



**ASPIRE FIRESTONE ACADEMY  
STUDENT FAMILY  
HANDBOOK  
2018-2019**

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## WELCOME FROM THE CEO

Dear Aspire Families,

**From all of us here at Aspire, welcome to the 2018-19 school year!**

Aspire was founded in 1998, making this year our **20th anniversary!** For twenty years, we have had the privilege of partnering with families to ensure that every Aspire student receives an excellent education. From day one, our vision has always been ***College for Certain***. We promise to work hard each day to prepare your child for a future filled with choices, and we thank you for partnering with us to make that happen. You, family members, are the wonderful champions, cheerleaders, and coaches for your children - and we could not do this work without you.

This year, there are **over 17,000 Aspire students** across California and Tennessee, and our goal is for each and every one of them to be **prepared for success in college and in life**. From TK through 12th grade, we are **helping students gain the knowledge and skills they need** to tackle any problem - not just problems on a worksheet or a test, but real problems that matter to them, to the people they love, and to the communities they live in and serve, both now and in the future.

We believe that **there is no more important work than education** and no greater accomplishment than seeing students reach their goals. Whether this is your family's first year with Aspire or you have been with us for many years, we want you to know what an honor it is for us to work with you and your child (or children!) in our schools.

Thank you for your partnership, and let's have a wonderful year!

Sincerely,

Carolyn Hack  
Aspire Public Schools CEO

## **ASPIRE-WIDE VISION**

Every student is prepared to earn a college degree.

## **ASPIRE-WIDE MISSION**

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

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

## **ANNUAL NOTIFICATION AND GUIDELINES**

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

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

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

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

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

## **ASPIRE FIRESTONE INFORMATION AND POLICIES**

### **LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Dear Falcon Families,

Welcome to the 2018-19 school year! We would like to extend a big thank you to all the families that have chosen to send their children to our school year after year, and a big welcome to our new families. Aspire Firestone is committed to successfully developing intellectually curious, self-confident and self-reliant young people for the betterment of a future global society. We are committed to providing a rigorous Common Core aligned academic program, Art, Music, Library, and Science classes, collaboration with family, staff, and community, in a child-centered, technology-enriched, learning environment. We will also continue to implement Restorative Practices, and teach our scholars that conflict is addressed through dialogue. We are excited for what the new year holds, and we look forward to working with you as partners in the education of our scholars.

### **ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Aspire Firestone Academy (Firestone) in South Gate, is chartered through the Los Angeles Unified School District (and the California Department of Education) through its charter authorization process, as well as the Public School Choice resolution. The school currently serves 414 students in grades K through 5th grade. The school's demographic profile is 99% Hispanic/Latino, with 87% of the student body eligible for the free and reduced price meals program. In the 2015-2016 school year, 30% of the students were English Language Learners. The school has been successful in many different ways. Attendance is consistently 96%, or higher. We have continued our Restorative Practice program, and we are in our third year of implementation. We continue to maintain a 0% suspension rate. We are in our second year of our full Special Education inclusion program, which we have called our Access Program. Firestone has strong goals for academic progress. With a 23% growth in ELA and a 17% growth in Math for the 2015 – 2016 school-year, Firestone is poised to make steady progress with the Common Core State Standards. Firestone is part of the Aspire Public Schools (APS), a non-profit 501(c)(3). The Home Office of Aspire Public Schools serves Firestone through business services, professional development, and other operational support.

### **SCHOOL SITE MISSION AND VISION**

#### ***Vision:***

Every student is prepared to earn a college degree.

#### ***Mission Statement:***

The mission of Aspire Firestone Academy is to successfully develop intellectually curious, self-confident and self-reliant young people for the betterment of a future global society.

### **CAMPUS AND OFFICE OPERATIONS**

Office Hours:

Monday- Thursday 7:15 am to 4:00 pm  
Friday 7:15 am to 2:00 pm

## SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Aspire Firestone Academy  
8929 Kauffman Ave.  
Southgate CA 90280  
323-249-5740

## DROP OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

On time drop off and pick up is important to your child's success. In order to make drop off and pick up as efficient for you, your child and other families, please follow the procedures below.

**Drop Off Time: AFA Drop off time begins from 7:15 am to 7:45 am.**

**AGA begins as early as 7:15 am (when school opens) up until 8:15 am.**

**There is no parking from 7:30 am to 8:30am.**

When dropping off your child for school in the morning we ask that you pull forward towards the end of the white curb. This will allow the cars to flow smoothly and for you to drop off your child a lot quicker. We ask that you pay attention to the directions of the monitors who are directing the flow of traffic. Once you drop your child off, we ask that you do drive off slowly and continue to follow the directions of the monitors.

**Pick Up Time: AFA pick up time begins at 2:45 pm. AGA pick up time begin at 3:15 pm.**

When picking up your child from school we ask that you take no more than five (5) minutes to pick your child up. This will allow the flow of traffic to move faster. **We do ask that you respect the handicap parking and do not park there unless you have a handicap placard.** We also ask that you follow the directions of the monitors who are out there assisting with traffic.

**Early Pick-Up Policies and Procedures:** Please be prepared to show your ID no exceptions! **If you are not** listed as an emergency contact, we cannot release student.

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

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

## CLOSED CAMPUS

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

## PARENT/FAMILY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents are asked to notify the office in writing as soon as any change of contact information (telephone numbers, address, etc.) occurs. This will ensure that all communication will be received without delay or interruption. Every student must have complete and up-to-date Emergency Contact Information, properly signed and on file in the school Office. **Student may only leave campus with an adult whose name is listed on the emergency contact information.**



## **CUSTODY ORDERS, POWER OF ATTORNEY OR CAREGIVER AFFIDAVITS**

We recognize that all families are unique. If you have family situations which involve specific custody or other legal documents, please let the school know so that we can support your child and family.

## **TELEPHONES AND CALLS TO STUDENTS**

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

If it becomes necessary for you to reach your child during school hours, or if it becomes necessary for your child to reach you during school hours, all communications should be relayed through the main office.

**Only emergency messages will be relayed.** As appropriate, the office staff and administration will determine if a message is an emergency.

## **MEDICATION**

If your child needs to take any prescription medications, you must have:

- 1) a doctor's written and signed note (Parent/Physician Statement) detailing the method, amount, and time schedules for such medication, **and**
- 2) a written and signed note (Parent/Physician Statement) from the parent indicating his/her desire that the school assist the student as set forth by the physician in his/her statement.

For safety reasons, children are not allowed to have medicine in their classrooms, lunchboxes, or in their pockets. All medication must be dispensed through the office. You may also come and administer medication to your child, if needed. From time to time some parents request that their child be able to take Tylenol or Advil at school. This is permissible only with written parent and doctor permission (Parent/Physician Statement) and the medication must be in its original container.

## **ENROLLMENT**

### **ENROLLMENT**

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

### **RE-ENROLLMENT**

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

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

Class placements are carefully considered and created at Aspire Public Schools, with a goal of balancing classes based on a variety of factors. Parents are welcome to submit a letter describing their child's learning styles and interest, but parent requests for specific teachers are not accepted.

### **FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

Aspire Public Schools does not accept or enroll foreign exchange students.

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Students who do not comply with the vaccination requirements shall be excluded from school, meaning, 'No shots, no school'.** State law requires that for unconditional admission to school, all students under 18 shall be fully immunized according to the requirements of the California Department of Public Health. All entering students must be up-to-date with immunizations according to

Aspire policy and the schedule provided by the California Department of Public Health. As of January 1, 2016, exemptions based on personal beliefs, including religious beliefs, will no longer be an option for the vaccines that are currently required for entry into school in California. If you have a previous personal belief exemption, please reach out to your school to discuss next steps. Students may be exempted from this requirement for medical reasons only. In the event of an outbreak of a disease for which the child has not been immunized, he or she will be excluded from school for the period of communicability.

**Students who do not comply with the requirements shall be excluded from school.** The immunization requirements do not prohibit pupils from accessing special education and related services required by their individualized education programs. If you have questions about your child's immunization record and/or admission status, please contact your child's school.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Aspire Public Schools (APS) believes that only through daily participation in classroom activities can students achieve success and progress in their academic and social growth. Regular attendance is also preparation for entry into the world of employment. All students and parents are accountable for regular class attendance and daily assignments.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

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

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

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

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

## **GENERAL TARDINESS**

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

Individual schools shall create and publish procedures to govern the admission of students that are tardy to school, including, but not limited to those described in the following section.

## **SCHOOL SITE ATTENDANCE AND TARDY PROCEDURES**

Regular, on-time attendance is important for your child’s success. In the event your child is absent or tardy, please follow the procedures below.

If your child is **absent**, please call the school office to **report the absence within 5 days** and ask for makeup work so that your child does not fall behind.

If your child is **tardy**, please have them come to the office to sign in for the day and obtain a “tardy pass” before they go to class.

## **CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

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

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

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

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

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

## **TRUANCY**

A student is considered truant when the student is:

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

Truancy is for unexcused absences not cleared within 5 days. To avoid truancy, please always inform the office if your child’s absence or tardy is for an excusable reason as defined above.

## **NOTIFICATIONS OF TRUANCY**

If your child is classified as truant under the California Education Code, you will receive notification from the school that includes information required by the state. The first notification will come to you once your child has accrued three truancy events. Please reach out to the school on this first notification, as it

will allow the school to work with you in support of your child's attendance. You will receive additional notifications after six and then again after seven total truancy events. [Education Code §§ 48260, 48261, 48262]

#### First Notification of Truancy or Excessive Absences

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

#### Second Notification of Truancy or Excessive Absences

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

### **NOTIFICATION OF DETERMINATION OF HABITUAL TRUANCY AND SART**

Once your child has received a third notification of truancy after accruing a seventh truancy event, the California Education Code identifies your child as a habitual truant. At this point, the school is required to hold a School Attendance Review Team (SART) meeting with you. At that meeting an attendance contract, including supports, will be discussed and signed and your child will be assigned to the school's truancy abatement program. [Education Code §§ 48260, 48261, 48262]

#### Notification of Determination as an Habitual Truant

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

The school's SART will consist of:

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

### **NOTIFICATION OF CONTINUED TRUANCY AND REFERRAL TO ASPIRE SARB**

Once a student reaches an 8<sup>th</sup> truancy event, you will receive notification that the student has been referred to the Aspire Student Attendance Review Board process, which is a final attempt to help resolve truancy issues before more stringent consequences are considered, including, but not limited to: referral to the District Attorney. [Education Code §§ 48260, 48261, 48262]

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

- Letter #4 sent regular and registered delivery confirmation mail from the Regional Office. In addition, a parent may be asked to sign the letter in person.
- A student must be notified a **fourth time** once they have reached an **eighth (8) truancy event**.
- Principal refers student to Aspire SARB with required attachments.
- Student will be assigned, with or without parent consent, to the school's truancy abatement program, including, but not limited to Weekend Makeup School.
- If the parent fails to respond in 10 days or attend the scheduled conference, the matter may be referred to the District Attorney's office and other appropriate actions, including a recommendation for disenrollment upon the accrual of additional truancy events.

The APS SARB will consist of:

- The school principal or their administrative designee;
- A teacher from the school in which the student is enrolled;
- The CEO’s designee from the Aspire Home Office; and
- Other relevant members, such as local school district representative, District Attorney representative, special education representative, counselor, local police official, etc.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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

### **GRADING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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

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

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

Aspire Firestone uses a standards based grading policy, which is a method where teachers measure how a student is doing in reaching a specific learning goal or standard. Students receive a 1-4 with the following definitions:

<b>Grading Key</b>	
4	Exceeding the grade level standard
3	Meeting the grade level standard
2	Approaching the grade level standard
1	Below the grade level standard
\	Standard not addressed

Please note, not all standards are assessed during every grading period. If you have questions about what your child is learning or how they are progressing, please reach out to your child's teacher.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

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

## **TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS**

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

## **REQUIRED RESTITUTION**

Student grades, diplomas, and transcripts may be withheld from students and parents or guardians when a student has damaged, destroyed, or not returned loaned property of the school and restitution has not been made. The records are withheld from the student and parent and/or guardian, but will not be withheld from a requesting school. [Education Code § 48904(b)]

## **CALIFORNIA MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT ACT**

In accordance with the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015, Aspire Public School has adopted the "Enhanced Pathway" in the *California Mathematics Framework, 2013* as it allows students to develop a solid foundation on key middle school mathematical concepts, and also gives students time to make key choices on their mathematics pathway. For additional information, please visit [www.aspirepublicschools.org](http://www.aspirepublicschools.org).

## **TESTING**

California students are required by state law to take multiple assessments to measure their progress and mastery of the CA adopted Common Core standards. These include, but are not limited to, the:

- Smarter Balanced Achievement Consortium Tests in grades 3 – 8 and 11
- CA English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPAC) for English Learners in K-12
- California Science Test (CAST) in 5, 8, and at least one high school grade
- California Alternative Assessment (CAA) for students who qualify based on disability
- Additional benchmark and interim tests are administered for internal Aspire purposes including an internal reading diagnostic assessment
- Other federal, state and local tests as required

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

The Family Life Education program is designed to help students understand the biological, psychological, social, moral, and ethical aspects of human sexuality. The program provides information on human growth and development, physical and emotional changes that occur during adolescence, and responsibility. Each school district shall ensure that all pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education from instructors trained in the appropriate courses. Each pupil shall receive this instruction at least once in junior high or middle school and at least once in high school. [Education Code § 51934]

The Family Life Education Program includes age appropriate instruction about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The course will include information on AIDS and its effects on the human body, HIV transmission and prevention, community resources, decision-making and refusal skills, and public health issues. The Family Life and HIV/AIDS instruction programs follow the guidelines set forth by the California Education Code. Parents and/or

guardians may contact the Principal if they would like to preview the classroom materials.

## **SCHOOL CULTURE AND STUDENT LIFE**

### **SCHOOL CULTURE HIGHLIGHTS**

Aspire Firestone Academy works hard to create a positive school culture with College for Certain and student success at the center of all that we do. From classrooms named for universities to celebrations that connect our school with students, family and staff, building community is an important piece of the work we do every day.

### **DRESS CODE**

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

#### Uniform Policy

The purpose of uniform dress at the school is:

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

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

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

#### Casual/Free Dress Days

"Casual Dress" means non-uniform; however, students wishing to remain in uniform on non-uniform days may do so. Dress may be casual, but should still adhere to the Dress Code policy and reflect personal and school pride. Clothing should be neat, clean, un-torn, and appropriate for school. Any student in non-uniform must ensure that the choice of dress covers at least as much of the body as would the uniform. Students whose clothing is inappropriate may be sent home for the remainder of the day. The administration reserves the right to determine which clothing is inappropriate.

### **SCHOOL SITE SPECIFIC DRESS CODE**

Aspire Firestone Academy requires all students to wear uniforms.

**Below are the specific uniform requirements for students.**

- Gray uniform pants, shorts or skirts
- Purple or light blue polo shirt

- Long sleeve grey or solid color sweater
- Black or solid color closed toe comfortable shoes

**Please do not send students with:**

Open toe shoes  
 Sweats  
 Tights  
 No shoes with lights or wheels (heely's)  
 No soccer shoes

**CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

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

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

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

- The student is currently enrolled in **at least** 30 semester credits of academic school work, **AND**
- The student has accrued the equivalent of at least 25 semester credits of academic work at the completion of the most recent grading period, **AND**
- The student is maintaining minimum progress toward meeting the high school graduation requirements as prescribed by Aspire’s Board of Directors; **AND**
- The student has maintained, during the previous quarter at least a 2.0 GPA (on a 4.0 GPA scale – *inclusive* of any Community College Credits) in all enrolled courses.

**ATHLETICS**

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

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

**DAILY ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES**

Students must attend school on the day of a school activity or event in order to participate. Students who do not attend school the day of a school activity or event, even if the event is in the evening may be denied the privilege of attending school activities or events on that date.



## **SCHOOL LUNCHES**

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

## **EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS - WORK PERMIT**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **EXPANDED LEARNING/AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS**

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

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

### **NOTICE OF REGULATIONS**

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

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Aspire Firestone Academy is committed to supporting all students through the implementation of systems that build a positive school culture. This includes both overarching intervention frameworks as well as specific culture and positive behavior building programs. Some specific systems we use include:

**Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS):** MTSS is the next evolution of Response to Intervention, which focuses much more on the whole child and creating a tiered system of supports that takes into account not just academic or behavioral needs, but also the impact of environment on these needs.

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS):** PBIS is a problem-solving framework that supports schools in determining behavioral interventions and support at all tiers within an MTSS system.

**Restorative Practices (RP):** RP promote positive relationships and community building while providing meaningful opportunities for members of the school community to share the responsibility for making our schools a safe and nurturing environment. Restorative Practices are used throughout all tiers of support and intervention to create positive school culture, alternative discipline and change.

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)**

Our approach to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is to create positive school climate and culture and foster the social and emotional growth of our scholars and teammates through adopting an intentional focus on the integration of SEL throughout our entire instructional pyramid and beyond. Aspire will be moving forward with an Aspire-wide TK-12 adoption and roll out of SEL principles and programming in 2018-2019. Our Social and Emotional Learning Program is a key element in advancing our Equity efforts at Aspire, by ensuring each scholar is receiving the types and appropriate level of supports they need to reach their potential.

Aspire is committed to supporting our students' social and emotional development to be caring and productive citizens. We engage in culturally responsive and equitable practices in our communities of students, families, and teammates to cultivate the following lifelong skills in each Aspire scholar and educator:

- Managing emotions and behaviors
- Feeling and expressing empathy and compassion for others
- Making responsible decisions
- Setting and achieving positive goals

Aspire Firestone Academy utilizes proven SEL programs and other techniques to include SEL in our regular day program. This program is in addition to the many other culture and skill building opportunities occurring at your child's school.

Paths: The PATHS® program is a PreK-6 curriculum designed to reduce aggression and behavior problems by promoting the development of social-emotional competence.

Please reach out to us if you would like to learn more about the systems and programs our school uses.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT CYCLE**

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

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

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of these regulations, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of

force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATION GUIDELINES**

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

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

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

- BE RESPONSIBLE, BE RESPECTFUL, AND BE SAFE by carrying yourself with respect and showing respect to others.
- ABIDE by all Federal, State, County, and City Laws.
- FOLLOW ADDITIONAL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES contained in the Student Family Handbook and as developed by the School Site Council (previously Advisory School Council).
- FOLLOW RULES that apply to specific classes and subjects. These rules will be made known to students and parents, in writing, at the beginning of the school year.

The following are not allowed:

- Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of drugs (illegal or prescription) or alcohol.
- Possession, use, or distribution of tobacco products or cigarettes.
- Possession or use of firearms, weapons, explosives, fireworks, or any other item capable of harming any person or property (or any items that could create the impression of such harm).
- Gang related activities, such as “throwing signs” and group intimidation or gang affiliation.
- Fighting, horsing around, hitting, loud noise, or threats towards any person.
- Wasting, damaging, defacing, or destroying any school property or property belonging to another person. Graffiti is prohibited. Do not destroy or write on school buildings, grounds, or property.
- Littering on school property and keeping food, drinks, and gum out of classrooms and hallways. Eat only in approved areas and have only water in classrooms.

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

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

- 1) Follow directions of all staff at all times.
- 2) Look professional at all times. Please review the dress code section if you have questions.
- 3) Use positive language: No teasing, bullying, profanity, or insults, etc.
- 4) Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself: No provoking or fighting, etc.
- 5) Take care of the school and other people’s property: No littering, gum chewing, or defacing of property. Eat only in approved areas and have only water in classrooms.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION**

Suspension shall be imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct. However, a pupil, including an individual with exceptional needs, as defined in Section 56026, may be

suspended for any of the reasons enumerated in Section 48900 upon a first offense, if the principal or superintendent of schools determines that the pupil violated subdivision (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e) of Education Code Section 48900 (see below under grounds for suspension for details) or that the pupil's presence causes a danger to persons. [Education Code § 48900.5]

## **SUSPENSION**

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

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

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

### Authority to Suspend

1. A teacher may suspend a student only from the teacher's classroom for the day of the suspension plus the following school day.
2. The Principal or the Principal's designee may suspend a student from class, classes or the school campus for a period not to exceed five school days.
3. The CEO or designee may extend a student's suspension pending final decision by the Aspire Administrative Panel on a recommendation for expulsion.
4. A student with an IEP being considered for expulsion may be suspended for ten (10) consecutive days pending assessment and an IEP Team meeting. The suspension may also be extended pending final decision by the Aspire Administrative Panel on a recommendation for expulsion. In the event that a special education student's cumulative suspensions in the school year exceed 10 days, the LEA is required to provide FAPE during any subsequent days of suspension. The IEP team determines the appropriate offer of FAPE for the student

### Jurisdiction

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

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

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

- a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.  
or (2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a

person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.

- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit use or possession by a pupil of the pupil's own prescription products.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- k) No student may be suspended under Education Code 48900(k) per LAUSD requirements.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- m) Possessed an imitation firearm. As used in this section, "imitation firearm" means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.
- o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for purposes of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- r) Engaged in an act of bullying. For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the following meanings:
  - 1. "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Sections 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
    - A. Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
    - B. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the pupil's physical or mental health.
    - C. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with the pupil's academic performance.
    - D. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with the pupil's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
  - 2. (A) "Electronic act" means the transmission, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication

device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- A. A message, text, sound, or image.
- B. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
  - i. Posting to or creating a burn page. "Burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).
  - ii. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).
    - (1) "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
    - (2) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
2. B) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) and subparagraph (A), an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
3. "Reasonable pupil" means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of the pupil's age, or for a person of the pupil's age with the pupil's exceptional needs.
- t) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this section, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily harm.

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

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

### Procedures in Cases Requiring Suspension

1. Incident Investigation- The school site administrator or teacher investigates the incident and determines whether or not it merits suspension.
2. Determination of Length of Suspension- The school site administrator determines the appropriate length of the suspension in conjunction with local school policy and school-specific disciplinary management plans (maximum of five consecutive school days). [Education Code § 48911(a)]  
The total number of days for which a student may be suspended from school shall not exceed 20 school days in any school year. [Education Code § 48903(a)]
3. Legal Notifications-Prior to the suspension or expulsion of any student, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts of assault which may have violated Penal Code section 245. [Education Code § 48902]

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

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

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

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

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

### Appeals Process

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

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

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

## EXPULSION

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

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

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

### Authority to Expel

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

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

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

## EXPELLABLE OFFENSES

### • Mandatory Expulsion

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

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

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

### • Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion

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

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

- Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense [Ed. Code § 48900(a)]
- Possession of any knife as defined in Education Code § 48915(g), explosive or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student



- Unlawful possession of any controlled substance, as listed in Health and Safety Code §§ 11053-11058, except for the first offense for the possession of not more than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana, other than concentrated cannabis [Ed. Code § 48900(c)]
- Robbery or extortion [Ed. Code § 48900(g)]
- Assault or battery upon any school employee as defined in (Penal Code §§ 240 and 242)
- Permissive Recommendation for Expulsion-requires a second finding of fact

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

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION**

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

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

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

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

### Verbal Harassment

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

### Cyber Harassment

Any written language, pictures or video directed at a staff member or student that is insolent, demeaning, abusive, implicitly or explicitly implied as a threat of bodily harm is totally unacceptable and shall be deemed harassment and will be dealt with as such. This includes social networking platforms including, but not limited to Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, etc.

### Physical Harassment

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

### Sexual Harassment

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

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's

academic status or progress.

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

It is the responsibility of the school to:

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

It is the responsibility of the student to:

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

### Transgender Harassment

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

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

- Dress code is gender-neutral and transgender students may dress in accordance with their gender identity.
- Bullying related to transgender identity will be quickly addressed and is considered a violation of Education Code § 48900(r) described above

## **SEARCHES**

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

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

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

## **DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS POLICY**

Aspire Public Schools recognizes the need for a Drug free, Alcohol free and Tobacco free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all Aspire buildings, facilities and vehicles. No person may possess, use or sell these items in any Aspire building, facility or vehicle.

## **OTHER PROHIBITED ITEMS**

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

## **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITEMS**

Students are responsible for maintaining personal items. Aspire is not responsible for the loss or breakage of student's personal items at school unless said items are in the possession of an Aspire staff member at the time they are lost, stolen or broken.

## **STUDENT SUPPORTS AND PROTECTIONS**

### **SECTION 504 PLAN**

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

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

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

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

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

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

## CHILD FIND AND SPECIAL EDUCATION NOTIFICATION

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

A student must be evaluated and identified as having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to be eligible for special education programs and related services. Assessment is the process to determine a student’s needs and eligibility for an Individualized Education Plan. No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for an individual with exceptional needs. Assessments must address all areas related to the suspected disability and be conducted by a multi-disciplinary team, including the parent. The evaluation will result in a written report consistent with *California Education Code Section 56327*. Whenever a parent provides a request for assessment, the LEA has 15 days to review the request and respond in writing. If the LEA determines that assessment is appropriate, an assessment plan will be developed and a copy given to the parents. Parents have 15 days to respond to the proposed assessment plan. The assessment will begin upon receipt of parent’s written consent to Individual Assessment Plan. The assessment must be completed and the IEP meeting held within 60 days of receipt of parent’s written consent. If there is denial of the request for assessment, prior written notice will be provided to the parents, consistent with *Title 34, CFR Section 300.503*, providing *rationale* for denial of the request.

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

## SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPLAINTS

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

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

## **HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (MCKINNEY-VENTO REAUTHORIZATION OF 2002)**

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

## **FOSTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

As required by State law, Aspire Public Schools ensures that all educational decisions for foster youth shall be made to ensure that each foster pupil has the opportunity to meet the same academic achievement standards to which all pupils are held. For additional information concerning services for foster children and youth, please contact the Regional Manager of Student Services. Contact information for the RM may be obtained through your school's main office.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

Aspire provides a variety of programs to help students who need support in their speaking, reading, writing or understanding of English as a result of English not being their home language. If you are interested in these supports for your child, please contact your school's main office.

## **GENDER DIVERSE STUDENT SUPPORTS**

Aspire is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students and ensuring that all students have equal access to Aspire's educational programs and activities. Aspire requires that all schools and all personnel promote acceptance and respect among students and staff. Aspire is a place where each student's gender identity is accepted and valued as an important part of the whole child. If you are interested in discussing specific supports for your child, please contact your school's main office.

## **STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (SST)**

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

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

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

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

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

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

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

## HOME HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION

The purpose of Home and Hospital Instruction (HHI) is to provide instruction to a student with a *temporary* disability in the student's home or in a hospital or other residential health facility, excluding state hospitals. The temporary disability must make attendance at Aspire impossible or inadvisable. Please reach to your school's main office if you would like to discuss HHI for your student.

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS

This section provides general information about the counseling services at Aspire schools. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the particular requirements for counseling at a specific school nor do all Aspire schools have the capacity to provide counseling services. Please contact the school's main office to determine specific protocols at this school site.

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

**Counseling services are not guaranteed for students.** Students referred for services may be placed on a waiting list until such time as the counseling staff has an opening. Students may be moved on the wait-list based on school discretion and applicable State and Federal laws. As stated above, however, school counseling resources are limited and counseling services are not guaranteed for every referral received.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

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

## CONTAGIOUS OR INFECTIOUS DISEASE

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

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AT ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Aspire Public Schools is committed to maintaining safe and secure campuses for our students and staff. We work diligently to make sure that students and staff are prepared for emergencies. To that end, every school has a comprehensive school safety plan that covers Aspire's policies and expectations regarding the practices of each school in maintaining the security of the physical campus, responding appropriately to emergencies, increasing the safety and protection of students and staff, and creating a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning. Every school conducts regular emergency drills that at a minimum, meets the state mandated requirements. These drills include: Fire, Earthquake, and Lockdown/Shelter in Place.

Parents are asked to make sure that their students actively participate and take emergency drills seriously. These drills help make sure students are well prepared in an event of an emergency. Each school also stocks emergency supplies to sustain students and staff. These supplies include the following: water, food, first aid supplies, search and rescue supplies, and sanitation items. These supplies are checked regularly by school staff.

Parents should be familiar with the school's emergency procedures and update contact information whenever it changes. Keep your cell phone with you to receive recorded updates on the emergency. Knowing where to go to pick up your child will save time and reduce anxiety. Parents should remember that schools have emergency procedures in place to protect all the students and that schools will follow these procedures during an emergency.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

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

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION**

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

### **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Children learn best when their parents are engaged every step of the way, creating a bridge of learning from the classroom to the home. Below are some examples of what Aspire does to help parents and guardians become great coaches for their children:

**Special Saturday Classes:** Scheduled at specific Saturdays during the school year, these half-day sessions allow parents to attend school with their children and get to know the school site better. We believe it's important for them to see, feel, and experience the space that their children spend so much time in.

**Guidance for At-home Support:** Aspire coaches parents on how to structure reading at home (20+ min per day K-5), providing the right level of help with homework, participating in projects, and playing games that reinforce learning.

**Participation in School Decision-making:** Aspire includes two parent representatives on the School Site Council (previously Advisory School Council) of each school, as well as parent participation on the school's Teacher Hiring Committee.

### **VISITOR POLICY**

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

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

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

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

## **VISITOR GUIDELINES**

All campus visitors must have the consent and approval of the principal/designee. Permission to visit must be given at the time requested if at all possible or within a reasonable period of time following the request. Children who are not enrolled at the school are not to be on the campus unless prior approval of the principal has been obtained.

Visitors may not interfere with, disrupt or cause substantial disorder in any classroom or school activity, including, but not limited to, lunch, recess or after-school.

Visitors are expected to:

- Follow the established school policy in requesting a classroom visitation
- Complete a visitor's permit upon arrival at the site
- Enter and leave the classroom as quietly as possible
- Not converse with the students, teacher and/or instructional aides during the visitation
- Not interfere with any school activity
- Keep the length and frequency of classroom visits reasonable
- Follow the school's established procedures for meeting with the teacher and/or principal after the visit, if needed
- Learn and follow the school-wide behavioral expectations
- Return the visitor's permit to the point of origin before leaving the campus.

Any individual who disrupts a school site or fails to follow school rules and/or procedures is subject to removal from the school site and may be further restricted from visiting the school.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers help enrich students' education and provide extra assistance for teachers and school staff. Volunteers are typically on campus for longer periods or with larger amounts of responsibility than standard visitors are. Because of this, there are additional requirements for volunteers beyond those for basic visitors and key volunteer requirements are discussed below, but please review the full volunteer handbook for a complete list of requirements.

Potential volunteers are urged to contact the school if they can offer time or services to help with any part of the school program. **Volunteers are placed with teachers or other staff members who have requested volunteer assistance. Schools reserve the right to assign volunteers to classrooms/activities as needed and to decline a volunteer's services at any time.** All visitors, including volunteers, must sign in at the front desk and receive a "Visitor Badge" as identification. They must also sign out when leaving the premises. This is for the safety of the children and staff as well as the visitor in case of an emergency. For the safety of all students, all volunteers must have:

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



### Volunteer Drivers

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

## ASPIRE FAMILY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **NOTICE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Under FERPA, Aspire must get parents' or eligible students' written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from students' records.

However, Aspire may disclose designated "directory information" (as defined below) without prior written consent, unless a parent or eligible student has advised Aspire that s/he does not want such "directory information" disclosed. Every parent and eligible student must be notified about what information constitutes "directory information," must be informed that s/he may opt-out of having this information provided about her/his student (or about herself/himself, if over 18 years old), and must provide Aspire with her/his decision to opt out within a reasonable amount of time from when the "directory information" notice was provided. At the start of every school year, parents and eligible students will be provided this "directory information" notice and will be provided a reasonable period of time to opt-out.

Directory information, if released, is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. Aspire defines directory information to include:

- Student's full name
- Grade enrolled
- Degrees, honors and awards received
- Club participation
- Sports participation, including athlete's height and/or weight

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Aspire to include information about students in certain school publications, such as but not limited to:

- Yearbooks
- Graduation programs
- Honor roll and other awards/recognition lists
- Club activity announcements
- Sports activity rosters, which may include height and weight of athletes

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

If you do not want Aspire to disclose any or all directory information, as defined above, from your child's education records (or your educational records, if you are 18 years old or older) without your prior written consent, you must notify Aspire in writing. Aspire provides an "Opt-Out" form at the start of every school

year, as part of its annual FERPA/Directory Information Notification. You may use this form or you may submit other written notification within a reasonable amount of time from the date you were informed of what is included as “directory information.”

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION AND TITLE IX POLICY**

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

Aspire will follow uniform complaint procedures when addressing complaints alleging unlawful discrimination based on age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability in any program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance.

Students, parents, guardians, or any other individuals having questions or concerns regarding Aspire’s “Discrimination Harassment Policy” should contact the principal of the school and Aspire recommends individuals work with their schools when they have concerns.

Parents who wish to file a discrimination or harassment complaint should complete Aspire’s “Uniform Complaint Investigation Request” Form (located at the back of this handbook), and should contact the Principal at the school or their Regional Manager of Student Services. More information on Aspire’s Uniform Complaint procedures is included later in this handbook.

## **ASPIRE STUDENT DATA PRIVACY POLICY**

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

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

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

## FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS TO PRIVACY ACT

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

1. **The right to inspect and review** the student's education records within 45 days of the day the Aspire receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Aspire principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Aspire principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. **The right to request amendment** of the student's education record that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Aspire to amend a record they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Aspire principal to clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Aspire principal will notify, in writing, the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing with the Aspire Director of Student Services regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. **The right to consent** to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Aspire as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Aspire Board of Directors; a person or company with whom Aspire has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing the official's tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill the official's professional responsibility.

Upon request, Aspire discloses education records without prior written consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Student records shall be released to another school district where the student has enrolled or intends to enroll, upon official request from that district. If such transfer of education records is made, Aspire will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request.

At the time of transfer of records, the parent/guardian, custodian or adult-age student may receive a copy of the records at his/her/their expense (\$0.25 per page), if requested, and shall have an opportunity to challenge the contents of the records.

4. **The right to file a complaint** with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Aspire to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name/address of the office that administers FERPA and receives grievances is:

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

## **USDA CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT**

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

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

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

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND NOTIFICATION**

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

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

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

## **PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**

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

## **FAMILY CONCERN PROCESS**

If you have concerns at a school site, please see below for the Parent Concern Process that should be followed for your site.

Aspire Public Schools encourages students, parents, and staff to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus staff.

Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Step 1- Meeting/discussion with the specific staff member

Step 2- Meeting/discussion with the person's supervisor (if applicable)

Step 3- Meeting/discussion with the Principal, Phone#: 323-249-5740

Step 4- Meeting/discussion with the Area Superintendent or Associate Superintendent

-----Contact information available from the school office-----

If an informal conference regarding a concern fails to reach an outcome that is satisfactory to the staff member, student, or parent, he/she may initiate the formal process by filing a written complaint. The form is available at the end of this handbook. Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.



**FAMILY CONCERN DOCUMENTATION FORM**

**Your Name** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Description of Concern:**

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

**Please describe your desired solution:**

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

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail, fax or deliver to you school site or Regional Office**

Aspire Firestone 8929 Kauffman Ave. Southgate CA 9080 Office :323-249-5740 Fax: 323-568-2017	Regional Office 5901 E. Slauson Ave. Commerce CA 90040 Office: 323-837-9920 Fax: 323-837-9921
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Date received by Aspire School or Regional Office \_\_\_\_\_

## **UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICY**

The Board of Directors of Aspire Public Schools (“Aspire”) recognizes that Aspire is responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. We have established Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) to address allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, and complaints alleging violation of state or federal laws governing educational programs, the charging of unlawful pupil fees and the non-compliance of our Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). The UCP shall be used for any program or activity conducted by Aspire, which is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from any state financial assistance.

This section contains rules and instructions about the filing, investigation and resolution of a UCP complaint.

A UCP complaint is a written and signed statement by a complainant alleging a violation of federal or state laws or regulations, which may include an allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or charging pupil fees for participation in an educational activity or non-compliance with the requirements of our LCAP. A complainant is any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization who files a written complaint alleging any of the above listed UCP complaint reasons. If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing, due to a disability or illiteracy, we shall assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint.

Aspire shall follow UCP for all allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying against any protected group as identified in Education Code sections 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135. This includes any actual or perceived characteristics as set forth in Penal Code section 422.55 or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. This list may be updated as required by law.

The UCP shall also be used when addressing complaints alleging failure to comply with state and/or federal laws in: After School Education and Safety, Child Nutrition, Consolidated Categorical Aid, Course Periods without Educational Content, Education of Pupils in Foster Care and Pupils who are Homeless, Every Student Succeeds Act / No Child Left Behind, Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP), Migrant Education, Pupil Fees<sup>1,2</sup>, Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil, School Safety Plans and Special Education. This list may be updated as required by law.

Complaints *other* than issues relating to pupil fees must be filed in writing with the following designated to receive complaints:

Uniform Complaint Officer  
c/o Regional Manager/Director of Student Services  
5901 E. Slauson Ave. Commerce CA 90040  
Office Phone 323-837-9920 Fax Number 323-837-9921

Any pupil fees complaint should be filed with the principal of a school.

<sup>1</sup> A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

1. A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.
2. A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment.
3. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

<sup>2</sup> A pupil fee complaint shall be filed no later than one year from the date the alleged violation occurred.

## **ASSURANCES**

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

A pupil fees or LCAP complaint may be filed anonymously if the complainant provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support the complaint.

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

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

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

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

Aspire designates its CAO/CSO as the compliance officers. The compliance officers shall receive and investigate complaints and ensure compliance with the law. A designee appointed by CAO/CSO may conduct the investigation.

## **INITIATION OF COMPLAINT**

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

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

## **INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINT**

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

## **RESPONSE/RESOLUTION**

An investigation shall be completed, resolved and decision rendered within sixty (60) days after receiving a request for direct intervention or an appeal request, unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of time. The complaint officer or designee shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the investigation and decision. The written report shall contain: Findings and disposition of the complaint; corrective actions (if any); rationale for such disposition; and procedures for initiating an appeal with Aspire's Student Services Office. If requested, the CAO/CSO or CEO designee will complete



an additional investigation and prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the investigation and decision. The CAO/CSO's written report shall contain findings and disposition of the complaint; corrective actions (if any); rationale for such disposition; and procedures for initiating an appeal, which are as follows:

1. Notify CAO/CSO or CEO designee in writing of the decision to appeal within fifteen (15) days of receiving the written report
2. Submit a letter to the California Department of Education (CDE) along with the originally filed complaint and a copy of Aspire's decision to CA Department of Education, 1430 N Street., Sacramento, CA 95814. Additionally, department specific information can be found here: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc/ucpcontacts.asp>
3. The appeal to the CDE must specify the reason for the appeal and whether Aspire's facts are incorrect and/or the law is misapplied.

## **MEDIATION**

Nothing in this document shall prohibit anyone involved in the complaint from utilizing alternative methods to resolve the allegations, such as mediation. Nor are we prohibited from resolving complaints prior to the formal filing of a written complaint. Mediation is a problem solving activity whereby a third party assists the parties to the dispute in resolving the complaint.

## **CIVIL LAW REMEDIES**

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



## **UNIFORM COMPLAINT FORM**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Alleged Violation \_\_\_\_\_ School/Office of Alleged Violation \_\_\_\_\_

For allegations of noncompliance, please check the program or activity referred to in your complaint, if applicable:

- |                                               |                                                                |                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Nutrition      | <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Categorical Aid          | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foster/Homeless      | <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil Fees for Educational Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> After School Education/Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Safety Plans  | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Control Accountability Plan     | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education Minutes    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Child Left Behind | <input type="checkbox"/> Every Student Succeeds Act            | <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant Education             |
- Courses without Educational Content/Already Satisfied for Graduation/Postsecondary Education

For complaints of discrimination, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying (employee-to-student, student-to-student, and third party to student), please check which of the actual or perceived protected characteristics upon which the alleged conduct was based:

- Sex  Sexual Orientation  Gender  Gender Identity  Gender Expression  Ancestry  
 Ethnic Group Identification  Race or Ethnicity  Religion  Nationality  National Origin  Age  
 Color  Mental or Physical Disability  Immigration Status  Lactating Student  
 Association with a person or group with one or more of the actual or perceived categories listed above

***For complaints of bullying that are not based on the above listed protected characteristics, and other complaints not listed on this form, please contact your School Principal, Regional Office or Area Superintendent.***

### Regional Office Contact Information:

- Bay Area (EPA, Oakland, Richmond): 510.434.5000  
 Central Valley (Modesto, Sacramento, Stockton): 209.647.3047, ext. 13903  
 Los Angeles: 323.837.9920

If you have contacted your school and Regional Office and still require assistance, referrals or resources, please contact the Home Office Department of Student Services at 510.434.5000





**STUDENT FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

Our signatures below indicate that we have received, read for understanding, and agree to follow the policies and guidelines found in the Student Family Handbook 2018-2019.

_____ Student Name (please print)	_____ Grade Level	_____ Date
_____ Student Name (please print)	_____ Grade Level	_____ Date
_____ Student Name (please print)	_____ Grade Level	_____ Date
_____ Student Name (please print)	_____ Grade Level	_____ Date
_____ Parent/Guardian Signature		_____ Date