardian signature signifies that the student will:

- Use the device in a responsible and ethical manner that upholds the standards of California Academy of Learning Charter School.
- Understand that the device is at all times the property of the California Academy of Learning Charter School.
- Not uninstall, disable and/or modify any hardware or software installed on the device or install new or additional programs on the device. ● Not permit individuals, other than California Academy of Learning Charter School administrators or authorized California Academy of Learning Charter School IT Department personnel, to access, repair or service the device.
- Adhere to the California Academy of Learning Charter School Acceptable Use Policy found in the *Code of Conduct*. Devices used off school property are subject to all applicable California Academy of Learning Charter School Board Policies, expectations, and regulations.
- Understand the device will not be used for personal and/or private purposes and is to be used for the student's educational use and school responsibilities.
- Report loss and/or damage of the device to the California Academy of Learning Charter School IT Department. If the loss and/or damage is a result of negligence, the student/parent(s) or guardian(s) may be held financially responsible.
- Adhere to this Student Device User Agreement in the event the student is issued a "loaner" device during service.
- Notify the administration immediately if a student should receive an electronic communication containing materials that may be unlawful, inappropriate, affected by a virus, and/or a potential violation of the Code of Conduct.
- Not share login credentials and log off and secure their device to protect their work and information.
- Have a fully charged device prior to the start of the school day.



California Academy
of Learning
Charter School

750 Orchard Street, California, PA 15419 ***** 40B Trojan Way, Coal Center, PA 15423

Website: www.calcharteracademy.org

Heather Nicholson, CEO

Request for Excused Absence from School for an **Extra-Curricular Competition**

Student's Full Name: _____ Grade: _____

Date(s) of Proposed Absence: _____

Name of Person(s) Directing and/or Supervising Student during Above Absence

Relationship to Student: _____

Itinerary of the trip: *Include activities which could be educational in nature and will, therefore, provide the child with some valuable experiences outside the classroom. Include group name for competitions.*

Classroom assignments are the responsibility of the student to obtain, preferably prior to departure. All assignments must be completed. Upon their return, students shall be given the number of days to complete their assignments equal to the number of days absent.

I certify that all of the above information to be true and agree to comply with the above conditions.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Best Contact Phone #

***Please return this form to the Charter Office 2 weeks prior to the pre-planned competition trip.**

SCHOOL USE: Date Received _____

Current # days Excused Absent _____ Current # days Unexcused Absent _____

Excused Absences request _____ approved _____ NOT approved

School Administrator Signature _____



**California Academy
of Learning
Charter School**

750 Orchard Street, California, PA 15419 ***** 40B Trojan Way, Coal Center, PA 15423

Website: www.calcharteracademy.org

Heather Nicholson, CEO

Request for Excused Absence from School for a Pre-planned Educational Trip

Student's Full Name: _____ Grade: _____

Date(s) of Proposed Absence: _____

Name of Person(s) Directing and/or Supervising Student during Above Absence

Relationship to Student: _____

Itinerary of the trip: *Include activities which could be educational in nature and will, therefore, provide the child with some valuable experiences outside the classroom.*

Classroom assignments are the responsibility of the student to obtain, preferably prior to departure. All assignments must be completed. Upon their return, students shall be given the number of days to complete their assignments equal to the number of days absent.

I certify that all of the above information to be true and agree to comply with the above conditions.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Best Contact Phone #

***Please return this form to the Charter Office 2 weeks prior to the pre-planned educational tour or trip.**

SCHOOL USE: Date Received _____

Current # days Excused Absent _____ Current # days Unexcused Absent _____

Excused Absences request _____ approved _____ NOT approved

School Administrator Signature _____

California Academy of Learning Student Driving & Parking Agreement

Driving and parking on California Academy of Learning Charter School property is a **privilege**, not a right. This privilege may be granted to 11th and 12th grade students who demonstrate responsible behavior and comply with all school rules, state laws, and the conditions outlined below. The school reserves the right to deny, suspend, or revoke driving privileges at any time.

Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible to drive and park on school property, a student must:

- Possess a valid driver's license.
- Maintain current vehicle registration and insurance.
- Be in good academic standing.
- Demonstrate appropriate school behavior.
- Arrive at school before class starts at 8:10. Having more than **four** tardies a semester, unexcused absences, or truancy violations will result in holding an attendance meeting with parents, guidance counselor, and administration.
- Obtain written approval from the school administration before driving or parking on school property.

Driving privileges may be revoked if these standards are no longer met.

Student Responsibilities:

Students who receive permission to drive agree to:

1. Comply with all federal, state, and local motor vehicle laws.
2. Operate their vehicle safely and responsibly at all times.
3. Park only in designated student parking areas.
4. Obey all traffic signs, speed limits, and staff directions while on school property.
5. Enter and leave campus safely without reckless driving, speeding, racing, excessive noise, or other unsafe behavior.
6. Lock their vehicle while it is parked on school property.
7. Wait to be dismissed at the end of the day. Drivers will be able to leave school as soon as the buses and parent pick-up departs.
8. Not use their vehicle during the school day without prior administrative permission.
9. Notify the school immediately if a new vehicle is being driven to school.

Passenger Expectations:

- Student driving privileges are limited to **one approved student driver and one student passenger** unless otherwise authorized by administration.
- The driver is responsible for the conduct of every passenger transported to or from school.
- Both the driver and passenger may be subject to disciplinary action for behavioral violations occurring in or around the vehicle.

Parking and Liability:

- Parking on school property is entirely at the owner's risk.
- California Academy of Learning Charter School assumes no responsibility for theft, vandalism, fire, collision, weather damage, or any other loss or damage involving a student's vehicle or its contents.

- Vehicles parked illegally or in unauthorized locations may be ticketed, relocated, or towed at the owner's expense.

Vehicle Search Consent:

As a condition of receiving permission to drive and park on school property, the student and parent/guardian acknowledge and agree that:

- The student's vehicle may be searched by school administration or its designee when there is reasonable suspicion that the vehicle contains evidence of a violation of school policy, law, or poses a threat to the safety of students or staff.
- Refusal to permit a search may result in the denial or revocation of driving privileges and may result in additional disciplinary action consistent with school policy.

Revocation of Driving Privileges

Driving and parking privileges may be suspended or permanently revoked for, including but not limited to:

- Violating school rules or policies.
- Reckless or unsafe driving.
- Speeding or careless operation of a vehicle.
- Unauthorized use of a vehicle during school hours.
- More than **four** tardies or unexcused absences per semester.
- Poor academic or behavioral standing.
- Transporting unauthorized passengers.
- Violations of state motor vehicle laws.
- Failure to comply with staff directions.
- Any conduct determined by school administration to jeopardize the safety of students, staff, or visitors.

Revocation of driving privileges does not limit the school's authority to impose additional disciplinary consequences when appropriate.

Student Acknowledgement

I have read and understand the Student Driving & Parking Agreement. I understand that driving and parking on school property is a privilege that may be revoked at any time. I agree to follow all school rules, state laws, and administrative directives regarding student driving.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Consent

I have reviewed this agreement with my student. I understand that driving is a privilege and that failure to comply with these expectations may result in the loss of driving privileges and/or additional disciplinary action.

I also consent to administrative searches of my student's vehicle in accordance with school policy and this agreement.

I certify that my student has a valid driver's license and that the vehicle driven to school is properly registered and insured.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Administrative Approval

After reviewing the student's eligibility, academic standing, attendance, and behavioral record, permission to drive and park on school property is:

☐ **Approved**

☐ **Denied**

Parking Permit Number (if applicable): _____

Administrator Signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments: _____

California Academy of Learning Charter School Student Driving & Parking Permission Agreement

Student Information:

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Driver's License Number: _____ License Expiration Date: _____

Vehicle Make: _____ Model: _____

Year: _____ Color: _____ License Plate Number: _____

Insurance Company: _____

Policy Number: _____

Parent Information:

Parent Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact _____

Emergency Phone Number: _____

Do you give your child permission to have a passenger? Yes No

California Academy of Learning Charter School Student Passenger Permission Form:

California Academy of Learning Charter School permits eligible students to ride to and from school with an approved student driver only with written permission from both the parent/guardian and school administration. Riding with another student is a privilege and may be revoked at any time for violations of school rules or unsafe behavior.

Passenger Information:

Student Passenger Name: _____ Grade: _____

Approved Student Driver Information:

Driver's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Vehicle Make/Model: _____ License Plate Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Consent:

I give permission for my student to ride to and/or from school with the approved student driver listed above.

I understand and acknowledge that:

- Riding with another student is a privilege, not a right.
- My student may only ride with the driver approved by the school.
- Permission is limited to transportation directly to and from school unless otherwise authorized by school administration.
- My student is expected to follow all school rules while entering, riding in, and exiting the vehicle.
- Inappropriate behavior by either the driver or passenger may result in disciplinary action and/or the loss of driving and passenger privileges.
- California Academy of Learning Charter School is not responsible for accidents, theft, damage, or injuries that occur while students are traveling to or from school in privately owned vehicles.
- I understand that student transportation in privately owned vehicles is the responsibility of the student driver and parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Phone Number: _____

Student Passenger Agreement:

I understand that riding with another student is a privilege. I agree to:

- Ride only with the approved student driver listed on this form.
- Follow all school rules and demonstrate appropriate behavior while in the vehicle.
- Wear my seat belt at all times.
- Avoid distracting the driver.
- Follow all directions given by school staff regarding student transportation.

- Understand that violations of school rules or unsafe behavior may result in the loss of passenger privileges and additional disciplinary action.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student Driver Acknowledgement:

I understand that I am responsible for operating my vehicle safely and for the conduct of my passenger while traveling to and from school. I agree to follow all provisions outlined in the Student Driving & Parking Permission Agreement.

Driver Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Administrative Approval:

The above-named student is approved to ride as a passenger with the approved student driver listed on this form.

☐ **Approved**

☐ **Denied**

Effective Date: _____

Administrator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Comments:

California Academy of Learning Charter School

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE HANDBOOK

The Student Handbook is available on the California Academy of Learning Charter School website, or by hard copy upon request to the main office of your school building.

Student Name (please print):

_____ Grade: _____

My child and I have reviewed the contents of the **2026-2027** CAL Student Handbook. We acknowledge the expectations, procedures, and consequences explained throughout.

_____(Student Name/ Signature)

_____(Grade)

_____(Parent/Guardian Signature)

_____(Date)