

Big Sur Charter School 2026-27 Family Handbook



Our Mission

The Big Sur Charter School is devoted to guiding students to become intellectually curious, emotionally intelligent, environmental stewards.

Big Sur Charter School

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Big Sur Charter School ("BSCS") community! BSCS offers a vibrant alternative to traditional public schooling. We combine education at our Monterey Learning Center, the home environment, in the community and in nature to ensure that students benefit from diverse and experiential learning environments. The school and the family represent two parts of a key, when connected in partnership, unlocks the potential of each student.

We recognize that not all students learn the same way and are committed to providing academically challenging programs that meet the individual needs of every student.

This handbook is designed to help you understand more about our school, so that you can fully participate as a partner in your child's learning. We know that you want the best for your child. Let's work together to provide your child with the support they need to be successful!



**Where Home, School, and Community
are Partners in Learning**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Charter School does not discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, immigration status, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code.

The Charter School Board of Directors shall not refuse to approve the use or prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction or any book or other resource in a school library on the basis that it includes a study of the role and contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities, or members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, or socioeconomic status groups. The Charter School Board of Directors shall not adopt or approve the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use of such would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code section 220.

The Charter School adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEIA").

The Charter School does not discourage students from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Charter School for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance, disability, neglect or delinquency, English proficiency, for being homeless or a foster/mobile youth, economic disadvantage, nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. The Charter School shall not encourage a student currently attending Charter School to disenroll or transfer to another school based on any of the aforementioned reasons except in cases of expulsion and suspension or involuntary removal in accordance with the Charter School's charter and relevant policies.

The Charter School does not request nor require student records prior to a student's enrollment.

The Charter School shall provide a copy of the California Department of Education Complaint Notice and Form to any parent, guardian, or student over the age of 18 at the following times: (1) when a parent, guardian, or student over the age of 18 inquires about enrollment; (2) before conducting an enrollment lottery; and (3) before disenrollment of a student.

The Charter School is committed to providing an educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, or national origin); The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the IDEIA; and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA (mental or physical disability). The Charter School also prohibits sexual harassment, including cyber sexual bullying, and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religion, religious affiliation, creed, color, immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. The Charter School does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including discrimination, intimidation, or bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the Charter School does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender.

Pursuant to California law and the California Attorney General's guidance to K-12 schools in responding to immigration issues ("Guidance"), Charter School provides equal access to free public education, regardless of a student's or their parent's or guardian's immigration status or religious beliefs. The complete Guidance, including Appendix G – Know Your Rights can be reviewed via the following link: <https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/bcj/school-guidance-model-k12.pdf>

The Charter School will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted. Inquiries, complaints, or grievances regarding harassment as described in this section, above, should be directed to the Charter School Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") Compliance Officer:

Aimee Alling, School Director
304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940
831-324-4573

The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in the Charter School's programs or activities. The Charter School prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or who participates or refuses to participate in a complaint investigation.

Admission Requirements

BSCS admits students residing in Monterey County and all adjacent counties. Upon enrollment families are required to provide immunization records, proof of age, and residency documentation for each student. Those students who do not meet the State guidelines for immunizations, and are not otherwise lawfully exempt from these requirements, will be excluded from attendance until the requirements are met. Students who have been exposed to a communicable disease for which they have not been immunized may be excluded from BSCS classes at the discretion of the School.

We are a public school and do not charge tuition. All interested families are encouraged to complete the Application for Enrollment. To ensure that parents and students understand the model of our home-school community approach we encourage you to schedule a school visit. These appointments may be made on our website.

If the number of students who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds the Charter School's capacity, as set annually by the Board of Directors, admission shall be determined by a public random drawing. In the event of a drawing, current students wishing to return will be automatically enrolled. Remaining enrollment spots will be filled through the public random drawing, scheduled at a time and place so as to allow for maximum parent involvement, with the following admissions preferences:

Siblings of students admitted to or attending the Charter School
Residents of the District
All other applicants

Students selected in the lottery have three days to formally accept the offer of enrollment. If the offer is not accepted in the allotted period of time, the Charter School will proceed to offer enrollment to the next student on the waiting list.

Formal enrollment in the Charter School also requires the following documents submitted prior to the start of the school year:

- Master Agreement and Acknowledgement of Responsibilities document signed by the parent, student, charter school teacher, and any person designated by the parent to teach their child. This document will clearly provide educational guidelines and responsibilities and provide consent to voluntarily participate in this independent study program.
- Records documenting immunizations required by the State of California.
- Residency verification documents.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a waitlist according to their draw in the lottery. This waitlist will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. In no circumstance will a waitlist carry over to the following school year.

Parents/guardians, teachers and the student are required to sign the Master Agreement before the first day of instruction. The Master Agreement contains the courses and monthly consultation meeting times.

Students may not be given access to any school curricula or activities until the Master Agreement is signed by all parties. No attendance may be claimed by the school until the Master Agreement has been signed.

Disenrolling

The state of California allows students to be enrolled in only one school at a time, regardless of whether the schools are public or private. Parents must notify BSCS when their child is enrolled in another school. Families must attend a final meeting with their teacher to return curriculum and materials. When a request for cumulative records is received from the new school, student records will be mailed to the requesting school.

The student's last known school district of residence will be notified of the student's disenrollment pursuant to Education Code 47605(d)(3):

If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.

Involuntary Removal Process

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action. The hearing shall be consistent with the Charter School's expulsion procedures. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the Charter School's suspension and expulsion policy.

Upon parent/guardian request for a hearing, the Charter School will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. The notice of hearing shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall include a copy of the Charter School's expulsion hearing process.

If the parent/guardian is nonresponsive to the Involuntary Removal Notice, the student will be disenrolled as of the effective date set forth in the Involuntary Removal Notice. If the parent/guardian requests a hearing and does not attend on the date scheduled for the hearing the student will be disenrolled effective the date of the hearing.

If, as a result of the hearing, the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known school district of residence within thirty (30) days.

A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent the Charter School from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy continue or reoccur.

Parent Engagement

BSCS is committed to fostering family involvement. Families are encouraged, but not required, to volunteer for fundraising events, attend school board or other school meetings, or sign up to be the class parent.

Parent meetings are another great way for families to be involved. These meetings provide opportunities to exchange ideas, strategies, and resources are crucial to student success.

Eighth grade families have the opportunity to plan the 8th grade promotion.

School Communication

ParentSquare is the school's primary communication tool. Class and school calendars along with all school communication is delivered through ParentSquare.

Family contact information, including the phone numbers and email addresses of all families who don't opt out of the directory, is available on ParentSquare. ParentSquare offers parents the option to keep your contact information private. This information is for school use only and may not be used for mailing lists, promotion of business, religious, or other advertisement purposes. We understand that contact information can change during the school year. BSCS relies on families to keep their contact information current in ParentSquare and with the office. Missing communication from the school can lead to students getting behind and to missed adventures!

Sibling Policy

Big Sur Charter Schools Sibling Policy is one that considers the safety and needs of students, faculty, and families, while supporting parent participation and ensuring that both teacher and parent volunteers can focus entirely on the children in the classroom and during other school-sponsored events.

- Siblings may accompany parents to school events that are open to the public.
- Siblings may attend classroom activities with their parents at the discretion of the individual teacher. Please make prior arrangements with the teacher.
- Siblings are not allowed when parents chaperone field trips, Coastal Stewardship classes or other school organized events.
- Siblings are not allowed when parent volunteers are in the learning classroom.

Fundraising

The purpose of the fundraising policy is to ensure that all fundraising efforts on behalf of the Big Sur Charter School (BSCS):

- Are consistent with the school's mission
- Comply with state and federal laws
- Are properly accounted for
- Directly impact the students of BSCS

Fundraising makes it possible for BSCS to provide programs aligned with the school's mission such as Coastal Stewardship, Art and Community Learning Partners programs.

Written permission from the school director is required if:

- Any individual or organization wanting to solicit funds or property on behalf of BSCS
- Any individual or organization, whether or not affiliated with BSCS, wishes to use any BSCS database, contact list, or communication channel to solicit funds or property to solicit fund on behalf of BSCS
- Any use of the BSCS name, brand and logo for fundraising activities

It is the intent of the BSCS Board that all fundraising events or programs should strive to incorporate practices that are in keeping with the mission of BSCS.

All gifts and donations will be accepted by the BSCS Board of Directors during regular Board meetings.

The school Director shall oversee and support all BSCS fundraising activities. Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to, developing the annual fundraising plan in collaboration with the Board of Directors.

Family Giving

Family giving is a great way to directly impact students. The Board recommends voluntary contributions from each parent at the level of \$50 per educational month per student for families of two students or less, and \$20 per educational month per student for families with three or more students. Please note that donations are strictly voluntary. No student's enrollment status or grades will be impacted, nor will the student incur any other penalties if the family does not donate.

Drop-off, Pick-up and Parking

- Wave Street/Cannery Row is the safest place to park and either walk your student up to the Learning Center or let them out.
- Please drop-off & pick-up your student on time.
- There is no supervision before 9 am or after classes end.
- If your student is in TK through Grade 4, you must sign your student in and out.
- Please wait in the courtyard for classes to begin or end. Be mindful of the noise as some classes may still be in session.
- There is no parking in either of the lots for any reason.
- No stopping in the red zone - it blocks the crosswalk making it unsafe for pedestrians.

Lunch and Snack

- Zero waste as possible
- Send lots of food, reusable water bottle and utensils
- If you need to drop a lunch off after school starts, please bring it to the office.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Big Sur Charter School's academic program provides educational opportunities in multiple environments - home, learning center, and community. The amount of time spent in any one learning environment is determined by grade level, with transitional kindergarteners spending more time learning at home, and eighth graders spending more time learning at the learning center and in the community.

At the learning center, kindergarten through eighth grade students work in small classroom settings with credentialed teachers using a comprehensive curriculum that meets Common Core Standards. Focus subjects are:

- Math (K-8)
- Language Arts
- Reading (K-2)
- Written expression (3-8)
- Art

Transitional kindergarten students will engage in play-based, hands-on investigations that incorporate language, literacy, and mathematics throughout the day.

In addition to their learning center classes, all students participate in Coastal Stewardship classes, our environmental education program.

On days students are not at the Learning Center, they continue to learn at home under the direct supervision of parents/guardians, using curriculum and resources provided by the school. Focus subjects are:

- Language Arts - Grammar, vocabulary, reading or writing depending on grade
- Social Studies
- Science
- PE
- Math (TK)

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that students engage in educational activities assigned by the School on each of the days of the regular school calendar in order to be considered in attendance on that day.

The school year is divided into ten (10) Learning Periods (LP) with a maximum of 20 school days each. For students in all grade levels offered by the School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work shall be no more than twenty (20) school days.

Big Sur Charter School recognizes that travel can provide students with important life experiences that enhance their education. If a student is to be absent for more than a week, parents must work with their student's teacher to complete a travel form. Failure to do so may result in a Report of Missed Assignment meeting to determine if Intendent Study is in the best interest of the student.

Big Sur Charter School offers a full home education option when extenuating circumstances exist. However, participation in the learning center classes ensures that students meet the rigorous academic state standards that collaborative work and group discussions becomes challenging in a home setting and therefore is strongly discouraged once a student reaches 3rd grade.

Families participating in this option will not have access to Coastal Stewardship classes, due to class size and requirements of the Learning Center Program.

Requests must be submitted in writing and approved by the School Board. Once approved, families meet weekly with their teacher of record. At this meeting, weekly work will be evaluated for time value for attendance purposes and assessments may be administered. All work is to be graded by the parent. Ungraded work will be sent home and can be presented to the teacher at the next meeting.

Teacher Qualifications

As the Charter School receives Title I federal funds through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("ESEA"), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"), all parents/guardians of students attending the Charter School may request information regarding the professional qualifications of classroom teachers and/or paraprofessionals, including at a minimum:

1. Whether the student's teacher:
 - a. Has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - b. Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - c. Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Upon request, the Charter School will provide the information to the parents/guardians in a timely manner. Parents/guardians may contact the School Director by email, director@bigsurcharterschool.org, or by phone, 831-324-4573, to obtain this information.

Coastal Stewardship

The Coastal Stewardship Program is an integral part of Big Sur Charter School, offering students a unique opportunity to explore and engage with the environment through hands-on learning. Students in grades TK through 8th grade participate in weekly outdoor education classes that include guided nature hikes, ecology lessons, and discussions on environmental challenges. This experience helps students develop a deep understanding of the threats facing our oceans and ecosystems—going beyond awareness to take meaningful action in protecting our coast. Led by our Nature Specialist, the program takes place in various locations throughout Monterey County. Its goals are age- and grade-specific, aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards and NOAA Sustainability Standards, with academic rigor increasing progressively by grade level.

Art

Art education is an essential part of our curriculum, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression. It enhances problem-solving skills, builds confidence, and provides students with meaningful ways to interpret and connect with the world around them.

BSCS students in 1st through 8th grade participate in a weekly art class. Rooted in the Visual and Performing Arts Standards, our program encourages students to explore their artistic passions.

Curriculum

All students are provided school selected, California standards-based curriculum. A copy of the curriculum list is available in the main office and on our website. All materials are the property of BSCS and must be returned in good condition at the end of each year or as required by the resource library. Parents agree to pay for all lost or damaged materials.

Assignments

Each Learning Period students receive a Home Study Guide (HSG) from their teacher. The HSG is a monthly plan that defines the content and assignments to be taught and graded at home by the parent or guardian, and has weekly turn in dates for assignments.

Each week, completed and graded HSG assignments are turned in along with the Assignment and Work Record (AWR). The AWR is a weekly record completed by the student to monitor completion and mastery of content in the Home Study Guide. Ungraded HSG assignments will be sent home and must be resubmitted within five (5) days to make up for any lost attendance.

Students also receive instruction and assignments from teachers during learning center classes. These assignments are graded and reported by the teacher.

Academic Honesty

The Governing Board believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The Board expects that students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty.

Students, parents/guardians, staff and administrators shall be responsible for creating and maintaining a positive school climate that encourages honesty. We understand that part of growing up is to test boundaries. For that reason, when addressing academic dishonesty, the first step will be a conversation with the teacher and or school director explaining the importance of doing one's own work, and being honest. If a second conversation is warranted, the parents will be notified, and the student shall be subject to discipline.

8th Grade Stewardship Camp

Participation in Stewardship Camp requires that students be in good academic and behavioral standing. Good academic standing is defined as having the equivalent to at least all C's and having maintained full attendance for LP's 6-10. Good behavioral standing means that students are following the school expectations:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe
- Be Your Personal Best

Attendance

As a nonclassroom-based school attendance at BSCS is assignment based. Students must complete all HSG and learning center assignments to receive full attendance and to ensure that the following instructional minutes are met:

- 36,000 minutes in kindergarten (equivalent to approx. 3.4 hrs/day)
- 50,400 minutes in grades 1-3 (equivalent to approx. 4.8 hrs/day)
- 54,000 minutes in grades 4-8 (equivalent to approx. 5.1 hrs/day)

Completed HSG and learning center assignments are evaluated monthly by the teacher for attendance purposes. The teacher may deduct attendance days if, in the teacher's professional judgment, the work does not represent sufficient instructional time. Ungraded/incomplete work may be sent home and must be resubmitted within five (5) days to make up for any lost attendance.

Report of Missed Attendance (Involuntary Removal)

Per the Independent Study Policy, when any student fails to complete their assigned work during any Learning Period, the School Director or his/her designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interest of the student to remain in independent study. A student may miss six (6) assignments in any given LP and still receive full attendance. A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim student record.

A Report of Missed Attendance evaluation may also be conducted if the student is not making adequate academic progress. The evaluation can include the following supportive strategies:

- A required meeting between student, parent/guardian and supervising teacher to create a plan to support the student and/or parent.
- Possible strategies to support the student's learning such as individual or small group tutoring, parent coaching, or other methods to support the student's success.

The Administration shall take any information presented by the parent/guardian into consideration when determining whether it is in the best interest of the student to remain in independent study. Additional factors to be considered include but are not limited to the following:

1. Student's grades at the time of the evaluation
2. Teacher observation/feedback
3. Standardized testing data
4. Student's progress in independent study curriculum

The Administration's decision shall be provided in writing to the parent/guardian within three (3) days of the evaluation. The Administration may:

1. Place the student on attendance probation to be evaluated again at a later time,
2. Use other alternatives to improve attendance, or
3. Find that it is not in the student's best interest to remain in independent study.

If the Administration finds that it is not in the student's best interest to remain in independent study, then the student shall be involuntarily removed from Big Sur Charter School pursuant to state law and charter school procedures.

Report of Missed Attendance for Special Education Students

If a Report of Missed Assignment Evaluation is needed for a Special Education student, the IEP team will be notified and an IEP meeting will be held to determine if independent study is an appropriate placement.

Grading

Parents are responsible for grading all HSG work according to the grading scale below. Ungraded work will be sent home to be graded, but must be returned within five (5) instructional days for the student to receive credit.

Big Sur Charter School's evaluation scale seeks to measure students' understanding of academic content but also, and maybe more importantly, the effort students put into learning the content and their academic growth. Students receive grades at the end of each Learning Period based on content mastery.

Evaluation Scale Kindergarten through 8th Grade:

4 = Expert- Student understands content well enough to thoroughly teach it to someone else.

3 = Practitioner- Student requires minimal support and makes few mistakes.

2 = Apprentice- Student is starting to understand the content but requires moderate support.

1 = Novice- Student is starting to learn the content but does not understand it yet.

0 = No work turned in

Report Cards and Progress Reports

BSCS will provide monthly access to progress reports via the student portal. Report cards are sent home at the end of each school year.

Report cards are a combination of the grades they receive from parents on home education assignments and their teachers on learning center assignments. While the teachers ultimately determine final grades, parent input is key to fully evaluating a student's academic progress.

To assist the teachers in determining a student's final grade and reflect on progress made during the school year card process, parents are required to complete a report card form at the end of the year.

State Testing

Every publicly funded school is required to administer standardized tests to the applicable grades (e.g., the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress.) Student non-participation in these tests can seriously impact the school's funding allocation and renewal of the BSCS Charter. BSCS expects all students in grades 3rd-8th to participate in required annual testing. Test scores are sent to parents and can be a useful tool in assisting families in measuring annual progress and planning curriculum. Schools are required to have a 95% participation rate; however, we cannot require students to take the CAASPP test, but participation is highly encouraged.

Tests include:

- Physical Fitness testing for grades 5th and 7
- English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) • State Mandated Standardized Testing for grade 3rd-8th

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a parent's or guardian's written request to Charter School officials to excuse their child from any or all parts of the CAASPP shall be granted. Upon request, parents have a right to information on the level of achievement of their student on every State academic assessment administered to the student.

Systems of Support

We understand that not all students learn at the same rate, and even the most skilled students hit bumps in the road – it's called learning! For this reason, we use a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to support students' academic and behavioral needs. MTSS models include universal screening of all students, multiple tiers of intervention delivery, a collaborative problem-solving approach, and uses data to inform decisions at each tier. Intervention delivery is based on individual students' academic, social, and behavioral needs. Teachers meet weekly to discuss the progress of all students. As part of MTSS interventions, students have access to small group tutoring, receive focused support during class time, and families receive support and resources as needed.

Sexual Health Education

The Charter School offers comprehensive sexual health education to its students in grades 7-8. A parent or guardian of a student has the right to excuse their child from all or part of comprehensive sexual health education, HIV prevention education, and assessments related to that education through a passive consent ("opt-out") process. The Charter School does not require active parental consent ("opt-in") for comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education. Parents and guardians may:

- Inspect written and audiovisual educational materials used in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education.
- Excuse their child from participation in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education in writing to the Charter School.
- Be informed whether the comprehensive sexual health or HIV/AIDS prevention education will be taught by Charter School personnel or outside consultants. When the Charter School chooses to use outside consultants or to hold an assembly with guest speakers to teach comprehensive sexual health or HIV/AIDS prevention education, be informed of:
 - The date of the instruction
 - The name of the organization or affiliation of each guest speaker
- Request a copy of Education Code sections 51930 through 51939.

Anonymous, voluntary, and confidential research and evaluation tools to measure students' health behaviors and risks (including tests, questionnaires, and surveys containing age-appropriate questions about the student's attitudes concerning or practices relating to sex) may be administered to students in grades 7-12. A parent or guardian has the right to excuse their child from the test, questionnaire, or survey through a passive consent ("opt-out") process. Parents or guardians shall be notified in writing that this test, questionnaire, or survey is to be administered, given the opportunity to review the test, questionnaire, or survey if they wish, notified of their right to excuse their child from the test, questionnaire, or survey, and informed that in order to excuse their child they must state their request in writing to the Charter School.

A student may not attend any class in comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education, or participate in any anonymous, voluntary, and confidential test, questionnaire, or survey on student health behaviors and risks if the Charter School has received a written request from the student's parent or guardian excusing the student from participation. An alternative educational activity shall be made available to students whose parents or guardians have requested that they not receive the instruction or participate in the test, questionnaire, or survey.

Surveys About Personal Beliefs

Unless the student's parent/guardian gives written permission, a student will not be given any test, questionnaire, survey, or examination containing any questions about the student's, or the student's parents' or guardians' personal beliefs or practices in sex, family life, morality, or religion.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Rights for Parents and Eligible Students

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("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 five calendar days after the day the Charter School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Charter School Director or designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Charter School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected, in accordance with California Education Code § 49069.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
3. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Charter School to amend a record should write the Charter School's Director or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the Charter School decides not to amend the record as requested, it will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. If the Charter School denies the amendment request, parents and eligible students may add a written statement of objection to the student's record, as outlined in California Education Code § 49070.
4. The right to provide written consent before the Charter School discloses personally identifiable information ("PII") from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
5. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to Charter School officials with legitimate educational interests. A Charter School official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the Charter School's Board of Directors. This also includes a volunteer, consultant, vendor, or contractor performing an institutional service or function for which the Charter School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the school's direct control with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or provider of digital educational platforms and/or services; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another Charter School official in performing their tasks. A Charter School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.

The Charter School may also disclose records without consent:

- To other schools where the student seeks or intends to enroll, per California Education Code § 49068. The Charter School will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the request for records, unless the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, subject to 34 C.F.R. § 99.31 (a)(9)(i).
- To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency per California Education Code § 49076(a)(2)(C).
- To state and local authorities in the juvenile justice system under California Education Code § 49076(a)(1)(M) and (N).
- To foster family agencies or caregivers for the purpose of case management per California Education Code § 49076(a)(1)(N).

The Charter School will not release student information to third parties for immigration enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order, in compliance with AB 699.

Parents have the right to:

1. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Charter School to comply with FERPA requirements. Complaints may also be filed with the California Department of Education.

Contact Information for Complaints

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

California Department of Education

1430 N Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

2. The right to request that the Charter School not release student names, addresses, and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from a student's education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to Charter School officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the Charter School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A Charter School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student to the following parties:

- a. Charter School officials who have a legitimate educational interest as defined by 34 C.F.R. Part 99;
- b. Other schools to which a student seeks or intends to enroll so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer. When a student transfers schools, the Charter School will mail the original or a copy of a student's cumulative file to the receiving district or private school within ten (10) school days following the date the request is received from the public school or private school where the student intends to enroll. The Charter School will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the request for records at the parent's or eligible student's last known address, unless the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student. Additionally, the Charter School will give the parent or eligible student, upon request, a copy of the record that was disclosed and give the parent or eligible student, upon request, an opportunity for a hearing;
- c. Certain government officials listed in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1) in order to carry out lawful functions;
- d. Appropriate parties in connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid if it is necessary to determine eligibility, amount of aid, conditions for aid or enforcing the terms and conditions of the aid;
- e. Organizations conducting certain studies for the Charter School in accordance with 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(F);
- f. Accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting functions;
- g. Parents of a dependent student as defined in section [152 of the Internal Revenue Code](#) of 1986;
- h. Individuals or entities, in compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. Subject to the exceptions found in 34 C.F.R. § 99.31 (a)(9)(i), reasonable effort must be made to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance, so that the parent or eligible student may seek a protective order;
- i. Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies;
- j. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law;
- k. A foster family agency with jurisdiction over a currently enrolled or former student, a short-term residential treatment program staff responsible for the education or case management of a student, and a caregiver (regardless of whether the caregiver has been appointed as the student's educational rights holder) who has direct responsibility for the care of the student, including a certified or licensed foster parent, an approved relative or nonrelated extended family member, or a resource family, may access the current or most recent records of grades, transcripts, attendance, discipline, and online communication on platforms established by the

Charter School for students and parents, and any individualized education program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan that may have been developed or maintained by the Charter School; and/or

- I. A victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense. The disclosure may only include the final results of the disciplinary proceedings conducted by the Charter School with respect to that alleged crime or offense. The Charter School discloses the final results of the disciplinary proceeding regardless of whether the Charter School concluded a violation was committed.

"Directory Information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The Charter School may disclose the personally identifiable information that it has designated as directory information without a parent's or eligible student's prior written consent. The Charter School has designated the following as directory information:

- Student's name
- Student's address
- Parent's/guardian's address
- Telephone listing
- Student's electronic mail address
- Parent's/guardian's electronic mail address
- Photograph/video
- Date of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level

If you do not want the Charter School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Charter School in writing at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment. Parents/guardians must also be notified annually of their right to opt out, per California Education Code § 49073.

Please note that data collected and reported by Charter School to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System ("CALPADS"¹) pursuant to state law, will be shared with the California College Guidance Initiative ("CCGI"²) and will:

- 1) Be used to provide pupils and families with direct access to online tools and resources.
- 2) Enable a pupil to transmit information shared with the CCGI to both of the following:
 - a. Postsecondary educational institutions for purposes of admissions and academic placement.
 - b. The Student Aid Commission for purposes of determining eligibility for, and increasing uptake of, student financial aid.

Please visit the CCGI website at CaliforniaColleges.edu to access resources that help students and their families learn about college admissions requirements.

A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

¹ CALPADS is a database maintained by the CDE which consists of pupil data from elementary and secondary schools relating to, among other things, demographic, program participation, enrollment, and statewide assessments data.

² CCGI is an authorized provider of an institutional service to all California local educational agencies and part of the state's efforts to make college-going a more streamlined experience for students. The CCGI currently receives enrollment data for all public-school students enrolled in grades six through twelve from the California Department of Education ("CDE").

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

English Language Learners

The Charter School is committed to the success of its English Learners and support will be offered both within academic classes and in supplemental settings for students who need additional support for English language learning. The Charter School will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, English Learners and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. The Charter School will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding English Learners and the rights of students and parents.

Students identified as English Language Learners on the Home Language Survey are required to take the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) each year. Students designated as English Learners will be monitored for progress in English language development and, when appropriate, recommended for ELL Reclassification.

The BSCS English Learners reclassification procedures are based on California Education Code 52164.6 and the research which shows early reclassification of English learners improves overall academic achievement. Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a student as proficient in English including, but not limited to, the following:

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to, the ELPAC.
- Participation of the student's classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the student to evaluate the student's curriculum mastery.
- Parental opinion and consultation, achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement including a description of the reclassification process and the parents opportunity to participate, and encouragement of the participation of parents or guardians in the reclassification procedure including seeking their opinion and consultation during the reclassification process.

Comparison of the student's performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance and basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient students of the same age that demonstrate to others that the student is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for students of the same age whose native language is English.

Section 504

The School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program of the School. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity, including, but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodations by the School. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for accommodations under Section 504 may make a referral for an evaluation to the School Director. The full Section 504 Policy can be found on the school website.

Special Education - Child Find

Big Sur Charter School recognizes its legal obligation to identify, evaluate, and serve students with disabilities to provide them with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The

Charter School ensures compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), California Education Code requirements, and the applicable policies and procedures of the Sonoma County SELPA.

The Charter School is responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating all children with suspected disabilities within its jurisdiction, regardless of the severity of the disability. This includes:

- Children enrolled at the Charter School
- Children who are homeless or in foster care
- Highly mobile children, such as migrant students
- Children advancing from grade to grade who may still need special education
- Children enrolled in private schools or receiving home instruction within the jurisdiction

The Child Find process ensures that no child is excluded from consideration for special education services due to disability status, enrollment status, or economic circumstances.

Evaluation and Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development

Parents, teachers, and school staff collaborate in the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students determined eligible for special education services. If a parent, guardian, or staff member believes that a student may have a disability requiring special education services, they may submit a written request for evaluation to the School Director.

Upon receipt of a written referral for evaluation, the Charter School shall:

- Provide an assessment plan within 15 calendar days (excluding school breaks of more than 5 days)
- Complete the assessment within 60 calendar days of receiving parental consent
- Hold an IEP meeting within 30 days of completing the assessment

The assessment process follows all procedural safeguards required under IDEA and California law, including providing assessments in the student's primary language and ensuring parental participation in decision-making.

Special Education Services & Placement Considerations

Big Sur Charter School offers high-quality educational programs and services in accordance with each student's assessed needs. The school collaborates with parents, students, teachers, and other agencies to ensure that every eligible child receives appropriate support.

Independent study may be considered as a placement option only if determined appropriate by the student's IEP team and if it provides the student with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The school will ensure that students with disabilities placed in independent study continue to receive all necessary special education and related services as required by their IEP.

Non-Discrimination and Enrollment Rights

Big Sur Charter School shall not deny, discourage, or condition enrollment based on a student's disability, need for special education services, or the perceived cost of accommodations. The school ensures equal access to its programs for all students and provides necessary services as determined by a student's IEP or Section 504 Plan. If you believe your child may be eligible for special education services, please contact the School Director by email at: director@bigsurcharterschool.org or phone: (831) 324-4573

Homeless Children and Youth Annual Notice

The term "homeless children and youth" refers to individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes children and youths who (42 U.S.C. § 11434a; Education Code § 48850 et seq.):

1. Are sharing housing with others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of adequate alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or have been abandoned in hospitals.
2. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
3. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
4. Are migratory children or unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) who meet the above definition of "homeless."

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parent or guardian. In the case of unaccompanied youth, status is determined by the Charter School Liaison.

The School Director or designee appoints the following staff member as the School Liaison for homeless students (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)):

Christin Strang Lopez, Assistant Director
304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940
christin@bigsurcharterschool.org
831-324-4573

The Charter School Liaison shall ensure that (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)):

1. Homeless students are identified by school personnel and through outreach, coordination with outside agencies, and the annual housing questionnaire administered by the Charter School.
2. Homeless students enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at the Charter School.
3. Homeless students and families receive access to educational services for which they are eligible, including:
 - a. Head Start and Early Head Start programs
 - b. Early intervention services under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),
 - c. Preschool programs administered by the Charter School (if available), 7. Referrals to healthcare, dental, mental health, and substance abuse services
 - d. Housing assistance and other appropriate community services.
4. Parents/guardians are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated at places frequented by parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth (e.g., schools, shelters, libraries, and soup kitchens) in a manner understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless youth and unaccompanied youth.
6. Enrollment and admission disputes are mediated in accordance with applicable laws, the Charter School's policies, and Board regulations.
7. Parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of available transportation services, as applicable.
8. Charter School personnel providing services receive professional development to better support and serve homeless students.
9. The Charter School Liaison collaborates with state coordinators, local agencies, and school personnel to ensure that homeless students receive education and related services.

10. Unaccompanied youth:

- a. Are enrolled in school and provided with opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as their peers.
- b. Are recognized as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.
- c. Receive assistance from the Charter School Liaison to obtain verification of their independent student status for FAFSA and financial aid purposes.

A list of California Homeless Education Liaisons is available at: [CA Department of Education Homeless Education](#)

Housing Questionnaire (Education Code § 48851)

The Charter School shall administer an annual housing questionnaire to identify homeless children and youth. The questionnaire shall be based on best practices developed by the California Department of Education (CDE).

The questionnaire will be provided annually to:

- All parents/guardians of enrolled students.
- All unaccompanied youth.

The housing questionnaire will include:

- An explanation of the rights and protections for homeless students.

The questionnaire shall be available:

- In paper form.
- In English and, if 15% or more of enrolled students speak another language, in that primary language.
- Translated into additional languages upon request.

The school shall collect completed questionnaires and report to the CDE annually on the number of homeless children and unaccompanied youth enrolled.

Acceptance of Coursework & Graduation Requirements

In accordance with Education Code §§ 51225.1, 51225.2, and 51225.3, the Charter School shall:

- Accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at:
 - A public school,
 - A juvenile court school,
 - A school in another country,
 - A nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency.
- Award credit for partial coursework completed while a student was homeless.
- Not require students to retake portions of courses already completed unless:
 - The Charter School determines that the student can complete the requirements in time to graduate.
 - The decision is made in consultation with the student's educational rights holder.
- Ensure that homeless students are not prevented from enrolling in A-G courses necessary for admission to the University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU).
- Provide a copy of the Charter School's complete Homeless Education Policy at the time of enrollment for any homeless student.

School Stability

The Charter School will work with homeless students and their parent/guardian to ensure that each student is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all students, including, but not necessarily limited to

interscholastic sports. All decisions regarding a homeless student's education and placement will be based on the best interest of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin if it is in their best interest. The Charter School will immediately enroll a homeless student seeking reenrollment in the Charter School as the student's school of origin (subject to the Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy). The Charter School will also immediately enroll any homeless student seeking to transfer to the Charter School (subject to the Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy) regardless of the student's ability to meet normal enrollment documentation or uniform requirements (e.g., producing medical records or academic records from a previous school).

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin following the termination of the child's status as a homeless student as follows:

1. For students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, inclusive, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year in which the student's status changed.
2. For students enrolled in high school, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through graduation.

If the Charter School operates an intersession program, Charter School shall grant priority access to homeless students. Notwithstanding any other law, if the homeless student will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's parent, guardian, educational rights holder, Indian custodian³ in the case of an Indian child, or, if none of the preceding are applicable, an accompanied homeless student themselves shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable. "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by the Charter School on non-school days, including, but not limited to, summer school. "Indian custodian" is as the term is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

High School Graduation Requirements

Homeless students who transfer to the Charter School any time after the completion of their second year of high school shall be exempt from any of the Charter School's graduation requirements that are in excess of the California minimum graduation requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 ("additional graduation requirements") unless the Charter School makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

To determine whether a homeless student is in their third or fourth year of high school, either the number of credits the student has earned to the date of transfer, the length of the student's school enrollment, or, for pupils with significant gaps in school attendance, the pupil's age as compared to the average age of pupils in the third or fourth year of high school may be used, whichever will qualify the student for the exemption.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date that a student who may qualify for exemption under the above requirements transfers into the Charter School, the Charter School shall notify the student, the student's educational rights holder ("ERH"), and the School Liaison of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for an exemption.

The Charter School shall notify and consult with students who are exempted from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements and the student's ERH. The consultation shall include all of the following:

³ "Indian custodian" means any Indian person who has legal custody of an Indian child under tribal law or custom or under State law or to whom temporary physical care, custody, and control has been transferred by the parent of such child. *Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.*

1. Discussion regarding how any of the requirements that are waived may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
2. Discussion and information about other options available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, a fifth year of high school, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
3. Consideration of the pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption.

The Charter School shall not require any student who would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the Charter School to accept the exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements or deny the student enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which the student is otherwise eligible. The Charter School shall not revoke an exemption and shall grant an eligible student's request for the exemption at any time if the student qualifies, regardless of whether the student previously declined the exemption.

If a homeless student who was eligible for an exemption and 1) was not properly notified of the availability of the exemption, or 2) previously declined the exemption pursuant to this Policy, the Charter School shall exempt the student within thirty (30) days of the exemption request, if an exemption is requested by the student or the student's ERH and the student at one time qualified for the exemption, even if the student is no longer homeless.

An eligible student's exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements will continue to apply while the student is enrolled in the Charter School or if the student transfers to another school even after the student no longer meets the definition of a homeless child.

The Charter School shall not require or request that a student transfer schools in order to qualify the student for the exemption. Nor shall a student, a student's parent/guardian or educational rights holder, or a student's social worker or probation officer request a transfer solely to qualify for an exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements.

If a student who is exempted from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements completes the California minimum coursework requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 before the end of the student's fourth year of high school and would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the Charter School, the Charter School shall not require or request that the student graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

If the Charter School determines the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements by the end of the student's fifth year of high school, the Charter School shall do the following:

1. Consult with the student and the student's ERH regarding the student's option to remain at the Charter School for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements, consistent with the laws regarding continuous enrollment and satisfactory progress for Charter School students over age 19.
2. Consult with the student, and the ERH for the student, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
3. Consult with and provide information to the student and the student's ERH about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. Permit the student to stay at the Charter School for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements upon agreement with the student, if the student is 18 years of age or older, or, if the student is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the student's ERH.

5. Consult with the student, and the student's ERH, regarding the student's option to remain in the school of origin.

Through January 1, 2028, upon making a finding that a homeless student is not reasonably able to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements but is reasonably able to complete state coursework requirements specified in Education Code Section 51225.3 within the student's fifth year of high school, the School Director or designee shall exempt the pupil from Charter School's graduation requirements and provide pupil the option of remaining in school for a fifth (5th) year to complete the statewide coursework requirements. Charter School shall consult with the homeless student and the student's ERH regarding all of the following:

1. The pupil's option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.
2. How waiving the local educational requirements and remaining in school for a fifth year may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to a institution of higher education.
3. Whether any other options are available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. The pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption and option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.

If a homeless student is not eligible for an exemption in the year in which the pupil transfers between schools, because Charter School makes a finding that the pupil is reasonably able to complete Charter School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, then Charter School shall do the following:

1. Within the first 30 calendar days of the *following* academic year, Charter School shall reevaluate eligibility;
2. Provide written notice to the pupil, the ERH, and the pupil's social worker or probation officer, if applicable, whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption upon reevaluation, based on the course completion status of the pupil at the time of reevaluation, to determine if the pupil continues to be reasonably able to complete Charter School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school.
3. If, given their course completion status at that time the reevaluation is conducted, the pupil is not reasonably able to complete Charter School additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, the Charter School shall provide written notice to the pupil and the ERH of the pupil's options to:
 - a. Receive an exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the governing board body of Charter School that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3, or
 - b. Upon agreement with the ERH, stay in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements.

The pupil (if not a minor) or the ERH shall have sole discretion whether to accept the exemption, based on the pupil's best educational interests.

Reporting Requirements

Charter School shall report to the California Department of Education ("CDE") annually on the number of pupils who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from the Charter School's graduation requirements that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements. This data shall be reported for pupils graduating in the fourth year and fifth year cohorts, and shall be disaggregated by cohort, pupil category, race, and disability status. The CDE shall make this data publicly available on an annual basis aligned with other reporting timelines for the California dashboard graduation data.

Acceptance of Course Work

The Charter School will accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at any public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency by a homeless student.

The Charter School will provide homeless students credit for the partial completion of courses taken while attending a public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the student did not complete the entire course, the Charter School shall not require the student to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the Charter School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the student, finds that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the homeless student shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire course. These students shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet California State University or the University of California admission eligibility requirements.

Complaints of Noncompliance

A complaint of noncompliance with any of the requirements outlined above may be filed through the Charter School's Uniform Complaint Procedures. A copy of the Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures is available upon request at the main office.

Availability of Complete Policy

For any homeless student who enrolls at the Charter School, a copy of the Charter School's complete policy shall be provided at the time of enrollment. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the office.

Foster Youth Annual Notice

Definitions

For the purposes of this annual notice, the terms are defined as follows:

- "Foster youth" means any of the following:
 - o A child who has been removed from their home pursuant to Section 309 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code ("WIC").
 - o A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to WIC section 300 or 602 (whether or not the child has been removed from the child's home by juvenile court).
 - o A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to WIC section 602, has been removed from the child's home by the juvenile court, and is in foster care.
 - o A nonminor under the transition jurisdiction of the juvenile court, as described in WIC section 450, who satisfies all of the following criteria:
 - o The nonminor has attained 18 years of age while under an order of foster care placement by the juvenile court.
 - o The nonminor is in foster care under the placement and care responsibility of the county welfare department, county probation department, Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization.
 - o The nonminor is participating in a transitional independent living case plan.
 - o A dependent child of the court of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization who is the subject of a petition filed in the tribal court.⁴
 - o A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in WIC section 11400.
- "Former juvenile court school student" means a student who, upon completion of the student's second year of high school, transfers from a juvenile court school to the Charter School, including those from county community schools.

⁴ The Charter School shall not require an Indian tribe or tribal court representative to certify that any student is a dependent of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization.

- "Child of a military family" refers to a student who resides in the household of an active-duty military member.
- "Currently migratory child" refers to a child who, within the last 12 months, has moved with a parent, guardian, or other person having custody to the Charter School from another Local Educational Agency ("LEA"), either within California or from another state, so that the child or a member of the child's immediate family might secure temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity. This includes a child who, without the parent/guardian, has continued to migrate annually to secure temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity.
- "Newcomer pupil" is a person aged 3 to 21 years, who was not born in any of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, for more than three (3) full academic years. This also includes a "pupil participating in a newcomer program," as defined in Education Code section 51225.2, as that section read on January 1, 2023, who was enrolled in the Charter School before January 1, 2024. The Charter School may, in its discretion, also extend the rights in Education Code sections 51225.1 and 51225.2 to a "pupil participating in a newcomer program," as defined in Education Code section 51225.2, as that section read on January 1, 2023.
- "Educational Rights Holder" ("ERH") means a parent, guardian, or responsible adult appointed by a court to make educational decisions for a minor pursuant to WIC sections 319, 361 or 726, or a person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student pursuant to Education Code section 56055.
- "School of origin" means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster youth was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the student was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the Charter School liaison for foster youth, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the ERH for the youth, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster youth, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin. For a foster youth who is an individual with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code section 56026, "school" as used in the definition of "school of origin" includes a placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school as defined in Education Code section 56034, subject to the requirements of Education Code section 56325.
- "Best interests" means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational program and the foster youth's access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all Charter School students.
- "Partial coursework satisfactorily completed" includes any portion of an individual course, even if the student did not complete the entire course.
- Foster youth, former juvenile court school students, children of military families, currently migratory children, and newcomer pupils will be collectively referred to as "Foster and Mobile Youth." A parent, guardian, or other person holding the educational rights for a Foster and Mobile Youth will be referred to as a "parent/guardian" or "ERH."

The School Director or designee designates the following staff person as the Liaison for Foster and Mobile Youth:

Christin Strang Lopez, Assistant Director
 304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940
 christin@bigsurcharterschool.org
 831-324-4573

The Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison's responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

1. Ensuring and facilitating the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children.
2. Assisting foster children when transferring from one school to another school in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records and grades.

School Stability

The Charter School will work with foster youth and their parent/guardian to ensure that each student is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all students, including, but not necessarily limited to, interscholastic sports. All decisions regarding a foster youth's education and placement will be based on the best interest of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

Foster youth, currently migratory children and children of military families have the right to remain in their school of origin if it is in their best interest. The Charter School will immediately enroll a foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family seeking reenrollment in the Charter School as the student's school of origin (subject to the Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy). If a dispute arises regarding a foster youth's request to remain in the Charter School as the school of origin, the foster youth has the right to remain in the Charter School pending the resolution of the dispute. The Charter School will also immediately enroll any foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family seeking to transfer to the Charter School (subject to the Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy) regardless of the student's ability to meet normal enrollment documentation or uniform requirements (e.g., producing medical records or academic records from a previous school).

Foster youth, currently migratory children, and children of military families have the right to remain in their school of origin following the termination of the child's status as a foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family, as follows:

1. For students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, inclusive, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year in which the student's status changed.
2. For students enrolled in high school, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through graduation.

If the Charter School operates an intersession program, Charter School shall grant priority access to foster youths. Notwithstanding any other law, if the foster youth will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's educational rights holder, or Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable. "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by the Charter School on non-school days, including, but not limited to, summer school. "Indian custodian" is as the term is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

High School Graduation Requirements

Foster and Mobile Youth who transfer to the Charter School any time after the completion of their second year of high school, and newcomer pupils who are in their third or fourth year of high school, shall be exempt from any of the Charter School's graduation requirements that are in excess of the California minimum graduation requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 ("additional graduation requirements") unless the Charter School makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

To determine whether a Foster and Mobile Youth is in their third or fourth year of high school, either the number of credits the student has earned to the date of transfer, the length of the student's school enrollment, or, for students with significant gaps in school attendance, the student's age as compared to the average age of students in the third or fourth year of high school, may be used, whichever will qualify the student for the exemption. For a newcomer pupil, enrollment in grade 11 or 12, based on the average age of students in the third or fourth year of high school, may be used to determine whether the student is in their third or fourth year of high school.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date that a student who may qualify for exemption under the above requirements transfers into the Charter School, the Charter School shall notify the student, the parent/guardian,

and where applicable, the student's social worker or probation officer, of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for an exemption.

The Charter School shall notify and consult with students who are exempted from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements and the student's ERH. The consultation shall include all of the following:

1. Discussion regarding how any of the requirements that are waived may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
2. Discussion and information about other options available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, a fifth year of high school, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
3. Consideration of the pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption.

The Charter School shall not require any student who would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the Charter School to accept the exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements or deny the student enrollment in, or the ability to complete, courses for which the student is otherwise eligible. The Charter School shall not revoke an exemption and shall grant an eligible student's request for the exemption at any time if the student qualifies, regardless of whether the student previously declined the exemption.

If a Foster and Mobile Youth who was eligible for an exemption and 1) was not properly notified of the availability of the exemption, or 2) previously declined the exemption pursuant to this Policy, the Charter School shall exempt the student within thirty (30) days of the exemption request, if an exemption is requested by the student or the student's ERH and the student at one time qualified for the exemption, even if the student is no longer a Foster and Mobile Youth or the court's jurisdiction of the pupil has terminated.

An eligible student's exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements will continue to apply while the student is enrolled in the Charter School or if the student transfers to another school even after the court's jurisdiction terminates or the student no longer meets the definition of Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School shall not require or request that a student transfer schools in order to qualify the student for the exemption. Nor shall a student, a student's parent/guardian or educational rights holder, or a student's social worker or probation officer request a transfer solely to qualify for an exemption from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements.

If a student who is exempted from the Charter School's additional graduation requirements completes the California minimum coursework requirements specified in Education Code section 51225.3 before the end of the student's fourth year of high school and would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the Charter School, the Charter School shall not require or request that the student graduate before the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

If the Charter School determines the student is reasonably able to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements by the end of the student's fifth year of high school, the Charter School shall do the following:

1. Consult with the student and the student's ERH regarding the student's option to remain at the Charter School for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements, consistent with the laws regarding continuous enrollment and satisfactory progress for Charter School students over age 19.
2. Consult with the student, and the ERH for the student, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.
3. Consult with and provide information to the student and the student's ERH about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.

4. Permit the student to stay at the Charter School for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's graduation requirements upon agreement with the student, if the student is 18 years of age or older, or, if the student is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the student's ERH.
5. For a student identified as a foster youth, consult with the student, and the student's ERH, regarding the student's option to remain in the school of origin.

Through January 1, 2028, upon making a finding that a Foster and Mobile Youth is not reasonably able to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements but is reasonably able to complete state coursework requirements specified in Education Code Section 51225.3 within the student's fifth year of high school, the School Director or designee shall exempt the pupil from Charter School's graduation requirements and provide pupil the option of remaining in school for a fifth (5th) year to complete the statewide coursework requirements. Charter School shall consult with the Foster and Mobile Youth and their ERH regarding all of the following:

1. The pupil's option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.
2. How waiving the local educational requirements and remaining in school for a fifth year may affect the pupil's postsecondary education or vocation plans, including the ability to gain admission to an institution of higher education.
3. Whether any other options are available to the pupil, including, but not limited to, possible credit recovery, and any transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.
4. The pupil's academic data and any other information relevant to making an informed decision on whether to accept the exemption and option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements.

If a Foster and Mobile Youth is not eligible for an exemption in the year in which the pupil transfers between schools, or for a newcomer pupil, is not eligible for an exemption in the student's third year of high school, because Charter School makes a finding that the pupil is reasonably able to complete Charter School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, then Charter School shall do the following:

1. Within the first 30 calendar days of the **following** academic year, Charter School shall reevaluate eligibility;
2. Provide written notice to the pupil, the pupil's ERH, and the pupil's social worker or probation officer, if applicable, whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption upon reevaluation, based on the course completion status of the pupil at the time of reevaluation, to determine if the pupil continues to be reasonably able to complete Charter School's additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school.
3. If, given their course completion status at that time the reevaluation is conducted, the pupil is not reasonably able to complete Charter School additional graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school, the Charter School shall provide written notice to the pupil and the pupil's ERH of the pupil's options to:
 - i. Receive an exemption from all coursework and other requirements adopted by the governing board body of Charter School that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements specified in Section 51225.3, **or**
 - ii. Upon agreement with the pupil's ERH, stay in school for a fifth year to complete the Charter School's additional graduation requirements.

The pupil (if not a minor) or the pupil's ERH shall have sole discretion whether to accept the exemption, based on the pupil's best educational interests.

Reporting Requirements

Charter School shall report to the California Department of Education ("CDE") annually on the number of pupils who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from the Charter School's graduation requirements that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements. This data shall be reported for pupils graduating in the fourth year and fifth year cohorts, and shall be disaggregated by cohort, pupil category, race, and disability status. The CDE shall make this data publicly available on an annual basis aligned with other reporting timelines

for the California dashboard graduation data. For purposes of this notice, "pupil category" means the categories of pupils identified in the "Definitions" section of this Policy, above.

Acceptance of Course Work

The Charter School will accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at any public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency by a Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School will provide Foster and Mobile Youth credit for the partial completion of courses taken while attending a public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the student did not complete the entire course, the Charter School shall not require the student to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the Charter School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the student, finds that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the Foster and Mobile Youth shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire course. These students shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet California State University or the University of California admission eligibility requirements.

Student Records

When the Charter School receives a transfer request and/or student records request for the educational information and records of a foster youth from a new local educational agency ("LEA"), the Charter School shall provide these student records within two (2) business days. The Charter School shall compile the complete educational record of the student, including but not limited to a determination of seat time, full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization and other records, and, if applicable, a copy of the student's special education records including assessments, IEPs, and/or 504 plans. All requests for student records will be shared with the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison, who shall be aware of the specific educational recordkeeping needs of Foster and Mobile Youth.

The Charter School shall not lower a foster youth's grades as a result of the student's absence due to a verified court appearance, related court ordered activity, or a change the placement of the student made by a county or placing agency. If a foster youth is absent from school due to a decision to change the placement of the student made by a county or placing agency, the grades and credits of the pupil will be calculated as of the date the student left the Charter School.

In accordance with the Charter School's Educational Records and Student Information Policy, under limited circumstances, the Charter School may disclose student records or personally identifiable information contained in those records to certain requesting parties including but not limited to a foster family agency and state and local authorities within a juvenile justice system, without parent/guardian consent. Students who are 16 years of age or older or have finished 10th grade may access their own school records.

Discipline Determinations

If the Charter School intends to extend the suspension of any foster youth pending a recommendation for expulsion, the Charter School will invite the student's attorney and an appropriate representative from the relevant county agency to participate in the meeting at which the extension of the suspension will be discussed.

If the Charter School intends to suspend for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expel a student with a disability who is also a foster youth due to an act for which the recommendation for expulsion is discretionary, the Charter School will invite the student's attorney and an appropriate representative from the relevant county agency to participate in the Manifestation Determination Review meeting.

The Charter School will not lower a foster youth's grades due to absences related to verified court appearances, placement changes, or child welfare activities (EC 49069.5, EC 51225.2).

The Charter School may disclose student records to child welfare or probation agencies without parent/guardian consent, in accordance with FERPA and EC 49076(a)(11).

Availability of Policy

For any Foster and Mobile Youth who enrolls at the Charter School, a copy of the Charter School's complete foster youth policy shall be provided at the time of enrollment. Copies are also available upon request at the main office.

Resources for Support:

- Foster Youth Ombudsman: 1-877-846-1602
- Children's Law Center: (323) 980-1700
- Foster Ed California: foster-ed.org

This policy ensures compliance with California Education Code sections 48850-48859, 49069.5, 51225.1, and 51225.2 and related federal laws.

CONDUCT & BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Behavior Expectations

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe
- Be Your Person Best

A large part of what we do at Big Sur Charter School is guide students to become well balanced members of their community. We understand that students come to us with a variety of experiences that have shaped who they are. Given that, each circumstance is treated individually and can result in a different response based on the frequency and severity of behavior and student's age. Our goal is to ensure all students feel safe and respected as they learn to navigate their community, and every effort is made to support students in examining and correcting behavioral missteps.

Society recognizes certain activities to be unacceptable, and laws are enacted to protect everyone's best interests. Most of these behaviors also find their reflection in California law. While each incident has its own circumstances, suspension and possible expulsion consequences are in effect regarding specific behaviors.

Level One

Minor physical contact, mild verbal abuse (saying shut up or calling someone stupid, for example), disrespectful/disruptive behavior, mild use of profanity, minor threatening behavior, accidental damage of property.

Actions & Consequences:

- Conflict resolution conversation, peer mediation with all concerned, restorative justice circle, repair harm.

Level Two

Repetition of Level One behavior, skipping class, willful damage of property, engaging in bullying, bringing a toy weapon to school (one which cannot cause harm), leaving school without permission.

Additional Actions & Consequences:

- Office referral.
- Parents notified by phone.
- Parent conference mandatory.
- An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the parents.
- Possible behavior intervention plan created.
- Suspension and/or expulsion (depending on severity)

Level Three

Significant repetition of Level Two behavior, stealing, significant threatening behavior (using anything as a weapon), bringing an imitation of a weapon to school which might reasonably be mistaken for a weapon, serious physical abuse, serious use of profanity (such as swearing at a teacher).

Additional Actions & Consequences:

- A suspension report may be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the parents.
- Behavior intervention plan created.

Level Four

Stealing, drug possession or use at school functions, sexual misconduct, sexual activity, bringing a weapon to school (including all knives), tobacco use.

- Suspension, during which it will be decided what further action is needed, including community service, other forms of restitution, or expulsion.

The decision to suspend or expel will be based on the BSCS Suspension and Expulsion Policy. This may include activities to be completed at home with parental support.

Cell Phones at the Learning Center

Cell phones must be turned off and will be collected at the beginning of class and stored in a secure location until the end of the student's day at the Learning Center. If a student needs to be reached during the day please call the office, 831-324-4573, and a message will be delivered to your student. Cell phones that are not kept in a backpack will be taken to the office until a parent can accompany the student to pick it up.

Cell phones may be used:

- In the case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger.
- When a teacher or administrator of the Charter School grants permission to the student to possess or use the cell phone, subject to any reasonable limitation they may impose.
- When a licensed physician or surgeon determines that the possession or use of a cell phone is necessary for the health or well-being of the student.
- When the possession or use of a cell phone is required in a student's individualized education program.

Lost or Damaged School Property

If a student willfully damages the Charter School's property or the personal property of a Charter School employee, or fails to return a textbook, library book, computer/tablet or other Charter School property that has been loaned to the student, the student's parents/guardians are liable for all damages caused by the student's misconduct not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), adjusted annually for inflation. After notifying the student's parent or guardian in writing of the student's alleged misconduct and affording the student due process, the Charter School may withhold the student's grades, transcripts until the damages have been paid. If the student and the student's parent/guardian are unable to pay for the damages or to return the property, the

Charter School will provide a program of voluntary work for the minor in lieu of the payment of monetary damages. Upon completion of the voluntary work, the student's grades will be released.

Staff-Student Interaction and Boundaries Policy

Corporal Punishment

It is the policy of Big Sur Charter School that no teacher or other staff member will use corporal punishment against a student. This prohibition includes but is not limited to spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, tying, taping, or the use of any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior. However, this policy does not prohibit the use of reasonable force and touching in self-defense or in the defense of another person or to prevent damage to property. Briefly restraining a child who is trying to engage in violent or inappropriate behavior is also allowed, however, prone restraint is prohibited. Only such force as necessary to defend one's self, another person, or the child or to protect property is legally permitted. Excessive force is prohibited.

While the use of appropriate touching is part of daily life and is important for student development, teachers and other staff members must ensure that they do not exceed appropriate behavior.

For clarification purposes, the following non-exhaustive list of examples is offered for direction and guidance of School personnel:

Examples of PERMITTED actions (NOT corporal punishment)

- (a) Stopping a student from fighting with another student;
- (b) Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism;
- (c) Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student;
- (d) Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object;
- (e) Requiring an athletic team to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition team members or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills;
- (f) Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities.

Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment)

- (a) Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control;
- (b) Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment;
- (c) Paddling, swatting slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain.

Boundaries Defined

For the purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing beyond the boundaries of a student-teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviors

Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member's point-of-view but could be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from the perspective of students or parents. There is no single reasonable person standard. The purpose of the following lists of unacceptable and acceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to or may be perceived as inappropriate, or sexual misconduct, or "grooming." Grooming is defined as an act or series of acts by a sexual predator to gain physical and/or emotional control by gaining trust (of staff and/or family and a minor) and desensitizing the minor to various forms of touching and other intimate interaction.

Staff members must understand their own responsibilities for ensuring that they do not cross the boundaries as written in this policy. Violations could subject the teacher or staff member to discipline up to and including termination. *Disagreeing with the wording or intent of these established boundaries will be considered irrelevant for any required disciplinary purposes.* Thus, it is critical that all employees study this policy thoroughly and apply its spirit and intent in their daily activities.

Examples of Specific Behaviors (Non-Exhaustive)

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors (Violations of this Policy)

- (a) Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal and intimate nature.
- (b) Kissing of any kind.
- (c) Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation.
- (d) Intentionally being alone with a student away from the school.
- (e) Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments.
- (f) Sexual jokes.
- (g) Seeking emotional involvement with a student for your benefit.
- (h) Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented.
- (i) Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student in an attempt to gain their support and understanding.
- (j) Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior.

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors without Parent and Supervisor Permission

(These behaviors should only be exercised when a staff member has parent and supervisor permission.)

- (a) Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities.
- (b) Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed.
- (c) Allowing students in your home.

Cautionary Staff/Student Behaviors

(These behaviors should only be exercised when a reasonable and prudent person, acting as an educator, is prevented from using a better practice or behavior. Staff members should inform their supervisor of the circumstance and occurrence prior to or immediately after the occurrence)

- (a) Remarks about the physical attributes or development of anyone.
- (b) Excessive attention toward a particular student.
- (c) Sending emails, text messages or letters to students if the content is not about school activities.

Acceptable and Recommended Staff/Student Behaviors

- (a) Getting parents' written consent for any after-school activity.
- (b) Obtaining formal approval to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions.
- (c) Emails, text, phone and instant messages to students must be very professional and pertaining to school activities or classes (Communication should be limited to school technology).
- (d) Keeping the door open when alone with a student.
- (e) Keeping reasonable space between you and your students.

- (f) Stopping and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries.
- (g) Keeping parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student.
- (h) Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief.
- (i) Asking for advice from fellow staff or administrators if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries.
- (j) Involving your supervisor if conflict arises with the student.
- (k) Informing the Principal about situations that have the potential to become more severe.
- (l) Making detailed notes about an incident that could evolve into a more serious situation later.
- (m) Recognizing the responsibility to stop unacceptable behavior of students or coworkers.
- (n) Asking another staff member to be present if you will be alone with any type of special needs student.
- (o) Asking another staff member to be present when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours.
- (p) Giving students praise and recognition without touching them.
- (q) Pats on the back, high fives and handshakes are acceptable.
- (r) Keeping your professional conduct a high priority.
- (s) Asking yourself if your actions are worth your job and career.

It is impossible to list all inappropriate and appropriate behaviors. Staff members should apply common sense when interacting with students.

Reporting

When any staff member, parent, or student becomes aware or reasonably suspects or believes that a staff member (or volunteer, guest, vendor) crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, or reasonably suspects "grooming behavior," he or she must report the suspicion to the School Director or the Assistant Director promptly. "Grooming behavior" is an attempt to build an emotional and/or physical connection with a minor to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse. "Suspicion" means something perceived in spite of inconclusive or slight evidence. It is based on facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a violation of the boundaries policy occurred. Prompt reporting of "unacceptable behaviors" observed in adult interactions with minors is essential to protect students, staff, any witnesses, and the school as a whole. When observant staff members call attention to a boundaries violation(s), the likelihood of harm is greatly reduced.

Child Abuse / Sexual Abuse Reporting (Mandatory Reporting)

California Penal Code Section 11166 requires any staff member to immediately report this information or suspicion directly to your county child protective agency (CPS). The report shall be made by phone immediately, and a subsequent written report must be sent within 36 hours of your knowledge or suspicion of the abuse. Internal reporting to the School Director occurs after the phone-in report is made to the CPS.

Internal Investigations

The School Director will promptly investigate, report and document any allegation of sexual misconduct or inappropriate behavior.

Consequences

Staff members who have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, and where appropriate, will be reported to authorities for potential legal action.

Big Sur Charter School Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Purpose and Legal Compliance

The Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedures are established to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at Big Sur Charter School ("the Charter School"). This policy aligns with applicable federal and state laws, including California Education Code Sections 48900-48927, 47605, 47606.2, 51747, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

This policy shall be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with all legal requirements, including updates to state laws, chartering authority mandates, and best practices in student discipline.

Prohibited Disciplinary Practices No corporal punishment is allowed.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled only if the offense is related to school activity or school attendance, including but not limited to:

- While on school grounds
- While going to or coming from school
- During lunch (on or off campus)
- During, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity

Mandatory Expulsion Offenses (Ed Code § 48915(c))

A student must be recommended for expulsion for the following:

- Possessing, selling, or furnishing a firearm or explosive device.
- Brandishing a knife at another person.
- Selling a controlled substance.
- Committing or attempting to commit sexual assault or battery.

Discretionary Suspension and Expulsion Offenses

The school may suspend or expel students for other violations, including but not limited to physical violence, drug-related offenses, harassment, bullying (including cyberbullying), and threats to school safety.

Due Process for Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension Process

- Conference: A meeting with the student and parent/guardian must occur before suspension unless an emergency situation exists.
- Written Notice: Parents will receive written notification of the suspension in their primary language.
- Homework Access (Ed Code § 47606.2): Students suspended for two or more days are entitled to assignments and grading protections.
- Limits on Suspension: Suspensions may not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per incident.

Expulsion Process

- Hearing Requirement (Ed Code § 47605): Expulsions require a hearing before a neutral administrative panel.
- Parental Rights: Parents may present evidence, call witnesses, and have legal representation.
- Written Notice: Parents must receive at least ten (10) calendar days' written notice of the hearing.
- Appeal Rights: Expelled students have the right to appeal to the County Board of Education.
- Alternative Education: The school must assist in finding an alternative placement for expelled students (Ed Code § 48916.1).

Involuntary Removal (Truancy and Independent Study Non-Compliance)

- Parental Notification: Parents must receive at least five (5) school days' written notice before removal.
- Right to Hearing: If requested, the student remains enrolled until a final decision is made.
- Rehabilitation Plan: The school must provide a path for students to re-enroll.

Protections for Students with Disabilities (IDEA & Section 504)

- Manifestation Determination Review (MDR): Required before suspending a student with disabilities for more than 10 days.
- Interim Alternative Educational Settings (IAES): May be used for up to 45 days in cases involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily harm.
- Procedural Safeguards: Parents may request an expedited due process hearing.

Data Reporting and Compliance (Ed Code § 47605 & § 48916.1)

The Charter School will collect and report suspension and expulsion data, disaggregated by race, gender, special education status, and other relevant factors, to the California Department of Education (CDE) and the chartering authority.

Restorative Justice and Alternative Discipline Strategies

- Restorative Practices: The school will prioritize mediation, conflict resolution, and restorative justice practices before resorting to suspension or expulsion.
- Behavior Intervention Plans: Students will be given appropriate behavioral supports to prevent reoccurring misconduct.

Notice to Teachers

Teachers will be notified of any student disciplinary history in accordance with Ed Code § 49079. A complete version of the BSCS Suspension and Expulsion Policy is available at the office.

STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY

Big Sur Charter School believes that the health and safety of our students is a top priority. All students and staff will have the opportunity to review and practice safety procedures. A copy of the BSCS School Comprehensive Safety Plan is available on the school's website.

Vision, Hearing, Oral Health Assessments

Periodic health examinations of students may lead to the detection and treatment of conditions that impact learning. Health examinations also may help in determining whether special adaptations of the School's program are necessary. The School shall conduct health examinations of students as needed to insure proper care of the students.

Students enrolling in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten or while enrolled in first grade if the pupil was not previously enrolled in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten in a public school are required to have an oral health assessment completed by a dental professional that was performed within 12 months before the student's initial enrollment in a public school. Please contact the main office if you have questions about this requirement. During the kindergarten year, and in grades 2, 5 and 8, the School shall appraise the student's hearing and vision. The appraisal shall include tests for visual acuity, including near vision and color vision, although the color vision shall be appraised once and only on male students, the results of which shall be entered in the health records and need not begin until the student is in first grade. Classroom teachers are responsible for continuous and

regular observation of the student's eyes, appearance, behavior, visual performance, and perception that might indicate vision difficulties.

Where a student's school performance begins to give evidence that the existence of the problem might be caused by a visual difficulty, the school will contact the parents.

A student's vision may be appraised by using an eye chart or any other scientifically validated photoscreening test. Photoscreening tests shall be performed, under an agreement with, or the supervision of, an optometrist or ophthalmologist, by the school nurse or a trained individual who meets requirements established by the CDE. The School will provide for the testing of hearing of each student enrolled in the school in kindergarten year, and in grades 2, 5 and 8. Pupils at risk of hearing loss are: those exposed to loud noises, including loud music, pupils that have been referred for testing by a parent or teacher, repeat tests for those pupils for whom there was a previously documented problem, pupils who have not had a hearing test for three years; and any student who has enrolled for the first time in the School.

The School will provide families of children who fail the hearing or vision tests with a written notification of the test results and recommend further testing by a specialist.

The vision and hearing evaluation is highly recommended, but optional.

Physical Examinations and Right to Refuse

A parent/guardian having control or charge of any child enrolled in the Charter School may file annually with the School Director a written and signed statement stating that the parent/guardian will not consent to a physical examination of the child. Thereupon the child shall be exempt from any physical examination, but whenever there is a good reason to believe that the child is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, the child shall be sent home and shall not be permitted to return until the school authorities are satisfied that any contagious or infectious disease does not exist.

Immunizations

Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code and the California Code of Regulations, children must provide proof of having received required immunizations (shots) before they can attend school unless they meet the requirements for an exemption. Immunization records are required for all incoming students. Verification of immunizations will be completed with written medical records from the child's doctor or immunization clinic. To ensure a safe learning environment for all students, the Charter School follows and abides by the health standards set forth by the state of California. The immunization status of all students will be reviewed periodically. Those students who are not in compliance with the State requirements must be excluded from attendance until the requirements are met. Students who have been exposed to a communicable disease for which they have not been immunized may be excluded from school at the discretion of the Charter School.

These required immunizations include:

Child's Grade	List of shots required to attend school
TK/K-12 Admission	<p>Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (DTaP) - Five (5) doses Polio - Four (4) doses Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) - Two (2) doses Hepatitis B (Hep B) - Three (3) doses Varicella (chickenpox) – Two (2) doses</p> <p>NOTE: Four doses of DTaP are allowed if one was given on or after the fourth birthday. Three doses of DTaP meet the requirement if at least one dose of Tdap, DTaP, or DTP vaccine was given on or after the seventh birthday (also meets the 7th-12th grade Tdap requirement.) One or two doses of Td vaccine given on or after the seventh birthday count towards the requirement for DTaP. Three doses of Polio are allowed if one was given on or after fourth birthday. MMR doses must be given on or after first birthday. Two doses of measles, two doses of mumps, and one dose of rubella vaccine meet the requirement, separately or combined. Combination vaccines (e.g., MMRV) meet the requirements for individual component vaccines.</p>
Child's Grade	List of shots required to attend school
Entering 7th Grade	<p>Tetanus, reduced Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis (Tdap) - One (1) dose</p> <p>NOTE: In order to begin 7th grade, students who had a valid personal belief exemption on file with a public or private elementary or secondary school in California before January 1, 2016 must meet the requirements listed for grades K-12 as well as requirements for 7th grade advancement. At least one dose of pertussis-containing vaccine is required on or after the 7th birthday.</p>

Medical Exemptions

Starting in 2021, a law enacted by Senate Bills 276 and 714 requires new medical exemptions to be issued using a State database and a standardized medical exemption form. Medical exemptions issued using the California Immunization Registry-Medical Exemption website (CAIR-ME) are the only medical exemptions schools and pre-kindergarten facilities can accept from students entering a new grade span in 2021 and beyond. Medical exemptions issued starting January 1, 2021 are subject to CDPH review and may be revoked.

Valid medical exemptions on file for a student prior to January 1, 2021 may remain valid until 1) student enrolls in the next grade span, typically at kindergarten (or transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade; or 2) the physician who issued the exemption is disciplined by the respective licensing board, whichever is earliest.

Medications at School

Any student who is or may be required to take, during the regular school day, prescription medication prescribed or ordered for the student by an authorized health care provider may be assisted by the School Director or designated Charter School personnel.

In order for a student to be assisted by the school nurse or other designated Charter School personnel in administering medication, Charter School shall obtain both:

1. A written statement from the student's authorized health care provider detailing the name of the medication, method, amount/dosage, and time schedules by which the medication is to be taken, and
2. A written statement from the parent, foster parent, or guardian of the student indicating the desire that BSCS assist the student in the matters set forth in the statement of the authorized health care provider.

These written statements specified shall be provided at least annually and more frequently if the medication, dosage/amount, frequency of administration, or reason for administration changes.

For student safety, all medication to be administered at school must be in the original manufacturer's container and labeled with:

- Student's name and the name of the medication.
- Dosage of medication.
- Method by which the student is required to take the medication.
- Time the medication is to be taken during the regular school day.
- Date(s) on which the student is required to take the medication.
- Authorized health care provider's name and contact information.

A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

Mental Health Resources

Big Sur Charter School is committed to ensuring that all students are healthy, safe, engaged, challenged and supported. We know that when unidentified and unaddressed, mental health challenges can lead to poor academic performance, increased likelihood of suspension and expulsion, chronic absenteeism, student attrition, homelessness, incarceration, school violence, and even suicide. Access to mental health services at the Charter School and in our community is not only critical to improving the physical and emotional safety of students, but it also helps address barriers to learning and provides support so that all students can learn problem-solving skills and achieve in school and, ultimately, in life. The following resources are available to your child:

Available on Campus

- School based counseling services: To make certain each child's mental health needs are addressed the Charter School offers counseling services. Please contact the office at 831-324-4573 for more information. The full Suicide Prevention Policy can be found in the Annual Updates and Policy section of this handbook.
- Special education services: If you believe your child may have a disability, you are encouraged to directly contact Aimee Alling at 831-324-4573 to request an evaluation.

Available in the Community

- [Prevention and Early Intervention \(PEI\) Resources and Supports \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Community Human Services - Mental Health](#)
- [First 5 Monterey](#)
- [Interim, Inc.](#)
- [Monterey County Behavioral Health](#)
- [Harmony at Home](#)
- [The Village Project](#)
- [Center for Community Advocacy](#)
- [Central Coast Citizenship Project](#)
- [United Way Monterey County](#)
- [Bereavement Support](#)
- [Programs for Moms](#)

Available Nationally

- National Suicide Prevention Hotline - This organization provides confidential support for adults and youth in distress, including prevention and crisis resources. Available 24 hours at 1-800-273-8255.
- The Trevor Project - This organization provides suicide prevention and crisis intervention for LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13 and 24. **Available at 1-866-488-7386 or visit <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>.**
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America – This organization is a community- based mentorship program. Community-specific program information can be found online at <https://www.bbbs.org> or by calling (813) 720-8778.

The full Health and Safety Policy can be found on the school's website.

Type 2 Diabetes Annual Notification

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes in adults. Until a few years ago, type 2 diabetes was rare in children, but it is becoming more common, especially for overweight teens. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), one in three American children born after 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in his or her lifetime.

Type 2 diabetes affects the way the body is able to use sugar (glucose) for energy.

- The body turns the carbohydrates in food into glucose, the basic fuel for the body's cells.
- The pancreas makes insulin, a hormone that moves glucose from the blood to the cells.
- In type 2 diabetes, the body's cells resist the effects of insulin, and blood glucose levels rise.
- Over time, glucose reaches dangerously high levels in the blood, which is called hyperglycemia.
- Hyperglycemia can lead to health problems like heart disease, blindness, and kidney failure.

It is recommended that students displaying or possibly experiencing the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes be screened (tested) for the disease.

Risk Factors

Researchers do not completely understand why some people develop type 2 diabetes and others do not; however, the following risk factors are associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes in children:

- Being overweight. The single greatest risk factor for type 2 diabetes in children is excess weight. In the U.S., almost one out of every five children is overweight. The chances are more than double that an overweight child will develop diabetes.
- Family history of diabetes. Many affected children and youth have at least one parent with diabetes or have a significant family history of the disease.
- Inactivity. Being inactive further reduces the body's ability to respond to insulin.
- Specific racial/ethnic groups. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, or Asian/Pacific Islanders are more prone than other ethnic groups to develop type 2 diabetes.
- Puberty. Young people in puberty are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than younger children, probably because of normal rises in hormone levels that can cause insulin resistance during this stage of rapid growth and physical development.

Warning Signs and Symptoms Associated with Type 2 Diabetes

Warning signs and symptoms of type 2 diabetes in children develop slowly, and initially there may be no symptoms. However, not everyone with insulin resistance or type 2 diabetes develops these warning signs, and not everyone who has these symptoms necessarily has type 2 diabetes.

- Increased hunger, even after eating
- Unexplained weight loss
- Increased thirst, dry mouth, and frequent urination

- Feeling very tired
- Blurred vision
- Slow healing of sores or cuts
- Dark velvety or ridged patches of skin, especially on the back of the neck or under the arms
- Irregular periods, no periods, and/or excess facial and body hair growth in girls
- High blood pressure or abnormal blood fats levels

Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Methods and Treatments

Healthy lifestyle choices can help prevent and treat type 2 diabetes. Even with a family history of diabetes, eating healthy foods in the correct amounts and exercising regularly can help children achieve or maintain a normal weight and normal blood glucose levels.

- Eat healthy foods. Make wise food choices. Eat foods low in fat and calories.
- Get more physical activity. Increase physical activity to at least 60 minutes every day.
- Take medication. If diet and exercise are not enough to control the disease, it may be necessary to treat type 2 diabetes with medication.

The first step in treating type 2 diabetes is to visit a doctor. A doctor can determine if a child is overweight based on the child's age, weight, and height. A doctor can also request tests of a child's blood glucose to see if the child has diabetes or pre-diabetes (a condition which may lead to type 2 diabetes).

Types of Diabetes Screening Tests That Are Available

- Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test. A blood test measures the average blood sugar level over two to three months. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- Random (non-fasting) blood sugar test. A blood sample is taken at a random time. A random blood sugar level of 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or higher suggests diabetes. This test must be confirmed with a fasting blood glucose test.
- Fasting blood sugar test. A blood sample is taken after an overnight fast. A fasting blood sugar level less than 100 mg/dL is normal. A level of 100 to 125 mg/dL is considered pre-diabetes. A level of 126 mg/dL or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- Oral glucose tolerance test. A test measuring the fasting blood sugar level after an overnight fast with periodic testing for the next several hours after drinking a sugary liquid. A reading of more than 200 mg/dL after two hours indicates diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes in children is a preventable/treatable disease and the guidance provided in this information sheet is intended to raise awareness about this disease. Contact your school administrator or health care provider if you have questions.

A copy of the information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes is available at:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/type2diabetes.asp>. Please contact the office if you need a copy of this information sheet or if you have any questions about this information sheet.

Type 1 Diabetes

The Charter School will provide an information sheet regarding type 1 diabetes to the parent or guardian of a student when the student is first enrolled in elementary school, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.6. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

1. A description of type 1 diabetes.
2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes.

3. A recommendation that parents or guardians of students displaying warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes should immediately consult with the student's primary care provider to determine if immediate screening for type 1 diabetes is appropriate.
4. A description of the screening process for type 1 diabetes and the implications of test results.
5. A recommendation that, following a type 1 diagnosis, parents or guardians should consult with the pupil's primary care provider to develop an appropriate treatment plan, which may include consultation with and examination by a specialty care provider, including, but not limited to, a properly qualified endocrinologist.

A copy of the information sheet regarding type 1 diabetes is available by the CDE on the CDE website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/type1diabetes.asp> Please contact the office if you need a copy of this information sheet or if you have any questions about this information sheet.

School Meals

Pursuant to California law, the Charter School shall make available a nutritionally adequate breakfast and a nutritionally adequate lunch free of charge and with adequate time to eat, to any student who requests a meal without consideration of the student's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one (1) free breakfast meal and one (1) free lunch each school day on which the student is scheduled for two (2) or more hours of educational activities at a school site, resource center, meeting space or other satellite facility operated by the Charter School. This shall apply to all pupils in kindergarten through grade twelve (12).

Applications for school meals are included in the first day packets to all families and can also be obtained on the Charter School website and in the main office. All families are encouraged to complete the application form. Completed application forms can be returned to the main office. Income eligibility guidelines for federally funded free and reduced-price meals are available at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/>

Based on a parent/guardian's annual earnings, a parent/guardian may be eligible to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit from the Federal Government (Federal EITC). The Federal EITC is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. The Federal EITC has no effect on certain welfare benefits. In most cases, Federal EITC payments will not be used to determine eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, food stamps, low-income housing, or most Temporary Assistance For Needy Families payments. Even if you a parent/guardian does not owe federal taxes, they must file a federal tax return to receive the Federal EITC. Be sure to fill out the Federal EITC form in the Federal Income Tax Return Booklet. For information regarding your eligibility to receive the Federal EITC, including information on how to obtain the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Notice 797 or any other necessary forms and instructions, contact the IRS by calling 1-800-829-3676 or through its website at www.irs.gov.

A parent/guardian may also be eligible to receive the California Earned Income Tax Credit (California EITC) starting with the calendar year 2015 tax year. The California EITC is a refundable state income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. The California EITC is treated in the same manner as the Federal EITC and generally will not be used to determine eligibility for welfare benefits under California law. To claim the California EITC, even if you do not owe California taxes, you must file a California income tax return and complete and attach the California EITC Form (FTB 3514). For information on the availability of the credit eligibility requirements and how to obtain the necessary California forms and get help filing, contact the Franchise Tax Board at 1-800-852-5711 or through its website at www.ftb.ca.gov.

Charter School shall allow students, teachers, and staff to bring and carry water bottles. Water bottles may be excluded from libraries, computer labs, science labs, and other places where it is deemed dangerous to have drinking water. Charter School may develop additional policies regarding the types of water bottles that may be carried. Charter School adheres to all applicable requirements regarding placement and maintenance of water bottle refilling stations on campus. Charter School shall encourage water consumption through promotional and

educational activities and signage that focus on the benefits of drinking water and highlight any water bottle filling stations that are located on campus.

Human Trafficking Prevention

California has the highest number of incidents of human trafficking in the U.S., and all students may be vulnerable. The Charter School believes it is a priority to inform our students about (1) the prevalence, nature of and strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely seek assistance, and (2) how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.

In accordance with the California Healthy Youth Act, the Charter School will provide age-appropriate instruction on the prevention of human trafficking, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment. You have the right to excuse your child from all or part of the instruction on the prevention of human trafficking. An opt-out form is available at the main office for your convenience. Your consent for this instruction is NOT required. If we do not receive a written request to excuse your child, your child will be included in the instruction.

Information and materials for parents/guardians about the curriculum and resources on prevention of human trafficking and abuse, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment are available on Charter School's website for your review.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

The Charter School recognizes that pregnant and parenting students are entitled to accommodations that provide them with the opportunity to succeed academically while protecting their health and the health of their children. A pregnant or parenting student is entitled to eight (8) weeks of parental leave, or more if deemed medically necessary by the student's physician, which the student may take before the birth of the student's infant if there is a medical necessity and after childbirth during the school year in which the birth takes place, inclusive of any mandatory summer instruction, in order to protect the health of the student who gives or expects to give birth and the infant, and to allow the pregnant or parenting student to care for and bond with the infant. The Charter School will ensure that absences from the student's regular school program are excused until the student is able to return to the regular school program.

Upon return to school after taking parental leave, a pregnant or parenting student will be able to make up work missed during the pregnant or parenting student's leave, including, but not limited to, makeup work plans and reenrollment in courses. Notwithstanding any other law, a pregnant or parenting student may remain enrolled for a fifth year of instruction in the Charter School if it is necessary in order for the student to be able to complete any graduation requirements, unless the Charter School determines that the student is reasonably able to complete the graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the student's fourth year of high school.

Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pregnant or parenting students may be filed under the Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") of the Charter School. The complaint may be filed in writing with the compliance officer:

Aimee Alling, School Director
304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940
831-324-4573

A copy of the UCP is available upon request at the main office. For further information on any part of the complaint procedures, including filing a complaint or requesting a copy of the complaint procedures, please contact the School Director.

Safe Storage of Firearms

The purpose of this notice is to inform and to remind parents and legal guardians of all students at the Charter School of their responsibilities for keeping firearms out of the hands of children as required by California law. There have been many news reports of children bringing firearms to school. In many instances, the child obtained the firearm(s) from his or her home. These incidents can be easily prevented by storing firearms in a safe and secure manner, including keeping them locked up when not in use and storing them separately from ammunition.

To help everyone understand their legal responsibilities, this notice spells out California law regarding the storage of firearms. Please take some time to review this notice and evaluate your own personal practices to assure that you and your family are in compliance with California law:

- With very limited exceptions, California makes a person criminally liable for keeping any firearm, loaded or unloaded, within any premises that are under their custody and control where that person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, and the child obtains access to the firearm and thereby (1) causes death or injury to the child or any other person; (2) carries the firearm off the premises or to a public place, including to any preschool or school grades kindergarten through twelfth grade, or to any school-sponsored event, activity, or performance; or (3) unlawfully brandishes the firearm to others.
 - The criminal penalty may be significantly greater if someone dies or suffers great bodily injury as a result of the child gaining access to the firearm.
- With very limited exceptions, California also makes it a crime for a person to negligently store or leave any firearm, loaded or unloaded, on their premises in a location where the person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to it without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, unless reasonable action is taken to secure the firearm against access by the child, even where a minor never actually accesses the firearm.
- In addition to potential fines and terms of imprisonment, as of January 1, 2020, a gun owner found criminally liable under these California laws faces prohibitions from possessing, controlling, owning, receiving, or purchasing a firearm for 10 years.
- Finally, a parent or guardian may also be civilly liable for damages resulting from the discharge of a firearm by that person's child or ward.

The county or city may have additional restrictions regarding the safe storage of firearms. Thank you for helping to keep our children and schools safe. Remember that the easiest and safest way to comply with the law is to keep firearms in a locked container or secured with a locking device that renders the firearm inoperable.

Dangers of Synthetic Drugs

The illicit use and abuse of synthetic drugs represents an emerging and ongoing public health threat in California. The fentanyl crisis specifically, has impacted communities across the state, leading to a sharp increase in fentanyl poisonings and deaths in recent years. This notice aims to address the crisis with a preventative approach ensuring students and families are educated on the deadly consequences of recreational drug use.

A synthetic drug is a drug with properties and effects similar to a known hallucinogen or narcotic but having a slightly altered chemical structure, especially such a drug created in order to evade existing restrictions against illegal substances. Synthetic drugs include but are not limited to synthetic cannabinoids ("synthetic marijuana," "Spice," "K2"), methamphetamines, bath salts, and fentanyl.

The California Department of Public Health ("CDPH") has expounded on the extreme danger of drugs laced with fentanyl. Illicit fentanyl can be added to other drugs to make them cheaper, more powerful, and more addictive.

Illicit fentanyl has been found in many drugs, including heroin, methamphetamine, counterfeit pills, and cocaine. Fentanyl mixed with any drug increases the likelihood of a fatal overdose. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to tell if drugs have been laced with fentanyl without additional testing, because fentanyl cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted when used as a lacing agent. Social media platforms may be used as a way to market and sell synthetic drugs, such as fentanyl.

Additional information regarding fentanyl from the CDPH's Substance and Addiction Prevention Branch [can be found on the CDPH website](#).

Cancer Prevention Act

Students in the state are advised to adhere to current immunization guidelines, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Family Physicians, regarding full human papillomavirus (HPV) immunization before admission or advancement to the eighth grade level of any private or public elementary or secondary school.

Because the vaccine is more effective when given at younger ages, two doses of HPV vaccine are recommended for all kids between the ages of 9 to 12 years, and the second dose should be given before the start of 8th grade. Kids who wait until later to get their first dose of HPV vaccine may need three doses.

HPV vaccination can prevent over 90 percent of cancers caused by HPV. HPV vaccines are very safe, and scientific research shows that the benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh the potential risks.

School Safety Plan and Asbestos Management Plan

The Charter School has established a Comprehensive School Safety Plan. The Plan is available upon request at the main office.

The Charter School has also established an Asbestos Management Plan. The Plan is available upon request at the main office. The following asbestos-related activities are planned or in progress at the Charter School: no such activities are planned or in progress for the current school year.

Campus Search and Seizure

The Charter School recognizes and has determined that the occurrence of incidents which may include the possession of firearms, weapons, alcohol, controlled substances, or other items of contraband prohibited by law or Charter School rules and regulations, jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of students and Charter School employees.

The California Constitution requires that all students and staff of public schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure, and peaceful. As such, Charter School has adopted a Policy outlining the reasonable search of students and their property, student use areas, and/or student lockers and the seizure of illegal, unsafe, unauthorized or contraband items and materials through a search based upon reasonable suspicion.

A student's personal cell phone, smartphone, or other personal electronic device shall not be searched by school officials without a warrant, the student's consent, or a legitimate emergency, unless the device is lost or abandoned. An emergency is any situation involving danger of death or serious physical injury to any person, that requires access to the information located or reasonably believed to be located on the electronic device. If the Charter School has a good faith belief that the device is lost, stolen, or abandoned, the Charter School

may only access electronic device information in order to attempt to identify, verify, or contact the owner of the device.

The Charter School is not prohibited from seizing/confiscating a student's personal electronic device, without searching its contents, if the student's use or possession of the private electronic device is in violation of Charter School rules or regulations.

Youth Suicide Prevention Policy

The Governing Board of Big Sur Charter School ("the School") recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Board of Directors has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures.

In compliance with Education Code section 215, this policy has been developed in consultation with BSCS and community stakeholders, BSCS school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and mental health professionals, the county mental health plan, first responders, and community organizations to identify additional resources to ensure this policy is aligned and includes similar research and resources, as well as to assist in planning, implementing, evaluating, and updating the BSCS's strategies for suicide prevention and intervention. BSCS shall work in conjunction with local government agencies, community-based organizations, and other community supports to identify additional resources. To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, updated, and easily accessible to all. BSCS shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for BSCS. The suicide prevention point of contact for BSCS and the School Director shall ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. this policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least every five (5) years in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Suicide Prevention Crisis Team

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, BSCS created an in-house Suicide Prevention Crisis Team ("SPCT") consisting of administrators, mental health professionals, relevant staff, and parents. The SPCT includes the following individuals:

1. [Aimee Alling, School Director
2. Heather O'Hara, MFT
3. Susie King, teacher

BSCS designates the following employees to act as the primary Suicide Prevention Liaisons to lead the SPCT:

- Primary Liaison: Susie King
- Secondary Liaison: Julie Heilman

The functions of the SPCT are to:

- Review mental health related school policies and procedures;
- Provide annual updates on school data and trends;
- Review and revise school prevention policies;
- Review and select general and specialized mental health and suicide prevention training;
- Review and oversee staff, parent/guardian, and student trainings;
- Ensuring the suicide prevention policy, protocols, and resources are posted on the school website;
- Ensure compliance with Education Code section 215;
- Collaborate with community mental health organizations;

- Identify resources and agencies that provide evidence-based or evidence-informed treatment;
- Help inform and build skills among law enforcement and other relevant partners; and
- Collaborate to build community response.

Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services

Employees of BSCS shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. While it is expected that school professionals are able to identify suicide risk factors and warning signs, screen and assess and to provide ongoing supports to youth identified at risk, the care or treatment for suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training for School Staff

BSCS, along with its partners, has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure the curriculum is evidence-based, evidenced informed, aligned with best practices in suicide prevention, and promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Training and professional development shall be provided for all school staff members (certificated and classified) and other adults on campus (including substitutes and intermittent staff, volunteers, interns, tutors, coaches, and afterschool program staff).

1. All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists, other public entity professionals, such as psychologists, social workers, or nurses) who have received advanced training specific to suicide prevention. Charter School has collaborated CharterSafe and the Monterey County Behavior Health to review the training materials and content to ensure it is evidence-based, evidence-informed, and aligned with best practices.
2. Staff training is reviewed and adjusted annually based on previous professional development activities, emerging best practices, and feedback.
3. Charter School shall ensure that training is available for new hires during the school year.
4. At least annually, all staff shall receive training on prevention and protective factors such as the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention.
5. At a minimum, all staff shall participate in training on the core components of suicide prevention (identification of suicide risk and protective factors and warning signs, prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention). Core components of the general suicide prevention training shall include:
 - a. How to identify youth who may be at risk for suicide including suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.
 - b. Appropriate ways to approach, interact, and respond to a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or having thoughts of suicide including skill building to ask directly about suicide thoughts.
 - c. Charter-approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including programs and services in a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) and referral protocols). Such procedures will emphasize the student should be under constant supervision and immediately referred for a suicide risk assessment.
 - d. Charter-approved procedures identifying the role educators, school staff, and volunteers play in supporting youth and staff after a suicide or suicide death or attempt (postvention).
6. In addition to core components of suicide prevention, ongoing annual staff professional development for all staff shall include the following components:
 - a. The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health.
 - b. Common misconceptions about suicide.
 - c. Charter School and community mental health and suicide prevention resources.
 - d. Appropriate messaging about suicide (correct terminology, safe messaging guidelines).
 - e. Ways to identify youth who may be at risk of suicide including suicide warning signs, risk, and protective factors.

- f. Appropriate ways to approach, interact, and respond to a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or is having thoughts of suicide. Specifically, how to talk with a student about their thoughts of suicide, including skill building to ask directly about suicide thoughts and warm handoffs.
- g. Charter School-approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including multi-tiered systems of support and referrals). Such procedures will emphasize that the student should be constantly supervised until a suicide risk assessment is completed.
- h. Charter School-approved procedures for identifying the role educators, school staff, and volunteers play in supporting youth and staff after a suicide or suicide death or attempt (postvention).
- i. Information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Youth affected by suicide.
 - Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts.
 - Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders.
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.
 - Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care.
 - Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences.
 - [Charter School must Insert other Local Youth Populations Vulnerable to Depression and Suicide based upon CalSCHLS, YRBS or other school climate survey data]].

Specialized Professional Development for School-based Mental Health Staff (Screening and/or Assessment)

Additional professional development in suicide risk assessment (SRA) and crisis intervention is provided to designated student mental health professionals, including but not limited to school counselors, psychologists, social workers, administrators, and nurses employed by Charter School. Training for these staff is specific to conducting SRAs, intervening during a crisis, de-escalating situations, interventions specific to preventing suicide, making referrals, safety planning, and re-entry.

Specialized Professional Training for targeted School-based mental health staff includes the following components:

- Best practices and skill building on how to conduct an effective suicide risk screening/SRA using an evidence-based, Charter School-approved tool; Patient Health Questionnaire 9 (PHQ-9) Depression Scale; BSS Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation; National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)'s Ask Suicide-Screening Questions (ASQ) Toolkit; and the Adolescent Suicide Assessment Protocol – 20.
- Best practices on approaching and talking with a student about their thoughts of suicide and how to respond to such thinking, based on school guidelines and protocols.
- Best practices on how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately respond and provide support based on school guidelines and protocols.
- Best practices on follow up with parents/caregivers.
- Best practices on re-entry.

Virtual Screenings for Suicide Risk

Virtual suicide prevention efforts include checking in with all students, promoting access to school and community-based resources that support mental wellbeing and those that address mental illness and give specific guidance on suicide prevention.

Charter School has established a protocol for assigning school staff to connect with students during distance learning and school closures. In the event of a school closure, Charter School has determined a process and protocols to establish daily or regular contact with all students. Staff understand that any concern about a student's emotional wellbeing and/or safety must be communicated to the appropriate school staff, according to Charter School protocols.

Charter School has determined a process and protocols for school-based mental health professionals to establish regular contact with high-risk students, students who are on their caseloads, and those who are identified by staff as demonstrating need. When connecting with students, staff are directed to begin each conversation by identifying the location of the student and the availability of parents or caregivers. This practice allows for the staff member to ensure the safety of the student, particularly if they have expressed suicidal thoughts.

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Notification, Participation and Education

1. BSCS includes parents/guardians/caregivers in suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, the Charter School shall share this Policy with parents/guardians/caregivers by notifying them where a complete copy of the policy is available.
2. This Suicide Prevention Policy shall be easily accessible and prominently displayed on the BSCS Web page and included in the parent/student handbook. Parents/guardians/caregivers are invited to provide input on the development, review, and implementation of this policy.
3. BSCS shall notify the parent/guardian/caregiver when a student has been screened or screened/assessed for suicide risk regardless of outcome
4. BSCS shall establish and widely disseminate a referral process to all parents/guardians/caregivers/families, so they are aware of how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about protocols and school, community-based, and crisis resources.
5. Community-based organizations that provide evidence-based suicide-specific treatments shall be highlighted on the Charter School's website with treatment referral options marked accordingly.
6. Staff autoreplies during vacations or absences shall include links to resources and phone/text numbers so parents and students have information readily available.
7. All parents/guardians/caregivers may have access to suicide prevention training that addresses the following:
 - a. Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.
 - b. How to approach and talk with their child(ren) about thoughts of suicide.
 - c. How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any child/youth judged to be at risk for suicide and referral for an immediate suicide risk assessment.
 - d. Charter School's referral processes and how they or their children can reach out for help, etc.
8. Parent/guardians are provided with information on suicide prevention resources including crisis hotlines, local warmlines, and school and community-based supports and crisis resources including the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Crisis text line, and local crisis hotlines and includes information that hotlines/resources are not just for crisis but also for friends/family and referral.
9. Parents/guardians/caregivers are reminded that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") generally protects the confidentiality of student records, which may sometimes include counseling or crisis intervention records. However, FERPA's health or safety emergency provision permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, to appropriate parties, in order to address a health or safety emergency when the disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

Student Participation and Education

Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, BSCS along with its partners has carefully reviewed and will continue to review potential student curricula to ensure it includes information on recognizing and responding to signs and symptoms (within themselves and friends), learning coping skills, encourage help-seeking behavior and being knowledgeable of supports and resources.

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with BSCS and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

BSCS's instructional and student support program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and resilience. The instruction shall not use the stress model to explain suicide.

BSCS provides instruction to middle and high school students on general mental health and suicide prevention... The Charter School's instructional curriculum, shall consider the grade level and age of the students and be delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. The instruction is provided under the supervision of Charter School employed mental health professionals, with input from county and community mental health agencies, and middle and high school students. The instruction is developmentally appropriate, student-centered, and includes:

- a. Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma.
- b. How to recognize behaviors (warning signs), protective factors, and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others.
- c. Help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help.
- d. Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.
- e. Guidance regarding the district's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures.

Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula (e.g., health classes, orientation classes, science, and physical education). BSCS maintains a list of current student trainings, which is available upon request.

BSCS has shared school-based supports and self-reporting procedures, so students are able to seek help if they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or if they recognize signs with peers. Although confidentiality and privacy are important, students should understand safety is a priority and if there is a risk of suicide, school staff are required to report. Charter-based mental health professionals are legally and ethically required to report suicide risk. When reporting suicidal ideation or an attempt, school staff must maintain confidentiality and only share information limited to the risk or attempt.

BSCS supports the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that increase awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention (e.g., Mental Health Awareness Weeks, Peer Counseling Programs, Freshman Success, and National Alliance on Mental Illness on Campus High School Clubs).

Charter School will include the following information on all student identification cards:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/Suicide Crisis Lifeline:
 - Call or Text "988"
 - Call 1-800-273-8255
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: Call 1-800-799-7233
- Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741741
- Teen Line: Text "TEEN" to 839863
- Trevor Project: Text "START" to 678678
- Trans Lifeline: 1-877-565-8860
- Local suicide prevention hotline telephone number

In addition to listing the above resources on student identification cards, Charter School shall include the following language: *"If you or someone you know is struggling emotionally or having trouble coping, there is help. Students in distress or those who just want to talk about their problems, can call or text the phone numbers listed here for free, confidential support."*

BSCS shall establish and widely disseminate a referral process to all students, so they know how to access support through school, community-based, and crisis services. Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they have knowledge or concerns of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt.

Intervention and Emergency Procedures

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary designated suicide prevention liaison. If this primary suicide prevention liaison is unavailable, the staff shall promptly notify the secondary suicide prevention liaison.

The suicide prevention liaison shall immediately notify the School Director or designee, who shall then notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible if appropriate and in the best interest of the student. Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.

The suicide prevention liaison shall also refer the student to mental health resources at BSCS or in the community.

A. Action Plan for Suicide Attempts on Campus or During School-Sponsored Activity

BSCS shall implement the following response protocol for suicide attempts during the school day.

When a student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911. The call shall NOT be made in the presence of the student and the student shall not be left unsupervised. Staff shall NOT physically restrain or block an exit.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported on campus or at a school-related activity, the suicide prevention liaison shall, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one or more of the following, as appropriate:
 - a. providing immediate first aid as needed, until a medical professional is available.
 - b. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened and report any medications taken, and access to weapons, if applicable.
 - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.
 - d. Remaining calm, keeping in mind the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed.
 - e. Moving all other students out of the immediate area.
 - f. Not sending the student away or leaving him/her alone, even to go to the restroom.
 - g. Providing comfort to the student, listening and allowing the student to talk and being comfortable with moments of silence.
 - h. Promising privacy and help, but not promising confidentiality.
 - i. Students should only be released to parents/guardians/caregivers/families or to a person who is qualified and trained to provide help.
2. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.
3. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed and coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. **Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.**

4. After a referral is made, BSCS shall verify with the parent/guardian that the follow up treatment has been accessed. Parents/guardians will be required to provide documentation of care for the student. If parents/guardians refuse or neglect to access treatment for a student who has been identified to be at risk for suicide or in emotional distress, the suicide prevention liaisons shall meet with the parent to identify barriers to treatment (e.g., cultural stigma, financial issues) and work to rectify the situation and build understanding of the importance of care. If follow up care is still not provided, BSCS should consider contacting Child Protective Services to report neglect of youth.
5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at BSCS.
6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

B. Action Plan for Off Campus Suicide Attempts

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted during the school day on the BSCS campus, the suicide prevention liaison shall follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in BSCS's safety plan. After consultation with the School Director or designee and the student's parent/guardian about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the School Director or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. BSCS staff may receive assistance from BSCS counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted off the BSCS campus and unrelated to school activities, the School Director or designee shall take the following steps to support the student:

1. Contact the parent/guardian and offer support to the family.
2. Discuss with the family how they would like BSCS to respond to the attempt while minimizing widespread rumors among teachers, staff, and students.
3. Obtain permission from the parent/guardian to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis are correct.
4. The suicide prevention liaisons shall handle any media requests.
5. Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students.
6. Offer to the student and parent/guardian steps for re-integration to school. Re-integration may include obtaining a written release from the parent/guardian to speak with any health care providers; conferring with the student and parent/guardian about any specific requests on how to handle the situation; informing the student's teachers about possible days of absences; allowing accommodations for make-up work (being understanding that missed assignments may add stress to the student); appropriate staff maintaining ongoing contact with the student to monitor the student's actions and mood; and working with the parent/guardian to involve the student in an aftercare plan; providing parents/guardians/caregivers/families local emergency numbers for after school and weekend emergency contacts.

Supporting Students during or after a Mental Health Crisis

Students shall be encouraged through the education program and in BSCS activities to notify a teacher, the School Director, another BSCS administrator, psychologist, BSCS counselor, suicide prevention liaisons, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions. BSCS shall implement the following steps during or after a crisis:

1. Treat every threat with seriousness and approach with a calm manner; make the student a priority.
2. Listen actively and non-judgmentally to the student. Let the student express their feelings.
3. Acknowledge the feelings and do not argue with the student.
4. Offer hope and let the student know they are safe, and that help is available. Do not promise confidentiality or cause stress.

5. Explain calmly and get the student to a skilled mental health professional or designated staff to further support the student.
6. Keep close contact with the parents/guardians/caregivers/families and mental health professionals working with the student.

Re-Entry to School After a Suicide Attempt

A student who has verbalized ideation or attempted suicide is at a higher risk for suicide in the months following the crisis. Having a streamlined and well-planned re-entry process ensures the safety and wellbeing of students who have previously attempted suicide and reduces the risk of another attempt. An appropriate re-entry process is an important component of suicide prevention. Involving students in planning for their return to school provides them with a sense of control, personal responsibility, and empowerment.

BSCS shall implement the following steps upon the student’s re-entry:

1. The School Director shall obtain a written release of information signed by parents/guardians/caregivers/families and providers.
2. School mental health professionals shall confer with the student and parents/guardians/caregivers/families about any specific requests on how to handle the situation.
3. School-based mental health professionals shall confer with the student and parents/guardians/caregivers/families to develop a safety plan.
4. School-based mental health professionals shall inform the student’s teachers about possible days of absences.
5. Teachers and administrators shall allow accommodations for student to make up work (understanding that missed assignments may add stress to student).
6. Mental health professionals or trusted staff members shall maintain ongoing contact to monitor student’s actions and mood.
7. School-based mental health professionals shall work with parents/guardians/caregivers/ families to involve the student in an aftercare plan.
8. School-based mental health professionals shall provide parent’s/guardians/caregivers/ families local emergency numbers for after school and weekend emergency contacts.

Messaging About Suicide Prevention

BSCS along with its partners shall:

1. Thoroughly and regularly review with its partners, all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe and effective messaging about suicide.
2. Ensure that all communications, documents, materials related to messaging about suicide focus on warning signs as well as risk, prevention, and protective factors, avoid discussing details about methods of suicide, avoid oversimplifying (i.e. identifying singular cause of suicide), avoid sensational language, and only includes clear, respectful, people-first language that encourages an environment free of stigma. As part of safe messaging for suicide, we use specific terminology when referring to actions related to suicide or suicidal behavior:

Use	Do Not Use
<p>“Died by suicide” or “Took their own life”</p>	<p>“Committed suicide” Note: Use of the word “commit” can imply crime/sin</p>
<p>“Attempted suicide”</p>	<p>“Successful” or “unsuccessful” Note: There is no success, or lack of success, when dealing with suicide</p>

3. Provide suicide prevention resources in parent/student handbooks and on school-issued identification cards, if any, for staff and students, on school websites, and during any mental health or suicide prevention skill-building activity for students or parents/families and professional development for staff.

Responding After a Suicide Death (Postvention)

A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have devastating consequences on the school community, including students and staff. BSCS shall follow the below action plan for responding to a suicide death, which incorporates both immediate and long-term steps and objectives:

The suicide prevention liaison shall:

1. Coordinate with the School Director to conduct an initial meeting of the Suicide Prevention Crisis Team to:
 - a. Confirm death and cause.
 - b. Identify a staff member to contact deceased's family (within 24 hours).
 - c. Enact the Suicide Postvention Response.
 - d. Notify all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
2. Coordinate an all-staff meeting, to include:
 - a. Notification (if not already conducted) to staff about suicide death.
 - b. Emotional support and resources available to staff.
 - c. Notification to students about suicide death and the availability of support services (if this is the protocol that is decided by administration).
 - d. Share information that is relevant and that which you have permission to disclose.
3. Prepare staff to respond to needs of students regarding the following:
 - a. Review signs of emotional distress and suicide ideation.
 - b. Review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment.
 - c. Develop and provide supports to staff in responding to student reactions.
 - d. Talking points for staff to notify students.
 - e. Share school and community-based resources available to students (on and off campus).
4. Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior, and immediately refer them to a school-based mental health professional.
5. Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior.
6. Communicate with the larger school community about the suicide death and availability of support services. Staff shall not share explicit, graphic, or dramatic content, including the manner of death.
7. Consider, (in consultation with the family) funeral arrangements for family and school community.
 - o If possible, suggest the funeral occur outside of school hours.
 - o Encourage parents/guardians of students to attend funeral/memorial with their children.
 - o Request family approval to attend and staff a table for resources to be available at the funeral, if possible, to remind students and the community of available resources.
 - o Offer a safe space on campus for students to utilize if needed before/after funeral or memorial service.
 - o Acknowledge there may be a high rate of absenteeism on the day of the funeral and school officials should make appropriate accommodations for staff and students to attend.
8. Respond to memorial requests in respectful and non-harmful manner; responses should be handled in a thoughtful way and their impact on other students should be considered.
9. Identify media spokesperson to cover story without the use of explicit, graphic, or dramatic content, if needed.

10. Utilize and respond to social media outlets:
 - o Identify what platforms students are using to respond to suicide death.
 - o Identify and encourage staff and students to monitor social media outlets.
11. Include long-term suicide postvention responses:
 - a. Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed.
 - b. Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of deceased.
 - c. Consider long-term memorials and how they may impact students who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk of suicide.

Epinephrine Auto-Injectors Notice

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 49414, Big Sur Charter School is providing this notice to inform parents, guardians, and school staff about the availability and use of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors on campus.

Big Sur Charter School maintains emergency epinephrine auto-injectors for use in the event a student or other individual experiences a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). These devices are stored in clearly marked, accessible locations on campus, including:

- **Main Office**
- **Coastal Stewardship First Aid Kit**

In accordance with state law, designated school personnel have received training on recognizing the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and on the proper storage, handling, and administration of epinephrine auto-injectors.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss your child's specific health needs, please contact the school office at (831)324-4573.

Pupils' Rights to Refrain from the Harmful or Destructive Use of Animals

Students with a moral objection to dissecting or otherwise harming animals have the right to opt out of those activities. They must notify their teacher of their objection and for an alternate project.

(a) "Animal" means any living organism of the kingdom animalia, beings that typically differ from plants in capacity for spontaneous movement and rapid motor response to stimulation by a usually greater mobility with some degree of voluntary locomotor ability and by greater irritability commonly mediated through a more or less centralized nervous system, beings that are characterized by a requirement for complex organic nutrients including proteins or their constituents that are usually digested in an internal cavity before assimilation into the body proper, and beings that are distinguished from typical plants by lack of chlorophyll, by an inability to perform photosynthesis, by cells that lack cellulose walls, and by the frequent presence of discrete complex sense organs.

(b) "Alternative education project" includes, but is not limited to, the use of video recordings, models, films, books, and computers, which would provide an alternate avenue for obtaining the knowledge, information, or experience required by the course of study in question. "Alternative education project" also includes "alternative test."

(c) "Pupil" means a person under 18 years of age who is matriculated in a course of instruction in an educational institution within the scope of Section 32255.5. For the purpose of asserting the pupil's rights and receiving any notice or response pursuant to this chapter, "pupil" also includes the parents of the matriculated minor.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (EC §§52060-52077)

Big Sur Charter School is required to adopt a three-year Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and to update the LCAP on or before July 1 of each subsequent year. The LCAP is required to identify annual goals, specific actions geared toward implementing those goals, and must measure progress for student subgroups across multiple performance indicators based on eight priorities set by the State. The priorities must be aligned to the school's spending plan. The LCAP must be approved before the annual budget can be adopted. Once the budget and LCAP are adopted at the local level, the Plan will be reviewed by the County Superintendent to ensure alignment of projected spending toward goals and services. The following are the eight State priorities:

- Providing all students access to fully-credentialed teachers, instructional materials that align with State standards, and safe facilities;
- Implementation of and student access to State academic content and performance standards; ● Parent involvement and participation;
- Improving student achievement and outcomes along multiple measures;
- Supporting student engagement;
- Highlighting school climate and connectedness;
- Ensuring all students have access to classes that prepare them for college and careers; and, ● Measuring other important student outcomes related to required areas of study.

Big Sur Charter School will consult with its teachers, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the LCAP.

Big Sur Charter School will hold at least one hearing to solicit recommendations and comments from the public regarding expenditures proposed in the plan before adopting the LCAP.

Big Sur Charter School will post the approved LCAP on the school website and establish policies for filing a complaint of noncompliance under Education Code section 52075 using the Uniform Complaint Procedures. Information regarding the requirements for a LCAP and the complaint process shall be provided to pupils, parents, guardians, and employees on an annual basis.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Uniform Complaint Procedures

The Charter School is the local agency primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing educational programs. The Charter School shall investigate and seek to resolve complaints using policies and procedures known as the Uniform Complaint Procedure ("UCP") adopted by our Governing Board for the following types of complaints:

1. Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group on the basis of the actual or perceived characteristics of age, ancestry, color, mental disability, physical disability, ethnic group identification, immigration status, citizenship, gender expression, gender identity, gender, genetic information, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, medical condition, marital status, sex, or sexual orientation, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any Charter School program or activity. Unlawful discrimination includes, but is not limited to, noncompliance with Education Code section 243(a) or 244(a).
2. Complaints alleging a violation of state or federal law or regulation governing the following programs:
 - a. Accommodations for Pregnant, Parenting or Lactating Students;
 - b. Consolidated Categorical Aid;

- c. Education of Students in Foster Care, Students who are Homeless, former Juvenile Court Students now enrolled in a public school, Migratory Children and Children of Military Families;
 - d. Every Student Succeeds Act;
 - e. Migrant Education Programs; and/or
 - f. Regional Occupational Centers and Programs;
3. Complaints alleging noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees. A student enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity. A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
- a. 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.
4. 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.
5. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees may be filed with the School Director.

Complaints alleging noncompliance with the requirements governing the Local Control Funding Formula ("LCFF") or Local Control and Accountability Plans ("LCAP") under Education Code sections 47606.5 and 47607.3, as applicable. If the Charter School adopts a School Plan for Student Achievement ("SPSA") in addition to its LCAP, complaints of noncompliance with the requirements of the SPSA under Education Code sections 64000, 64001, 65000, and 65001 shall also fall under the UCP.

Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding child nutrition programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 49490-49590 are governed by Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations ("C.F.R.") sections 210.19(a)(4), 215.1(a), 220.13(c), 225.11(b), 226.6(n), and 250.15(d) and Title 5, California Code of Regulations ("C.C.R.") sections 15580 - 15584.

Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding special education programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 56000-56865 and 59000-59300 are governed by the procedures set forth in 5 C.C.R. sections 32003205 and 34 C.F.R. sections 300.151-300.153.

Complaints other than complaints relating to pupil fees must be filed in writing with the following Compliance Officer:

Aimee Alling, School Director
 Title XI Officer,
 (831)-324-4573; director@bigsurcharterschool.org
 304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940

Complaints against the Director must be filed in writing with the following Compliance Officer:

Board Chair
 (831)-324-4573; boardchair@bigsurcharterschool.org
 304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940

Only complaints regarding pupil fees, LCAP, or noncompliance with Education Code section 243 or 244 may be filed anonymously and only if the anonymous complainant provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with the respective applicable laws.

Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, must be filed within six (6) months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, occurred or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. All other complaints under the UCP shall be filed not later than one (1) year from the date the alleged violation occurred. For complaints relating to the LCAP, the date of the alleged violation is the date on which the Charter School's Board of Directors approved the LCAP or the annual update was adopted by the Charter School.

The Compliance Officer responsible for investigating the complaint shall conduct and complete the investigation in accordance with California regulations and the Charter School's UCP Policy. The Compliance Officer shall provide the complainant with a final written investigation report ("Decision") within sixty (60) calendar days from the Charter School's receipt of the complaint. This sixty (60) calendar day time period may be extended by written agreement of the complainant.

The complainant has a right to appeal the Charter School's Decision to the California Department of Education ("CDE") by filing a written appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the Charter School's written Decision, except if the Charter School has used its UCP to address a complaint that is not subject to the UCP requirements. The appeal must include a copy of the complaint filed with the Charter School, a copy of the Charter School's Decision, and the complainant must specify and explain the basis for the appeal of the Decision, including at least one of the following:

- The Charter School failed to follow its complaint procedures.
- Relative to the allegations of the complaint, the Charter School's Decision lacks material findings of fact necessary to reach a conclusion of law.
- The material findings of fact in the Charter School's Decision are not supported by substantial evidence.
- The legal conclusion in the Charter School's Decision is inconsistent with the law.
- In a case in which the Charter School's Decision found noncompliance, the corrective actions fail to provide a proper remedy.

A complainant who appeals the Charter School's Decision on a UCP complaint to the CDE shall receive a written appeal decision within sixty (60) calendar days of the CDE's receipt of the appeal, unless extended by written agreement with the complainant or the CDE documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the CDE's appeal Decision pursuant to 5 C.C.R. section 4633(f)(2) or (3), either party may request reconsideration by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction ("SSPI") or the SSPI's designee. The request for reconsideration shall specify and explain the reason(s) for contesting the findings of fact, conclusions of law, or corrective actions in the CDE's appeal Decision.

Complaints alleging noncompliance with Education Code section 243 or 244 may be filed with the SSPI directly, and the SSPI may directly intervene without waiting for an investigation by the Charter School. The complainant shall present the SSPI with evidence that supports the basis for the direct filing and why immediate action is necessary.

If a UCP complaint is filed directly with the CDE and the CDE determines that it merits direct intervention, the CDE shall complete an investigation and provide a written decision to the complainant within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, unless the parties have agreed to extend the timeline or the CDE documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.

If the Charter School finds merit in a UCP complaint, or the CDE finds merit in an appeal, the Charter School shall take corrective actions consistent with the requirements of existing law that will provide a remedy to the affected student and/or parent/guardian as applicable.

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside of the Charter School's complaint procedures. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders. For unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints arising under state law, however, a complainant must wait until sixty (60) calendar days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies. The moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief and is applicable only if the Charter School has appropriately, and in a timely manner, apprised the complainant of the complainant's right to file a complaint in accordance with 5 C.C.R. § 4622.

A copy of the UCP shall be available upon request free of charge in the main office. For further information on any part of the complaint procedures, including filing a complaint or requesting a copy of the UCP, please contact the School Director

General Complaints

Not all complaints fall under the scope of the UCP. Many concerns are the responsibilities of the local school district, including, hiring and evaluation of staff, classroom assignments, student advancement and retention, selection/provision of textbooks and materials, student discipline, provision of core curricula subjects, facilities, graduation requirements, homework policies and practices, use of general education funds and dress codes. For complaints that do not fall under the UCP or Title IX parameters please refer to the Charter School's General Complaints Policy, located on the school website.

Title IX, Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation, and Bullying Prevention Policy

Discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors, which interfere with students' ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, Big Sur Charter School ("BSCS" or the "Charter School") prohibits any acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying altogether.

As used in this policy, discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are described as the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication or cyber-bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, based on the actual or perceived characteristics of mental or physical disability, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions, and parental status), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status, nationality (including national origin, country of origin, and citizenship), race or ethnicity (including ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, ethnic background, and traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locs, and twists), religion (including agnosticism and atheism), religious affiliation, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age, or any combination of those characteristics, association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any combination of those characteristics, or based on any other

characteristic protected under applicable state or federal law or local ordinance. Hereafter, such actions are referred to as “misconduct prohibited by this Policy.”

To the extent possible, the Charter School will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond, address and report on such behaviors in a timely manner. BSCS school staff who witness acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.

Moreover, the Charter School will not condone or tolerate misconduct prohibited by this Policy by any employee, independent contractor or other person with whom BSCS does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. BSCS will promptly and thoroughly investigate and respond to any complaint of misconduct prohibited by this Policy in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent and will take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

This policy applies to incidents occurring on the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities regardless of the location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means, whether perpetrated by a student, employee, parent/guardian, volunteer, independent contractor or other person with whom BSCS does business, and all acts of BSCS’s Board of Directors (“Board”) in enacting policies and procedures that govern BSCS.

BSCS complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and local ordinances in its investigation of and response to reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying Coordinator (“Coordinator”):

Aimee Alling, School Director
304 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940
director@bigsurcharterschool.org
831-324-4573

Definitions

Harassment means conduct based upon one or more of the protected characteristics listed above that is severe or pervasive, which unreasonably disrupts an individual’s educational or work environment or that creates a hostile educational or work environment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes, comments or slurs.
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work or school based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment.
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.

Sexual Harassment

In accordance with Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*; 34 C.F.R. Part 106) and California law, discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex in education institutions, including in the education institution’s admissions and employment practices, is prohibited. All persons, regardless of sex, are afforded equal rights and opportunities and freedom from unlawful discrimination and harassment in education programs or activities conducted by BSCS.

BSCS is committed to providing a work and educational environment free of sexual harassment and considers such harassment to be a major offense, which may result in disciplinary action. Inquiries about the application of

Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106 may be referred to the Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

Under Title IX, "sexual harassment" means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity;
- or
- "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

Under California Education Code section 212.5, sexual harassment consists of conduct on the basis of sex, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct on the basis of sex, regardless of whether or not the conduct is motivated by sexual desire, when: (a) Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual's employment, education, academic status, or progress; (b) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment, educational or academic decisions affecting the individual; (c) the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; and/or (d) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the educational institution.

Examples of conduct that may fall within the Title IX definition of sexual harassment, the Education Code definition of sexual harassment, or both:

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
 - Intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another's body, or poking another's body.
- Unwanted sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as:
 - Sexually oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
 - Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an individual for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.
 - Subjecting or threats of subjecting a student or employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making the student's or employee's performance more difficult because of the student's or the employee's sex.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the work or educational environment, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing or possessing any such material to read, display or view in the work or educational environment.
 - Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the work or educational environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic.

- Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an individual by sex in an area of the work or educational environment (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations of harassment and sexual harassment above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of prohibited acts under this Policy.

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act. Bullying includes one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that may constitute hate violence or create an intimidating and/or hostile educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable student⁵ or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with the student's academic performance.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by BSCS.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, video or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Electronic act means the creation or transmission originated on or off the schoolsite, 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 message, text, sound, video, or image.
- A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in the definition of "bullying," above.
 - Creating a credible impersonation of another actual student for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of "bullying," above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a student for the purpose of bullying the student and such that another student would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the student was or is the student who was impersonated.
 - Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of "bullying," above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious student or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual student other than the student who created the false profile.
- An act of "Cyber sexual bullying" including, but not limited to:

⁵ "Reasonable student" is defined as a student, including, but not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill and judgment in conduct for a person of the student's age, or for a person of the student's age with the student's exceptional needs.

- The dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a student to another student or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in the definition of "bullying," above. A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
- "Cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
- Notwithstanding the definitions of "bullying" and "electronic act" above, 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.

Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment means a written document filed and signed by a complainant who is participating in or attempting to participate in BSCS's education program or activity or signed by the Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that BSCS investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in BSCS's education program or activity.

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

BSCS has adopted the following procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

BSCS advises students:

- To never share passwords, personal data, or private photos online.
- To think about what they are doing carefully before posting and by emphasizing that comments cannot be retracted once they are posted.
- That personal information revealed on social media can be shared with anyone including parents, teachers, administrators, and potential employers. Students should never reveal information that would make them uncomfortable if the world had access to it.
- To consider how it would feel receiving such comments before making comments about others online.

BSCS informs its employees, students, and parents/guardians of BSCS's policies regarding the use of technology in and out of the classroom. BSCS encourages parents/guardians to discuss these policies with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with such policies.

Education

BSCS employees cannot always be present when bullying incidents occur, so educating students about bullying is a key prevention technique to limit bullying from happening. BSCS advises students that hateful and/or demeaning behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable in our society and at BSCS and encourages students to practice compassion and respect each other.

BSCS educates students to accept all student peers regardless of protected characteristics (including but not limited to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identification, physical or cognitive disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration status) and about the negative impact of bullying other students based on protected characteristics.

BSCS's bullying prevention education also discusses the differences between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and includes sample situations to help students learn and practice appropriate behavior and to develop techniques and strategies to respond in a non-aggressive way to bullying-type behaviors. Students will also develop confidence and learn how to advocate for themselves and others, and when to go to an adult for help.

BSCS informs BSCS employees, students, and parents/guardians of this Policy and encourages parents/guardians to discuss this Policy with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with this Policy.

Professional Development

BSCS annually makes available the online training module developed by the California Department of Education pursuant Education Code section 32283.5(a) to its certificated employees and all other BSCS employees who have regular interaction with students.

BSCS informs certificated employees about the common signs that a student is a target of bullying including:

- Physical cuts or injuries
- Lost or broken personal items
- Fear of going to school/practice/games
- Loss of interest in school, activities, or friends
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Anxious/sick/nervous behavior or distracted appearance
- Self-destructiveness or displays of odd behavior
- Decreased self-esteem

Charter School also informs certificated employees about the groups of students determined by BSCS and available research to be at elevated risk for bullying and provides its certificated employees with information on existing school and community resources related to the support of these groups. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth ("LGBTQ") and those youth perceived as LGBTQ; and
- Students with physical or learning disabilities.

BSCS encourages its employees to demonstrate effective problem-solving, anger management, and self-confidence skills for BSCS's students.

Grievance Procedures

Scope of Grievance Procedures

BSCS will comply with its Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") policy when investigating and responding to complaints alleging unlawful harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying against a protected group or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of the protected characteristics set forth in the UCP that:

- Are written and signed;
- Filed by an individual who alleges that they have personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying, or by one who believes any specific class of individuals has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on a protected characteristic, or by a duly authorized representative who alleges that an individual student has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and

- Submitted to the BSCS UCP Compliance Officer not later than six (6) months from the date the alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The following grievance procedures shall be utilized for reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy that do not comply with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements of a uniform complaint. For formal complaints of sexual harassment, BSCS will utilize the sexual harassment grievance procedures listed below in addition to its UCP when applicable.

Submitting a Report or Complaint

All staff are expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, to intervene when safe to do so, call for assistance, and report such incidents. The Board requires staff to follow the procedures in this Policy for reporting alleged acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Reports and complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy shall be submitted to the Coordinator (or the Board Chair if the complaint is against the Coordinator) as soon as possible after the incidents giving rise to the report or complaint.

Complaints regarding such misconduct may also be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. Civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders may also be available to complainants.

While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report to the Coordinator. BSCS will investigate and respond to all oral and written reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on an anonymous report.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy and other verbal or physical abuses. Any student who feels they are a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the School Director, Coordinator, a staff person or a family member so that the student can get assistance in resolving the issue in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.

BSCS acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. All reports and complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible. This includes keeping the identity of the reporter and/or complainant confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to comply with applicable law, carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by BSCS on a case-by-case basis.

BSCS prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who files a report or complaint, testifies, assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation or proceeding related to misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation or lack of participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the individual. Individuals alleging retaliation in violation of this Policy may file a grievance using the procedures set forth in this Policy. Knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

All supervisors of staff will receive sexual harassment training within six (6) months of their assumption of a supervisory position and will receive further training once every two (2) years thereafter. All staff, and any individual designated as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator or decisionmaker and any person who facilitates an

informal resolution process will receive Title IX training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment as required by law.

Supportive Measures Under Title IX

Upon the receipt of a report of sexual harassment or a formal complaint of sexual harassment, the Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures. The Coordinator will consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and explain the process for filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment.

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint of sexual harassment or where no formal complaint of sexual harassment has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to BSCS's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or BSCS's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures available to complainants and respondents may include but are not limited to counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. BSCS will maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of BSCS to provide the supportive measures.

Investigation and Response

Upon receipt of a report or complaint of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, the Coordinator or designee will promptly initiate an investigation. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than thirty (30) school days.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Coordinator or designee will, to the extent possible with respect to confidentiality laws, provide the complainant with information about the investigation, including any actions necessary to resolve the incident/situation. However, the Coordinator or designee will not reveal confidential information related to other students or employees.

If the complaint is against the Coordinator, the Board Chair or designee will conduct a fact-finding investigation and provide the complainant with information about the investigation and resolution of the incident/situation.

For investigations of and responses to formal complaints of sexual harassment, the following grievance procedures will apply:

Notice of the Allegations

Upon receipt of a formal complaint of sexual harassment, the Coordinator will give all known parties written notice of its grievance process, including any voluntary informal resolution process. The notice will include:

- A description of the allegations of sexual harassment at issue and to the extent known, the identities of the parties involved in the incident, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident;
- A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a final decision is reached;
- A statement that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence; and

- A statement that BSCS prohibits an individual from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

Emergency Removal

BSCS may place a non-student employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of a formal complaint of sexual harassment grievance process in accordance with BSCS's policies.

BSCS may remove a respondent from BSCS's education program or activity on an emergency basis, in accordance with BSCS's policies, provided that BSCS undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

This provision may not be construed to modify any rights under the IDEA, Section 504, or the ADA.

Informal Resolution

If a formal complaint of sexual harassment is filed, BSCS may offer a voluntary informal resolution process, such as mediation, to the parties at any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility. If BSCS offers such a process, it will do the following:

- Provide the parties with advance written notice of:
- The allegations;
- The requirements of the voluntary informal resolution process including the circumstances under which the parties are precluded from resuming a formal complaint of sexual harassment arising from the same allegations;
- The parties' right to withdraw from the voluntary informal resolution process and resume the grievance process at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution; and
- Any consequences resulting from participating in the voluntary informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared; and
- Obtain the parties' advance voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.
- BSCS will not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

Investigation Process

- The decisionmaker will not be the same person(s) as the Coordinator or the investigator. BSCS shall ensure that all decisionmakers and investigators do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.
- In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than thirty (30) school days. If the Coordinator determines that an investigation will take longer than thirty (30) school days and needs to be delayed or extended due to good cause, the Coordinator or designee will inform the complainant and any respondents in writing of the reasons for the delay or extension. The entire Title IX process, including informal resolution, opportunities to respond, and determination of responsibility may take ninety (90) calendar days or longer, depending on the complexity of the investigation and the issues raised.
- The parties will be provided with an equal opportunity to present witnesses, to inspect and review any evidence obtained that is directly related to the allegations raised, and to have an advisor present during any investigative meeting or interview.
- The parties will not be prohibited from discussing the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.
- A party whose participation is invited or expected at an investigative meeting or interview will receive written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the meeting or interview with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.

- Prior to completion of the investigative report, BSCS will send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, a copy of the evidence subject to inspection and review, and the parties will have at least ten (10) days to submit a written response for the investigator's consideration prior to the completion of the investigation report.
- The investigator will complete an investigation report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send a copy of the report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, at least ten (10) days prior to the determination of responsibility.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

If the alleged harassment did not occur in BSCS's education program or activity, or against a person in the United States, or would not constitute sexual harassment under Title IX even if proved, the formal complaint with regard to that conduct must be dismissed for purposes of sexual harassment under Title IX. However, such a dismissal does not preclude action under another applicable BSCS policy.

BSCS may dismiss a formal complaint of sexual harassment if:

- The complainant provides a written withdrawal of the complaint to the Coordinator;
- The respondent is no longer employed or enrolled at BSCS; or
- The specific circumstances prevent BSCS from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a decision on the formal complaint or the allegations therein.

If a formal complaint of sexual harassment or any of the claims therein are dismissed, BSCS will promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal simultaneously to the parties.

Determination of Responsibility

The standard of evidence used to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard.

Determinations will be based on an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence and credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

BSCS will send a written decision on the formal complaint to the complainant and respondent simultaneously that describes:

- The allegations in the formal complaint of sexual harassment;
- All procedural steps taken including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, and methods used to gather other evidence;
- The findings of facts supporting the determination;
- The conclusions about the application of BSCS's code of conduct to the facts;
- The decision and rationale for each allegation;
- Any disciplinary sanctions the recipient imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity will be provided to the complainant; and
- The procedures and permissible bases for appeals.

Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy, knowingly make false statements or knowingly submit false information during the grievance process may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from BSCS or termination of employment. The Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies ordered by BSCS in response to a formal complaint of sexual harassment.

Right of Appeal

Should the reporting individual find BSCS's resolution unsatisfactory for complaints within the scope of this Policy, other than formal complaints of sexual harassment, the reporting individual may, within five (5) business days of notice of BSCS's decision or resolution, submit a written appeal to the President of the BSCS Board, who will review the investigation and render a final decision.

The following appeal rights and procedures will apply to formal complaints of sexual harassment:

- The complainant and the respondent shall have the same appeal rights and BSCS will implement appeal procedures equally for both parties.
- Within five (5) business days of BSCS's written decision or dismissal of the complaint, the complainant or respondent may submit a written appeal to the President of the Board, who will serve as the appeal decisionmaker or designate an appeal decisionmaker.
- The decisionmaker for the appeal will not be the same person(s) as the Coordinator, the investigator or the initial decisionmaker.
- The complainant and respondent may appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, and from BSCS's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:
 - Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
 - New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
 - The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decisionmaker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.
- BSCS will notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed.
- The decisionmaker for the appeal will: 1) give both parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; 2) issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result; and 3) provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

Recordkeeping

All records related to any investigation of complaints under this Policy are maintained in a secure location.

BSCS will maintain the following records for at least seven (7) years:

- Records of each sexual harassment investigation, including any determination of responsibility; any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript; any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent; and any remedies provided to the complainant.
- Records of any appeal of a formal sexual harassment complaint and the results of that appeal.
- Records of any informal resolution of a sexual harassment complaint and the results of that informal resolution.
- All materials used to train Title IX coordinators, investigators, decisionmakers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process.
- Records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment.

Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying Complaint Form

Your Name: _____

Date: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur? _____

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements or conduct; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I acknowledge that I have read and that I understand the above statements. I hereby authorize the School to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further understand that providing false information in this regard could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion from the school.

Signature of Complainant

Print Name

To be completed by the Charter School:

Received by: _____

Date: _____