



WOODLAND STAR CHARTER SCHOOL
Learning to think, to care, to create.

PARENT HANDBOOK

11700 Dunbar Road, Glen Ellen CA 95442 | 707-996-3849
Email: office@woodlandstarschool.org www.woodlandstarschool.org

Table of Contents

Mission Statement4

Vision Statement.....4

Woodland Star Students5

 Purpose and Goals of School.....5

 Student Mission and Achievement Goals.....6

 Student Graduation Goals.....7

 Waldorf-Methods at School and Home9

 Curriculum Overview13

 Homework Policy.....15

 Student Assessment17

 Students with Special Needs.....18

 Admission Requirements & Enrollment Procedures19

 Communicable Disease Protocol20

 Attendance and Rhythm Schedules21

 Etiquette for Classroom & School Visits.....22

 Absenteeism.....23

 Independent Study24

 Aftercare Program25

 Lunch and Snacks.....26

 Dress Code Policy.....27

 Field Trips.....29

 Cell phone, Gaming, and Smart-Technology device policy.....31

 Behavior Guidelines32

Administrative Structure.....35

 Charter School Definition35

 Governance.....35

 Committees and Groups36

 Communication and Redress37

Woodland Star Faculty.....40

 Teachers’ Mission Statement.....40

 Faculty Organization & Involvement.....40

Parent Engagement.....41

 Expectations of Parent Participation41

 Commitment to Parent Education42

 Class Parents43

School Wide Initiatives	44
Recommended Reading.....	44
Appendix A:.....	45
Appendix B:.....	49

Mission Statement

Woodland Star Charter School is a Waldorf Methods public school, serving families with children from Transitional Kindergarten through Eighth grade. We offer a developmentally based curriculum, integrating rigorous academics and the arts. Our goal is to educate children to become creative thinkers, ready to positively influence the world around them.

Vision Statement

Woodland Star Charter School is a community of families and teachers using Waldorf teaching methods to nourish and educate our children. We have developed a public school with a consistent philosophy, curriculum, and teaching method that embraces the developmental model of the growing child and awakens each child's full and unique potential. Waldorf methods nurture a sense of wonder and delight, and foster the reverence for nature and humanity inherent in the young child. The Waldorf curriculum develops the child's active will, creative imagination and clear, independent thinking. Children emerge as life-long learners with the self-confidence to impart direction and purpose to their lives and leadership to their community.



Woodland Star Students

Purpose and Goals of School

Woodland Star Charter School has a strong, cooperative and mutually supportive working relationship with Sonoma Valley Unified School District, building upon our mutual goals of providing the best possible educational opportunities for all children in the Sonoma area. Strong collaborative relationships with professionals and other community resources support the school, the students and their families. An involved community of parents and teachers actively and visibly support the children. Parents and other family members are involved in governance, the school program, events and activities, beautification and maintenance of the school facility, linkages with the larger community and the ongoing

evaluation of the school program. Parents financially support the school and their child's class to the best of their ability. The school supports a program of professional development, which includes support and evaluations for teachers and other staff.

At Woodland Star Charter School all children are respected and appreciated for their unique ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Woodland Star is a school from which children will emerge with strong potential for academic excellence, a commitment to the enhancement of their community, and the ability to succeed amidst the challenges of today's and tomorrow's world. Woodland Star Charter School desires for our children a Waldorf-inspired education that follows Rudolf Steiner's developmental model of the growing child. Woodland Star educates transitional kindergarten through eighth grade students who are residents of the state of California.

The purpose of this charter school is to support the development of competent, confident and responsible students who will achieve academic and personal habits and attitudes desired of an educated person in the twenty first century. We honor the intellectual, physical and emotional needs of our children; and we therefore chose a Waldorf-method curriculum that develops and nurtures the whole child, placing equal emphasis on academic excellence, artistic expression and social development. We intend to inspire in our children a respect for others, for their community as a whole, for nature and the Earth, so they may mature into capable, contributing participants in both their local and global community. We hope to imbue them with such wonder at the unfolding of their self-knowledge that they are inspired with enthusiasm for life-long learning.

Student Mission and Achievement Goals

The purpose of Woodland Star Charter School is to provide a stimulating, nurturing, and safe learning environment with an instructional program that fosters the realization of our students' human potential. Our Waldorf-inspired curriculum addresses the whole child's growth, physically, social-emotionally, and academically. Woodland Star's Mission is to graduate students who are...

- Individuals with a growing ability to think critically, independently, flexibly, collaboratively, creatively, and with global consciousness who have developed an appreciation of learning that will last a lifetime;
- Empathic, courageous individuals who express awe and reverence for life in all its forms, who seek to know themselves, value different perspectives, and form healthy relationships with others; and
- Self-directed, curious, enthusiastic, and responsible members of the local and global community who have the capacity to realize their ideas.

The School considers an educated person to have effectively developed the following attributes as far as his or her personal capacities allow:

Rational Thinking: The development of analytical abilities such as clear, logical thought developed through foundational mathematics, sciences, the study of histories and cultures.

Language: The ability to explore ideas with others, to work together on common projects and to articulate intentions and results, both verbally and in written form.

Imagination: The imagination must be active and fruitful, for it is the basis of all creativity and learning.

Intuition: This attribute is one of the most important, yet least tangible. Students need to have the opportunity to develop their capacity to respond to creative ideas and to rely on their individual observations and insights.

Compassion: A respect for other human beings, animals, plants, and the Earth itself is an essential attribute of an educated person and responsible community member.

Volition: The individual must develop the inner strength and capacity to translate ideas and plans into action. Qualities of determination and perseverance must be strengthened so that good intentions become tangible.

Freedom: A truly educated person must have the ability to establish personal direction and goals out of his or her own fully conscious ideas and insights.

Woodland Star's Learning Goals: Students will develop skills to gather and organize information, communicate clearly both orally and in writing; think scientifically, and use technology as a tool. We endeavor to cultivate personal habits that include intrinsic motivation, the capacity to focus on tasks and persevere; the ability to work cooperatively with others, to value relationships, and to take personal responsibility.

Student Graduation Goals

Students of the Woodland Star Charter School who have properly applied themselves will demonstrate the following skills upon graduation from eighth grade:

Core Academic Skills: Appropriate age or grade level mastery of:

- Language Arts: Students will demonstrate strong reading, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills, in multiple forms of expression, with communication skills appropriate to the audience. They will comprehend and critically interpret multiple forms of expression, including literature from various time periods and cultures.
- Mathematics: Students will develop abilities to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and basic concepts, including those within arithmetic, geometry, and mathematical subjects based on the California Core Standards.
- History/ Social Studies: Students will understand and apply civic, historical, and geographical knowledge in order to serve as citizens in today's diverse world.
- Science: Students will successfully utilize scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlying various branches of science, which may include physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, astronomy, botany and earth sciences.
- Foreign Language: Students will gain a basic level of proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension in at least one language in addition to their native tongue. Students will understand key aspects of the culture, both past and present, of the second language. (This may not be possible for students who have not attended Woodland Star starting in grade one.) Some students will be able to take Spanish II, while others will have a solid foundation for Spanish I in high school.

Other Core Skills: Underlying and utilized throughout each of the above subject areas will be other core skills such as:

- Critical Thinking Skills: Students must demonstrate proficiency in critical/analytical skills such as problem solving, analyzing and applying knowledge.
- Artistic Expression: Students must demonstrate achievement in music, visual/studio arts, drama, and movement.
- Healthy Physical Respect: Students must have acquired a healthy respect for their bodies and their relationship to the earth and other individuals. They will illustrate a concern for health and appreciation for the physical condition of one's own being.

Lifelong Learning Skills: Students will develop skills, which will enable them to pursue their own path of learning throughout their adult lives, including:

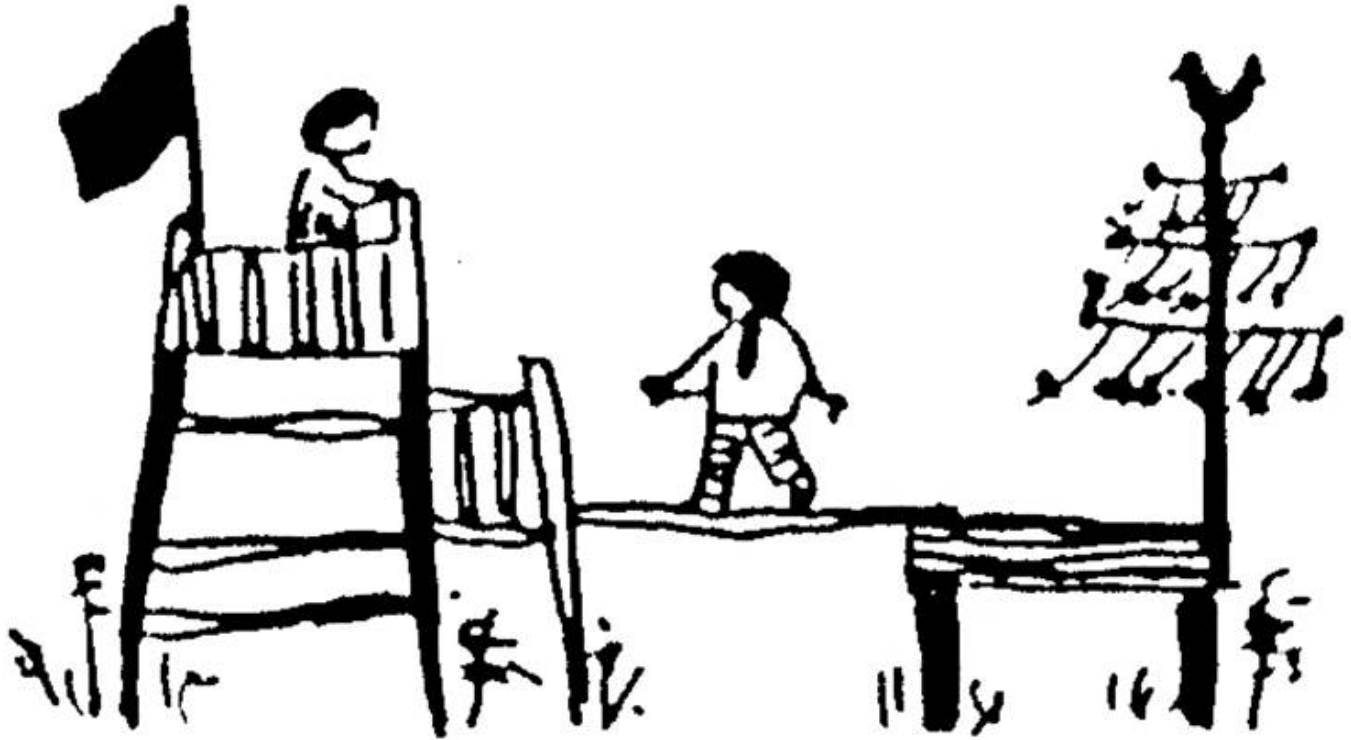
- Study skills and habits (note taking, library research skills, and studying strategies)

- The ability to plan, initiate, and complete a project
- The ability to reflect on and evaluate one's own and others' learning

Social/ Interpersonal Skills: Students will demonstrate:

- Strong citizenship and leadership skills by planning and implementing a project in service to the school and greater community
- The ability to engage in responsible, compassionate peer relationships
- The ability to collaborate and work effectively with others in cooperative groups

In addition to these general student outcomes, students will attain specific grade level outcomes in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, social studies and science. (Note: The specific grade and skill level standards for language, math and science have been aligned to the California state content and performance standards.)



Waldorf-Methods at School and Home

We have developed our school philosophy from what we believe to be the richest and most effective educational method, the principles of Waldorf education. Based on Rudolf Steiner's (founder of Waldorf schools) teaching model, the Waldorf-inspired school values the natural development of the child, and works to provide a physical, emotional and intellectual environment to foster age-appropriate growth. Observers will note unique aspects found in our school.

The arts, drama, music, painting, drawing, modeling, etc. are integrated into the entire academic curriculum, including mathematics and the sciences. This model of education through the arts awakens imagination and creative capacities, bringing vitality and wholeness to learning. Steiner wrote, "It is not just that the artistic element must be cultivated. The actual teaching of every lesson must be drawn from the artistic realm." Each topic of study is presented with deep regard for its inherent value to the children in relation to their developmental stage, rather than with a mechanical adherence to a standardized set of academic goals.

The school's classrooms create an environment that expresses an appreciation for beauty and nature. Classrooms change throughout the school year to reflect seasonal and curricular themes. The classrooms have a nurturing and imaginative ambience, which supports the younger children's transition from home.

Meals and snacks in the classroom provide additional opportunities to acknowledge our appreciation for the natural world. An emphasis is placed on eating wholesome, healthy foods, whether in daily snacks, celebrating festivals, birthdays, or special events. Families are encouraged to place importance on good nutrition with a commitment to whole foods. Snacks prepared at school will be made of wholesome ingredients to express a respect for a healthy earth and healthy bodies. Prior to each meal, students often recite a song or verse giving thanks, such as: "Earth who gives to us this food, sun who makes it ripe and good, sun above, earth below, our loving thanks to you we show. We are grateful for this meal."

Festivals offer us an opportunity to experience deeply the changing rhythms of the season and to honor what has come before us. Annual festivals may include Sprites' Night, the Lantern Walk, Spiral Walk and the May Festival. If you are interested in working on a festival, please contact your class parent, teacher, or member of the Parent Association.

Traditionally, Waldorf Class Teachers taught the same class of children through eight years of elementary school (grades 1-8). At Woodland Star, we are not expecting teachers to loop with their class for 8 years. It is more likely that an individual teacher's involvement with the class will last for a shorter period of three, four or five years. The Administration is always evaluating which circumstances can best serve the students, the teacher and the school as a whole. The continuity of a teacher leading a class for several years is a priority. For the teacher, this means time to really know the children and help them unfold their gifts, as well as facing an enormous challenge of working with a new curriculum each year. The child finds camaraderie and commitment with fellow classmates, as well as stability and continuing guidelines from the long-term, dedicated relationship with the teacher.

Daily lessons are taught orally, with ample opportunity for active student participation in discussion and projects. The children carefully document each day's lesson into their own personal main lesson books, incorporating narrative writing and artwork. These books are not only a valuable tool for developing organization, neatness, attention to detail and appreciation for beauty, but they also serve as a life-long record of learning and are a source of self-esteem.

Foreign language (Spanish) is taught beginning in Kindergarten, giving the children insights into other cultures. In first through third grade, languages are taught orally with songs, games, poetry and dialogues. In fourth grade, reading, writing and grammar are added and continue through eighth grade.

In the middle school Sciences are phenomenon based, that is, the teacher sets up an experiment, calls upon the children to observe, ponder, discuss and then discover. After the experiment, the children come together in studying the theory, deducting the conclusion, and applying the law. Through this process, rigorous, independent thinking and sound judgment are developed.

The Humanities take the children through a full sweep of cultural heritage. Beginning with stories of ancient Hebrew cultures in third grade, students progress around the world and through history, arriving at current events of the present day by eighth grade. By looking into these cultures and historical periods using their legends and their literature, students gain flexibility and an appreciation for the diversity of humankind. By the close of eighth grade, the students have travelled the world from Greece and Rome to medieval history, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Age of Exploration, up to our modern era. World religions are studied from an objective point of view in conjunction with the cultures from which they arose; this study is intended to foster knowledge, understanding and compassion.

First graders prepare for writing with rhythmic, gesturing exercises known as form drawing. In first grade, consonants are introduced with a story that connects the shape and sound to a related image. Hence, a capital letter "M" may take on the form of a mountain. In addition to learning the consonant symbols and sounds, first graders learn the sound and shapes of the short vowels so that they can begin reading CVC words. The children learn that written language, far from being abstract and arbitrary, has its origins in the expression of universal form. In the course of human history, real experience leads to pictorial images and then moves to abstract symbols. Throughout the grades, the children are encouraged to develop a profound love for language through drama, recitation, reading and writing. Texts taken from the rich humanities curriculum provide a high standard of literary quality that develops each student's language comprehension, an important ingredient for strong readers. Woodland Star teaches all children to read starting in first grade using the underpinnings of Structured Literacy. When children are exposed to reading lessons that are explicit, systematic and sequential they are able begin to read in the first grade. Each child's reading skills are assessed three times a year using a universal screener.

A morning Main Lesson, in which the main material for study is presented, begins each school day. The main lesson subject is taught for a three- or four-week block. Then that subject is replaced by another main lesson topic, but will

often return to be continued later in the term. This approach allows for freshness and enthusiasm, a concentrated, in-depth experience, and gives the children time to “digest” what has been learned.

Special Subjects

The remainder of the day is spent in mastering academic skills in English Language Arts or math as well as specialty classes, such as Spanish, music, practical arts and physical education. This leads children to experience moods of poetry, qualities of sounds, and elements of complex social and communicative skills, while developing physical coordination and spatial orientation. Other arts, such as wax modeling, dramas, puppetry, and painting are taught by the class teacher and add to the child’s joy of learning.

Music In Kindergarten

The children are exposed to music through the entire morning rhythm. Even their discipline is guided through singing. In the first grade, children begin playing the pentatonic flute, and all grades continue with woodwinds.

Crafts and Handwork

Crafts and handwork are integral parts of the required curriculum in the grades. Both boys and girls learn to knit in the first and second grade and crochet in third, creating many functional and colorful objects. Decades before brain research could confirm it, studies that led to this educational model recognized that brain function was founded on body function. Learning to knit and crochet in the early grades develops motor skills, which metamorphose into lively thinking and enhanced intellectual development later on. Coordination, patience, perseverance, and imagination are also schooled through practical work. Activities included in the elementary school curriculum, such as sewing, building and gardening give the children an understanding of how things come into being and a respect for the creation of useful items.

Technologies

We strongly discourage exposure to television, video games, movies, and computers—screen media of every kind. The Waldorf educational philosophy of Woodland Star Charter School is based upon a deep understanding of child development. The school is committed to nurturing each child’s unique qualities so that his/her academic abilities may flourish. To that end, we request that our families put forth a conscious effort to eliminate, or at least significantly reduce, the use of screen media (television, videos, video games, computer games, and feature movies) from children’s entertainment and education. We realize that significantly limiting or eliminating media from your child’s life might feel like a tall order. However, with support and reassurance, we are sure that families will find that more free time means more quality time together and more time for your child to develop and use inner resources to create games and creative play.

Having said this, we want to acknowledge that some of our families may derive their income from various forms of media. We certainly do not minimize their fine talents and vocations. We believe, however, that while television and other media can serve as a source of information and entertainment for adults, children are not operating in the same developmental stage as adults. We believe that media can be harmful to a child’s developing mind and body and can significantly shorten attention span. Recent research has shown that the use of media entertainment for young children has a negative effect upon their self-image, energy levels, psychological health, creativity, social behavior, and their ability to concentrate. The studies also illustrate a correlation between media exposure and a diminishment in quality relationships, values establishment, keen physical skills, and reading skills.

Concerns about the effects of television have centered most exclusively on the content of the programs children watch. However, whether the program is Sesame Street, Power Rangers or Sleeping Beauty, there is a similarity of experience about all television/movie watching. Many might argue that content is the key and that watching a nature program would be educational and good for the child. However, when watching a bird take flight in real life children use many senses. They might smell trees, grasses, and mud from a nearby creek. They use their eyes to track the bird in the sky and they express their joy in witnessing such an event. Viewing a bird on a screen is a passive, limited, two-dimensional experience that does not make use of the child’s full awareness and senses.

Marie Winn states in her book, *The Plug-In Drug*, that certain specific physiological mechanisms of the eyes, ears, and brain respond to the stimuli emanating from the screen regardless of the cognitive content of the programs. Television viewing requires the taking in of particular sensory material in a particular way, no matter what the material might be. The sedentary mode of someone watching television often does not match the internal experience of what is being viewed. For example, one would not jump out of the way of an oncoming car that is on the screen, yet one could feel the anxiety, fear, and panic of the situation being viewed. There is indeed no other experience in a child's life that permits quite so much intake while demanding so little output as watching television.

Our philosophy includes a commitment to understanding and nurturing each child's unique inner development. For reasons thoroughly defined in the Media section, we believe that eliminating, or at least significantly reducing children's television viewing will further enhance their ability to explore their inner selves. We ask that all parents regard this matter seriously and make every effort to consciously diminish their children's use of television, videos, video/computer games and social media. Parents considering Woodland Star Charter School need to understand that the success of the school is based in large part on a strong parent body dedicated to helping the school meet its objectives in all areas, including a family life that is supportive of the schools' educational goals.

Another way that families can enhance the educational experience is by understanding the rhythms of the day. Children flourish in environments that are not only loving but also orderly and predictable. With an external sense of order and routine, children feel comfortable living in the moment. Just knowing what is expected at different intervals in the day can help children feel secure in the world. As an example, a bedtime ritual can help to calm and soothe children and prepare them for restful sleep. Once this routine is established, the ritual may become parents' most treasured time with their children.

Toys from home are not permitted on campus. Personal toys that are allowed are those made in handwork classes, things found in nature or toys provided by the teacher from a classroom collection.



Curriculum Overview

Woodland Star Charter School believes it is vital that the education that the child receives at the school continues in the home. To accomplish this, a child's enrollment in the school must be supported by the parents' understanding of the unique nature of the school's curriculum. Our goal is to produce children with strong potential for academic development, a commitment to improving their community, and the ability to think independently and act freely. In support of that goal, we offer the following examples of what may be taught in each grade.

Kindergarten

The kindergarten program is a developmentally appropriate, non-academic and play-based. The home-away-from-home feeling is the beginning stage of long-lasting friendships as the children advance together through Woodland Star Charter School. In the kindergarten, the children are encouraged to develop and strengthen the use of their imagination through daily circle activities, story time, songs, games, plays and puppet shows. There are specific activities for each day of the week, which may include painting, drawing, beeswax modeling, baking bread and/or making soup, as well as practical activities such as washing, sweeping, folding, digging, and hammering. Consistency and rhythm set a tone of assurance and security for the child, wherein the imagination—the foundation of intelligence—is free to grow. Kindergarten, "a child's garden," is not a time to expose the child to the pressures of society or to make strong intellectual demands. It is a time to preserve childhood. Through imitation and imagination, Woodland Star kindergartners recreate the world around them. Imaginative play is their work.

First Grade

Storytelling is a large part of the first grade curriculum, encompassing Fairy Tales, Folk Tales and Nature Stories from around the world. Explorations of nature, pictorial and phonetic introduction of the alphabet, word recognition, qualities of whole numbers, Roman numerals, introduction to the four processes in arithmetic, mental math games, lower multiplication tables, form drawing.

Second Grade

Legends, Animal Fables, Native American Indian Legends, biographies of noble peoples., phonetic knowledge of vowel teams and inflectional suffixes, reading, basic elements of grammar and sentence structure, form drawing. Broadening arithmetic processes, continue observations of natural phenomenon (i.e.: weather, seasons, etc.).

Third Grade

Ancient legends, Hebrew and creation stories. Study of practical life: farming, housing, clothing, cooking and baking. Reading, spelling, cursive writing, original compositions, grammar, punctuation, parts of speech. Higher multiplication tables, weight, measuring, money, time, primary numbers, word problems.

Fourth Grade

Stories from Norse mythology and Celtic sagas and legends. California and local history, geography and cartography. Study of animal kingdom. Fractions, long division, square roots, averages, factoring.

Fifth Grade

Ancient Civilizations of India through classical Greece. Composition and poetry, spelling, reading, grammar. U.S. geography related to vegetation, agriculture and economics. Decimals, ratio and proportion, freehand geometry, metric system, mixed numbers. Study of plant kingdom.

Sixth Grade

Roman and Medieval history, composition and poetry, reading, formal letter writing, grammar, spelling, North and South American geography. Mineralogy, physics (acoustics, electricity, magnetism, optics and heat), astronomy. Percentages, interest, profit and loss, ratios, proportions, geometric drawing with instruments.

Seventh Grade

Renaissance, Reformation and Age of Discovery, literature and poetry (Chaucer, Arthurian legends), biographies. Composition, complex grammar, spelling, creative writing. World geography and ocean currents. Physics (mechanics and electricity), physiology, research, inorganic chemistry. Business math in depth, graphing and powers of numbers, pre-algebra.

Eighth Grade

Shakespeare and Elizabethan Age to modern poetry, writing short stories, dramatic scripts and journalism, spelling, grammar. Continued world geography and climatology. Age of Revolution to Current Events. Physics (hydraulics), physiology, organic chemistry, meteorology. Applied mathematics (review of solids and measurements), set concepts, algebra, solid geometry.

The Curriculum beyond Main Lesson

Singing and instrumental music, drama, Spanish, handwork, form drawing, painting, clay and beeswax modeling, speech, movement education, and gardening.

Homework Policy

The teaching staff at Woodland Star believe that true learning comes from within the child when guided by imaginative thinking. Teachers work diligently to provide enlivening lessons that awaken the interest of the child and provide balance among head, heart and hand activities. Homework, too, will be balanced in this manner, allowing the child to discover his or her own working style. Additionally, homework should produce independent work skills that are nurtured but not coerced. It is the ideal if homework is healing, but not tiring; stimulates interest, but not fear; and also encourages innate human eagerness to learn. In this light, some homework activities will be more demanding and focused, while others will be more exploratory, open-ended and creative, providing a healthy rhythm and variety of activities.

Because Woodland Star functions within a developmental model, the teaching staff is always focusing on the question, “What do these particular children need at this particular time in order to grow into complete human beings?” Therefore, what the first grade child needs in homework is different from what the eighth grade child needs. Children in kindergarten through second grade live so fully in the current moment that they usually cannot connect what happened at school during the day to their home lives. It would be detrimental to a child at this developmental stage to assign homework such as most of us understand it from traditional education. However, devotion to the teacher is a very typical attribute of the young child, and they will sometimes voluntarily produce something at home to be given as a “gift” to the teacher or class. In addition, this policy includes a list of healthy activities that can be accomplished during the home hours that will enhance the work done at school. Reading to and with your child nightly is strongly encouraged.

When students enter the third and fourth grades, they move into a new capacity to connect the home and the school. They have a new-found separateness from the teacher and can also begin to work through at home what they have done at school. Homework at this stage should stay enlivening and creative but can now begin to connect the memory of where they have been as a class to an anticipation of where they are going. Homework from grades three through eight is designed to:

- Help the children develop their habit life and develop responsibility for bringing things to and from school
- Allow the children to explore their own interests in a given topic
- Further enhance main lesson, practice periods and specialty classes
- Provide additional, stress-free time for students who work at a slower pace
- Give children additional practice time to develop academic, creative and musical skills.

Homework for grades three through eight can include but is not limited to:

- Reading, writing and mathematics to support main lesson or practice periods
- Continuation or completion of main lesson book pages
- Independent project (teacher assigned and/or student generated within teacher parameters)
- Projects or assignment as given by specialty teachers
- Make-up work from days or classes missed
- Remediation activities as discussed during parent-teacher conferences

Parents can assist the school by supporting their child as he or she strives to complete the homework. In this manner, the bridge between the school and the home is strengthened, and parents can get a glimpse of what the child is completing during the day. Parents can assist their children by providing a work space clear of clutter, television and telephone at a rhythmical time in the day that is set aside for homework. Hopefully, the time that is set aside is earlier rather than later in the day. Each teacher will explain his or her particular homework expectations to the class and the parents, including how homework will be evaluated. Parents are encouraged to support their child’s successful and timely completion of homework and to encourage the development of good work habits by reinforcing the teacher’s homework expectations.

These other home activities support the work of the school:

- Regular bedtime that allows 10-12 hours of sleep
- Eating a healthy breakfast consisting of whole foods and minimal sugar
- Reading to a child for 20 minutes daily; child reads daily as requested by class teacher
- Household or yard chores, gardening
- Outdoor play
- Indoor creative play
- Hobbies (if these are scheduled activities such as lessons, team sports, etc., they need to be monitored in order to prevent them from becoming overwhelming to the student, eliminating free time, or intruding upon the student's ability to complete homework)
- Artistic and musical endeavors
- Cooking
- Nature hikes and walks, day and night
- Picnics
- Community or religious activities
- Volunteer or community projects (for grades three through eight)

Student Assessment

Running parallel to the age-appropriate subject matter of the Waldorf-methods curriculum are insights into the phases of child development that correlate directly to specific physical growth milestones (i.e.: the change of teeth, change of voice or onset of menses, and completion of bone formation). Implicit in the first phase is protection of the physical-sensory organs against over stimulation. The young child's forces need to be "tamed" and "contained;" therefore, appropriate work for the preschool- and kindergarten-age child is actually directed creative play that refrains from drawing upon intellectual powers before the child is sufficiently mature. In the middle phase, grades one through eight, the class teacher aims to present experiential (rather than experimental) lessons that evoke a healthy range of emotional responses and interactive explorations. In this lower curriculum, storytelling, heroes and historical events are prominent elements while the interdependent relationships between Man and The World are revealed in wonder, filled with life and imbued with meaning. During the third phase of child development, grades nine through twelve, intellectual prowess steps onto center stage. Teen years are spent in mental gymnastics, which dissect the surrounding world with pure logic and scientific scrutiny.

As the distinctly human capacities of willing, feeling and thinking unfold in orderly progression, the child's environment becomes a world continually enriched with Goodness, Beauty and Truth. The impact produced by these powerful formative forces is immediately evident in Waldorf graduates. Their disciplined actions, artistic talents, and meaningful aspirations have produced numerous outstanding leaders in cultural, economic and political professions around the world.

It is important for the development of young students that curriculum content relate directly to their level of maturity and that their imagination, creativity and artistic abilities be nurtured. At the same time, it is the teacher's task to see that basic skills are developed. Woodland Star Charter School will meet the statewide performance standards and conduct pupil assessments required pursuant to section 60602.5 of the Educational Code. 3-8 grade students take a computer generated universal screener 3 times a year. 1-2 graders take a quick phonics survey and 2nd graders begin the computer generated universal screener mid year.

There is ongoing evaluation of student progress combining state and Waldorf-based measurements of specific grade/skill level standards. Assessments will include skills in the following areas:

- Core Academic Skills, including critical thinking and creative expression that underlie the core skills;
- Lifelong Learning Skills, such as study techniques and the ability to plan and evaluate;
- Social Interpersonal Skills, such as citizenship, responsibility, and collaboration.

Progress is assessed by use of student work, including samples of the child's main lesson books, various pieces of artwork, and practice papers. Parent conferences are scheduled each fall and spring. To assist in the development of the child, parent or teacher may request additional conferences. At the end of the school year, each class teacher will prepare a student report, which will assess the student's progress during that year for the benefit of the student, the parents, and future faculty. These assessments will articulate an evaluation of students' work, performance assessments, enumeration of subjects adequately completed, areas needing additional focus, and shall make reference to attitudes, study habits and social abilities.

Students with Special Needs

Woodland Star strives to meet the needs of children who come to us regardless of their physical or developmental challenges. We provide Special Education services on site and are under the supervision of El Dorado County Charter SELPA.

SST and IEP Teams

Addressing struggling learners and learners with special needs is a collaboration between the parents, teachers, and administration.

Woodland Star has established a MTSS (Multi-tier System of Support) in reading. Grades 1-4 have three tiers of reading groups. Students in Tier 3 work with the reading interventionist. Students in Tier 2 and Tier 1 work with their class teacher, with the support of an ELA assistant. This MTSS allows for smaller groups, which increases the level of attention and care for each student's skill development. The Executive Director, Director of Intervention, Director of Student Services, and English Language Development Program Director meet weekly to discuss student progress and celebrate growth or identify necessary changes of support.

Intervention staff support students who are showing signs of struggles in the classroom. If a student is not sufficiently responding to this support, a SST (Student Study Team) is established. This team involves parents, the class teacher, the Director of Intervention and the School Director. The SST is the first level of "formal" intervention that expands the circle of influence to include parents. It is important to note that students may work with the interventionist in a reading group without the need of an SST.

When there are concerns about a child's capacity to learn after they have been involved in the SST process, the Special Education staff will be consulted and attend a follow-up SST meeting. If the SST suspects a learning disability, the Special Education staff will arrange for a formal assessment of the student. The results of these assessments are reported in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting. If the child qualifies for special education, the IEP team will identify an individual plan and goals for the child. A member of the Special Education staff will be designated as case manager for each child with an IEP.

Admission Requirements & Enrollment Procedures

Woodland Star Charter School actively recruits a diverse student population from families in Sonoma Valley and surrounding areas who understand the value of the Woodland Star mission and vision and are who committed to the school's instructional and operational philosophy. Admission to the school shall be open to any resident of California with spaces offered through a lottery and/or open enrollment. Pupils are considered for admission without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender or disability.

Age Requirements

The ages of the children entering the school are those who turn 5 by June 2, 2025

Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Woodland Star has a 2-year and sometimes 3 year kindergarten program. First-year kindergartners must turn 5 years old on or before June 2 (24/25) and September 1 (2025/26) in order to start school the previous August. We place the youngest students in the 4 year old class for the first year.

First Grade thru Eighth Grade

We hope that students turn 6 by May 30 before entering First Grade in August. This age policy continues in this manner through all the grades, for example: a child would turn 7 by June 1 first prior to entering Second Grade in August. The Waldorf School Curriculum is a developmental one, which means when children are too young for their grade, the archetypes presented in the stories do not meet their inner developmental needs. It's akin to running in sneakers that are too large. While it's possible, it's not recommended. Occasional exceptions to these requirements may be made for students transferring from another school, but these shall be at the discretion of the Administration and the related class teachers.

Enrollment Lottery

All students applying to Woodland Star are entered into the school enrollment lottery. If the number of students who wish to attend the school exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing students of the Woodland Star Charter School and the understated preferences, shall be determined by lottery number. If the capacity is exceeded within a preference, the children's lottery numbers will determine who has preference. The following will be given preference for admission to the school, in order of hierarchy:

- Siblings of students admitted to or attending WSCS
- Children of WSCS teachers
- Children from families where neither parent attended college up to 49% of available seats in each given year for grades K-2
- Residents of the District
- All other applicants

Communicable Disease Protocol

If it is discovered at home that a child has a communicable and contagious disease (i.e.: pink eye, lice, ringworm) it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school. It is also the parents' responsibility to keep the school updated as to the status of the medical condition. If there are more than two children per classroom with the same condition, a letter will go out to the parents of all the children in that class. In some cases a medical clearance may be necessary for the child to return to school. The office staff will inform parents as to the protocol for the specific situation at hand.

If it is discovered at school that a child has a communicable disease, the child will be evaluated and parents contacted. The child may be sent home immediately or at the end of the day, whichever is appropriate given the specific situation.

The most important thing when dealing with communicable diseases is to maintain honest and open communication with our office staff. Our duty is to treat every situation with professionalism and compassion and to protect the health of all of the children at WSS. We greatly appreciate your assistance in achieving that goal.

Attendance and Rhythm Schedules

Bell Schedules

Kindergarten 8:20 - 3:15 (for parents choosing the optional 1/2 day, we request parents pick up before the 1:00pm rest period)

First through Eighth Grade 8:20 - 3:15

Weekly Schedule

Thursday is ALWAYS an early day for dismissal for all classes. School ends at 1:15.

Yearly Schedule

School generally opens on the 2nd Tuesday in August and finishes on Thursday the first week of June. Festivals will be scheduled throughout the year. Please see school calendar for holidays, breaks and teacher conference weeks.

Arriving Late

Our children's school day is enhanced by arrivals that are routine and on time. Punctuality and predictability help everyone in creating an atmosphere supportive of excellent work and mutual respect. Children who arrive after the school day has begun miss the opening of their classroom day, and feel the impact of this missed beat throughout their school day. Below are guidelines and policy points that we hope will clarify both expectations regarding punctual arrivals and consequences for late arrivals:

The first bell rings at 8:10 AM. Teachers will begin promptly at 8:20 and children are expected to be in their classroom and ready to begin the morning routine. Any child arriving after 8:20 is tardy and must check into the office to receive a tardy slip prior to entering the classroom.

Etiquette for Classroom & School Visits

The school welcomes parents/guardians and interested adult members of the community to visit the school and view the educational program. In order to ensure the integrity of the educational program, siblings are only welcome to visit at the discretion of the Director and the class teacher. No electric listening or recording device or cameras may be used by visitors in a classroom without the teacher's and Director's written permission. To ensure the safety of students and staff as well as to minimize interruption of the instructional program, the school has established the following procedures to facilitate visits during regular school days:

- Visits during school hours should first be arranged with the teacher, director , or administrative designee, at least three school days in advance. If a conference is desired, an appointment may be set with the teacher during non-instructional time.
- All visitors shall register with the front office immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when during regular school hours. When registering, the visitor is required to provide his/her name, address, age (if under 21), his/her purpose for entering school grounds and proof of identity. For purposes of school safety and security, the visitor will wear a visible identification while on school premises.
- The Director or administrative designee may refuse to register a visitor if it is believed that the presence of the visitor would cause a threat of disruption to the class or injury to teachers, other employees or students.
- The Director or administrative designee may withdraw consent to be on campus even if the visitor has a right to be on campus whenever there is reason to believe that the person has willfully disrupted or is likely to disrupt the school's orderly operation. If consent is withdrawn by someone other than the Director, the Director may reinstate consent for the visitor if the he/she believes that the person's presence will not constitute a disruption or substantial and material threat to the school's orderly operation.
- If you are visiting a classroom, you must knock on the classroom door and wait for a response. This may take several minutes if the class is in an activity.

Absenteeism

Good attendance is necessary because much of the daily lesson is presented orally and as a group interaction. A student who is frequently absent will find it difficult to make up work or fully understand the material. In addition, the class loses its rhythm and momentum. Consistent attendance is very important to your child's success, and to the unity and success of the class.

Every absence also causes a funding penalty, negatively impacting the school budget with a loss of \$50 per day per absent student. As with all public schools, our ADA (average daily attendance) and therefore our school's yearly budget, is based on regular attendance. The financial health of the school supports your child's educational opportunities. Your child's consistent attendance is significant. If a family anticipates an unavoidable absence, please request an independent study starting with the online platform. [Link on following page](#) .

Please see Appendix for full absence and truancy policy.

Independent Study

There are times when a student must miss school because of family obligations, illness, or a rare family travel opportunity that has undeniable educational value. With an approved Independent Study, teachers can provide assignments to guide learning and study while the pupil is absent from class. We encourage families to schedule trips during school breaks and not to take lightly that the student will miss important lessons and shared experiences with their classes during their absence. The curriculum moves on and the student will never hear a particular lecture or be part of a class discussion or play performance. When an absence is unavoidable, there is an Independent Study option.

Please note:

Not all Independent Study requests will be approved. Labs in Science Main Lesson blocks, for example, may not lend themselves to independent study.

The student must be in good academic standing for an Independent Study to be approved.

Woodland Star will only grant an Independent Study for a minimum of 3 missed school days and may grant no more than 14 days in any school year.

If the student has any prior incomplete Independent Studies on file, they may not be approved for any further requests. Students with excessive absences or tardies may be denied Independent Study.

Full Process:

Parents must submit the request via the request form within 10 school days of the absence

(<https://woodlandstarschool.org/independent-study/>)

The request will be delivered to the Attendance Desk for review. Parents will be notified of next steps within 3 school days.

The Office Staff will verify that the request is made at least 10 days prior to the absence, as well as the student's attendance statistics and number of Independent Study days available to the student.

Once that information is verified, the initial approval is communicated to the teacher for final approval.

Final approval will be communicated to the parents by the student's teacher.

The teacher will have the Independent Study work and contract for the student prior to the absence.

Students must return the signed contract and completed work upon their return.

Aftercare Program

The purpose of this program is to provide after school activities and care for students that attend the Woodland Star Charter School. The program incorporates Waldorf methods to complement the school's curriculum. A contract and enrollment packet must be completed and be on file for every child using the program. There is an annual enrollment fee, and reservations and payment are in advance on a monthly basis in order to ensure adequate staffing. Drop-in care is available, space permitting. Please request an enrollment packet if you need after school care for your child/children. Children left after school must be picked up within 10 minutes, at which time all remaining students on campus will be required to go to aftercare for proper supervision. All aftercare billing and policies will apply at this time.

Early and Aftercare are both offered each day school is in session and is available to all students. Early-care is open from 7:30-8:00 a.m., includes breakfast and is in the Multi-purpose room. Aftercare (room #19 for 1-8 and Room #7 for kindergarten) is available from 3:15 -5:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and from 1:15 to 5:30 on Thursday. Aftercare provides an afternoon snack. Please note: the Aftercare room is a peanut/peanut butter free environment.

Please be prompt picking up your child. For pick up after 5:30 a \$1/minute late fee will be assessed per child and added to your monthly statement for the first late pick up. A \$5 dollar fee per minute per child for the second late pick-up will be added to your bill. The 3rd late pick up will result in an suspension of the program for 30 days.

In order to keep all students safe and accounted for while on campus we want to remind everyone of some important rules.

1. Unattended students on campus before 8:00 should report to early care. Students on campus prior to that time will be sent to early care and will be charged the drop in rate.
2. All students will be sent to aftercare at 3:25 Monday-Wednesday and Friday and by 1:25 on Thursday. Students are not allowed to roam freely on campus after school
3. If your child is in Aftercare, it is imperative that you report to Aftercare and sign them out before they are released to your care. Children must wait for their parents in aftercare starting at 3:25/1:25. Please honor this request as we cannot safely track children if parents do not sign them out. Upon pick up, please collect your child/children and leave the premise. Only children under the direct care of aftercare staff may play on the WSCS grounds.

If you have further questions please contact aftercare@woodlandstarschool.org

Lunch and Snacks

Please serve your child(ren) a nutritional and adequate breakfast at home. A warm breakfast is an ideal way to start the day. All students except kindergartners need to bring a mid-morning snack in addition to their lunches. All food arriving at school with your child should be well balanced and nutritious. Packaged foods with chemical additives or sugar are greatly discouraged. Gum, candy, sugary foods and drinks laced with sugar are not allowed.

We ask that lunches be brought in sacks, baskets or cloth lunch bags that are free of media characters, slogans or advertising logos. In consideration of the respect for the earth, we ask that whenever possible food items be packaged in reusable containers. Please do not include prepackaged juice boxes or other packaged drinks with attached straws (the litter is a big problem). We promote recycling throughout the school.

School Meal Program: The state of California now requires that all public schools provide two meals per day for free. We are fortunate to have a healthy food program and encourage families to participate this program. The lunch menu is listed on parent square and the school's website monthly.

Dress Code Policy

Waldorf educational philosophy places strong emphasis on the importance of cultivating the child's imagination, or inner "picture-making" ability. As the child grows, this inner picturing gradually develops into the capacity for original and creative thinking. We are concerned with the question of how the quality and quantity of images in the environment may affect the development of the child's imagination, and our recommendations regarding images on clothing arise from this concern. Woodland Star Charter School (WSCS) requests the active support and cooperation of all parents in encouraging moderate clothing and personal grooming for the sake of creating a student community focused on learning, rather than dress.

CLOTHING

WSCS asks that students wear clothing that is clean, simple, in good repair, comfortable, modest and safe. Please keep in mind that enforcement of the dress code policy by the school is not necessary when parents send their children to school appropriately dressed.

- Children shall wear clothing free from media advertisements, cartoon images, slogans and commercial logos of any kind. Logos approximately two by two inches in size is acceptable.
- Writing, pictures or any other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, or which bear drug, alcohol or tobacco advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which advocate racial, ethnic or religious prejudice are prohibited.
- Outer clothing must conceal undergarments. Attire that exposes breasts, midriff or buttocks is not allowed.
- All clothing must fit appropriately; overly baggy or overly tight clothes are not allowed.
- Hats are worn outdoors and not in classrooms.

Inappropriate clothing includes see-through/fishnet fabrics, half shirts/crop-tops, side-less/backless, and strapless shirts or blouses.

- WSCS school shirts/sweatshirts or a special school event shirt (Waldorf Olympics) are acceptable.
- All teachers have the discretion, if they deem a child's clothing to be distracting to the learning environment, to ask the child to change or otherwise conceal the clothing in question.

SHOES

Platforms, high heels, and over cushioned shoes put a distance between the foot and the earth, hindering the foot's ability to develop optimally and often the student's ability to move freely. Come to school wearing comfortable, practical flat-soled shoes that are firmly attached to the feet.

- Shoes must be worn at all times on campus.
- Flip-flops are not acceptable footwear.
- "Heely's" or other roller-type shoes and shoes with lights are not allowed.

JEWELRY

- Small, modest, pierced earrings may be worn; long dangling earrings are prohibited on 'Games' days, otherwise, they are strongly discouraged.
- Chains or studs hanging from clothes are not allowed.
- The wearing of watches is discouraged below 6th grade so the child can flow through the day without being time conscious.

HAIR/MAKE-UP

- Hair should be maintained in a style that does not cover the face.
- Extreme hairstyles, for example, Mohawks, brightly colored hair, shaved heads with 'symbols' can be distracting to the learning environment and are strongly discouraged.
- Make-up is not allowed in grades K-5.

- Modest make-up is allowed in grades 6, 7 and 8. Students with more than modest make-up will be asked to remove it.

WEATHER

Because so much of a child's energy is put into growth and development, it is essential to dress them warmly. Children should come to school dressed in seasonally appropriate layers. Students should have rain gear (weatherproof coat, boots and hood or hat) for rainy days; as outside play is allowed.

ENFORCEMENT

WSCS reserves the right to enforce the dress code as written above to maintain the most productive educational environment possible for all students. All decisions regarding the dress code will be made in a consistent and fair manner. Questions regarding the dress code can be brought to the class teachers and/or School Director.

Field Trips

The expense of field trips increases as the students become older. The most expensive trip is the 8th grade trip. Parents, teacher and students will need to work together to raise funds for this culminating trip. The jog-a-thon revenue is solely for the purpose of affording field trips. There is a matrix for disbursement of the funds for each class with the largest amount going to the oldest grade. It is our hope that the community comes together for this event knowing that everyone will benefit from this matrix as they grow in our school.

Class field trips are selected and planned by the teacher and are designed to enrich the students' experience of a particular aspect of curriculum. Parent assistance is appreciated and necessary to help facilitate field trips. In order to facilitate effective and successful trips, the class teacher may select parent helpers to drive or accompany the class or to help with tasks for the trip. The class teacher is ultimately in charge to oversee the curriculum and activities; the menu and food; the route; and the specific parent helpers needed for the trip. Often a mentor or the administration advises the teacher in regards to selection of parents. Other parents wishing to participate in the field trip may do so only with the teacher's approval after a timely request has been made.

All parents participating on an overnight field trip will be required to get finger printed at least one month in advance of the field trip (reference Live Scan policy listed at the end of this section). In addition, field trip chaperones are required to attend a pre-trip meeting where rules, routes, activities and expectations are discussed. Parents must be willing to oversee the students and to help with any needed chore or activity from the beginning to the end of the trip. Any "on campus" rules always apply to all off-campus field trips (i.e.: dress code applies, no candy, gum, sodas, student cell phones, etc.). Drugs and alcohol are forbidden for parents and students alike.

The teacher will assign students to particular cars, and students are expected to keep to these assignments unless reassigned by the teacher. The teacher will clarify the route, which parents will abide by whether driving independently or in a caravan.

Field Trip Guidelines for Chaperones and Drivers

We count on each parent volunteer to make our field trips enriching experiences for students. Volunteers act as assistant teachers/supervisors on field trips; each volunteer is responsible for a small group of students. We ask parents to participate actively in field trip supervision to help ensure that the children are on their best behavior. To accomplish these goals, we ask volunteers to follow these guidelines:

- Be prompt.
- Secure all children in seat belts.
- Do not seat young children in passenger seat with airbag.
- Obey all traffic regulations.
- Leave pets and work concerns at home.
- Plan to stay for the entire duration of the field trip.
- Keep your assigned group together and on time.
- Remember that all children in your group are your responsibility.
- Do not bring or buy special treats for your assigned group.
- Model appropriate behavior for the students.
- Supervise cleanup if it is required.
- Check in with the teacher before returning to school.
- Do not release your car pool at WSCS until the teacher or assistant teacher has returned to school.
- Be present to the task at hand; no cell phone conversations.

Student rules:

- Listen and pay close attention to any docent.
- Do not touch anything that has not been specifically okayed by a member of the staff of the facility we are visiting
- Do not purchase anything at snack bars or shops unless okayed by the teacher in advance of the field trip.
- Use respectful language, good manners and indoor voices.
- Walk, don't run.
- Say with the parent volunteer to which you are assigned.
- Keep track of your belongings.

Other:

- If a child is taking medication, all medication along with appropriate information related to the medication, will be held by the class teacher. Children will not keep the medication in their possession.
- Whether a child is eligible to participate in a fieldtrip is at the teacher's discretion. Every child may not be able to participate in every fieldtrip. A child might not be allowed to participate if the child has been absent in the week or days preceding the field trip, or if the teacher feels that the child's behavior has been inconsistent and might compromise the fieldtrip experience for themselves and/or other children.
- Siblings under the age of 18 may not participate in class fieldtrips.

Live Scan Policy for Field trip Chaperones & Volunteers:

Parents who attend field trips or regularly volunteer in classrooms must be fingerprinted.

The following volunteers do need to be fingerprinted:

- Any volunteer who may be in a situation where they are with students and not always under the direct supervision of a teacher whether it be a field trip or on campus volunteer activity.
- Any volunteer who will be chaperoning on an overnight field trip.

The following volunteers do not need to be fingerprinted:

- A guest speaker not working with children.
- Volunteers working under the direct supervision of the teacher in the classroom.
- Drivers for day field trips.

Fingerprinting must be completed using a Live Scan system at a local law enforcement agency or at the UPS store in Maxwell Village. A fee will be charged of approximately \$75 and will be the responsibility of the volunteer. All volunteers must come to the school office to pick up the Live Scan paperwork and instructions at least one month prior to a volunteer activity. Volunteers who need to be fingerprinted may begin their volunteer work as soon as the office has received clearance.

Cell phone, Gaming, and Smart-Technology device policy

While common sense exceptions exist for teachers for pedagogical (such as videotaping a play or taking pictures of work and students) and emergency reasons, these devices are not to be used elsewhere on campus—by students, teachers, parents or employees of the school. If you see a student using a cell phone, please notify a staff or faculty member. If adults are seen using a cell phone on campus they will be asked to step off campus or into the office to complete their call.

Bringing smart phones and media devices to school is not advisable for any age as they are a tempting distraction for our students. With this in mind, Middle School students may bring cell/smart phones to school in packs, but they must be powered off and remain out of sight or hearing while the student is on campus including during recess times. All other students may not have any media or cell device (including smart watches) at school at all. If a before or after school exception is required for extenuating circumstances, an arrangement must be made with the Administrator ahead of time for the device to be kept in the school office during the school day.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students who do bring an electronic device assume full responsibility if the item is lost or stolen. If a student's device is found to be in use during the school day and/or on campus, it will be confiscated and can be retrieved at the end of the day by coming to the office. For the second offense, and when found in the hands of lower grade students on campus, the device will be held in the office until the end of the school week and will need to be retrieved by meeting with the Administrator and parents, at the end of the week.

As the technology market is regularly introducing new portable media and communications devices to the public, this policy applies to potential future portable media products as well. Having them on campus will result in confiscation in accordance with our current policy.

Behavior Guidelines

The administration and faculty work with the children and parents to articulate and put into practice the values necessary for a compassionate community – a community of love in which each child is valued and appropriately supported, a community of respect in which conflicts are resolved or mediated, a community of responsibility in which we (children and adults) show up on time and do our best.

In order to provide a school environment that fosters cooperation, responsibility and respect, children are expected to learn to follow several basic guidelines:

- Be courteous toward other children, teachers and parents. Pushing, hitting, kicking, bullying (also see Appendix A: Student Policy #12 –Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation, Bullying and Retaliation Prevention Policy), swearing, talking back, spitting and biting are not allowed. Children are also expected to listen respectfully to adults and to participate appropriately in classroom activities and to refrain from playing or talking out of turn during lessons.
- Leave inappropriate objects at home. This includes handheld video games, i-pods, personal toys, candy, weapons of any kind including knives, illegal substances, or any other material deemed detrimental by the teacher or administrator. Students whose parents wish them to have cell phones may check them in at the main office at the start of the day. Middle school students may carry cell phones in their backpacks. The phone must remain off for the school day and can only be used at the end of the school day in the school office.
- Respect the property of the school and of teachers and other students.

Chronic disregard for these guidelines will result in parent/teacher/admin. conferences and in appropriate disciplinary consequences.

Teachers may communicate specific expectations, and the consequences of failing to meet such expectations, to their students. When there is divergence from these expectations, the teachers will seek age appropriate interventions to redirect behaviors.

We understand that disruptive or inattentive behaviors may arise from a variety of conditions or needs within a child. All behavior is seen as communication, even when it crosses a disciplinary line. Our intent is to understand what the child is communicating and, in doing so, to give the child an appropriate support that positively affects the child's behavior. Generally, we recognize two broad areas of concern:

Physical/developmental needs, such as organic or constitutional impediments associated with developmental delays, including vision, auditory and speech challenges, sensory integration, autism spectrum, ADD, ADHD, etc.

Emotional/social needs, stemming from early life experiences, family crises, difficulty in relating to peers, etc.

These two areas are usually connected.

The teacher may convene a Student Success Team (SST) meeting that usually involves the parent(s), the administration and the teacher, who work together to understand the child and to implement a behavior plan to support the child. These meetings will continue to be scheduled as long as the child needs extra support and will be documented by the administration.

When a child is disrupting classroom learning and is not able to comply with the teacher's interventions, the teacher may send the child temporarily to another location (an adjacent classroom, the resource teacher, the office) in order to calm down. This is a time out during which the student may participate in appropriate physical exercises, have a one to one conversation about what is bothering them, draw a picture describing feelings or (for older students) describe the situation, their actions, and what they can do about what has happened. The goal is to return the student successfully to

class. On occasion, if the child is too upset to return to class, they may be sent home for the remainder of the day. This is not a suspension. Suspension and expulsion procedures are last resorts and are reserved for particular offenses as noted under the suspension and expulsion section. If a teacher is sending a child to the office it is important to send a note as well, detailing the situation and perceived need.

We believe that all children want to be successful and that all children want to learn. If they are having difficulties, it is our task as teachers and parents to help remove or mitigate those impediments. Angry words and actions or long lectures increase anxiety and self-blame in a child whose actions are already an expression of anxiety and poor self-esteem. We aim to break this vicious circle by giving fair and appropriate consequences for behavior in a manner that lets children know that we continue to care for and to believe in them.

When a child misbehaves, consequences should be appropriate to the offense. For example, if property is damaged, it can be replaced or repaired, if someone is hurt, apologies and amends must be offered, if time is wasted, free time may be used to make it up, etc.

More serious, repeated behaviors (bullying [also see Appendix A: Student Policy #12 –Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation, Bullying and Retaliation Prevention Policy], defiant behavior, willful disruption) are given firm consequences (including suspension) while the cause of the behavior is investigated and support for the student is put into place. The goal is to change the offending behavior while protecting the emotional and physical safety of all of the children. Teachers use class meetings, instructional and literary examples, and a variety of techniques (role playing, conflict resolution, pedagogical stories, etc.) to address these social problems

We oppose all forms of corporal punishment, public ridicule, shaming or any other form of psychological, emotional, or physical abuse. In the event that a teacher or staff member employs disciplinary procedures that are not in accord with the above stated intentions, or acts in an unprofessional way with regard to the discharge of his/her professional duties, the following steps may be taken:

- following the incident in a timely matter, meetings will occur involving the teacher, administrator and faculty representative
- an investigation into the matter will take place with a written account of the meeting and all information will be shared with appropriate individuals
- if warranted, appropriate staff disciplinary action will follow

Suspension

Suspension will be imposed when a student's presence causes direct harm to persons or property. A student may be suspended from attending school and school activities for a period of time from one (1) to five (5) school days. Both student and parents are informed (by phone, letter and conference) of the reasons and terms of the suspension. Students are expected to keep up on class work during the suspension. At the teacher's or the administrator's discretion, a suspension may be carried out "in house," in which case the suspended student would remain on campus, but perform supervised service work on behalf of the school.

Expulsion

Students who violate specific behavior expectations or have accumulated suspensions of over ten (10) days in a school year may be recommended to the Charter Council for expulsion. "In house" suspensions count the same as off-campus suspensions in triggering expulsion. Expulsion is the complete exclusion from Woodland Star Charter School immediately and for any future time. Expulsion may exclude a student from entering any S.V.U.S.D. school.

The following incidents may be grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion:

- causing purposeful physical injury to another person.

- bringing a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object to school unless student has written permission from a teacher and administration
- unlawfully possessing, using, selling, or otherwise furnishing or being under the influence of any controlled substance as defined in 11007 of the Health and Safety Code, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind while at school
- causing or attempting to cause damage to either school or private property
- stealing or attempting to steal either school or private property
- possessing or using tobacco on school premises
- committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity

Our goal is to create a school culture of trust and mutual respect that supports learning for all students and is proactive to support students with special needs, thus eliminating or significantly decreasing the need for extreme discipline measures such as suspension and expulsion.

Administrative Structure

Charter School Definition

There are more than 700 charter schools in the state of California. Although each one may be unique in mission, program and the challenges it faces, they all have some critical elements in common. Primarily, charter schools address the need for parents to have expanded choices in the kinds of educational experiences available to their children. Charters also address the need for parents to have opportunities for involvement in the life of the school.

These elements, along with the expectation that the innovations provided by the charter schools will translate into overall student achievement, represent the three-fold principles of the charter movement. Woodland Star Charter School embraces these principles.

An existing school district or county office of education must sponsor most charter schools in California. The Sonoma Valley Unified School District oversees this charter school. The Woodland Star Charter Council has final legal responsibility for the operation of our charter.

Governance

Woodland Star is an independent California nonprofit corporation, a 501(c)3 corporation. The Charter Council, consisting of representatives from the community, faculty and parents, serves as the board of directors of the corporation and is the final decision-making body of the school. A collaborative model governs charter schools; therefore the Charter Council weighs recommendations from Faculty Council, Parent Council and the Administration in its decision making.

The Charter Council is composed of nine (9) members. There are two (2) Woodland Star Charter School teachers, four (4) parents, and three (3) members appointed by the seated Council (these may be parents, community members, but not employees of the school). Parent representatives are chosen in an election sponsored by the Parent Council. Terms are for two years. Under California corporate law, board members must always act in the best interests of the whole of the corporation (school) in their decision making and may not represent particular interests.

The Charter Council meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30 PM at the school with additional meetings added as needed based on pending school business. All Charter Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the Brown Act and applicable public meeting laws. The Charter Council reviews all Woodland Star Charter School programs to determine the effectiveness of Charter School programs and provides direction for program improvements.

The Charter Council and the School Director will assure the evaluation of staff. The Charter Council approves the charter schools budget and the annual school calendar.

Woodland Star Charter School is non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Reporting to the Charter Council is the School's Executive Director.

Committees and Groups

To ensure strong faculty and parent direction and participation in the governance of the school, standing and ad hoc committees exist. These committees help create and implement policy, curriculum, budgetary and personnel decisions within the school. The standing administrative committees are the education committee, the site committee, the hiring committee, the festival committee, and the administration/finance committee.

Parent Association

Composition

The Parent Association is the body that coordinates parents to serve on Festivals and School events as well as to support the communication of information to the parent body in each class. The parent rep for each class supports for the operation of the school where parents and family members are able to contribute. It is also a body for directing parental input. The Chair is picked by vote from among the Committee Chairs and serves to coordinate and track the various Committees.

Parent Association Duties

Parent Association meetings are held on a regular basis, with a member of each Committee in attendance. The duties of the Parent Association include, but are not limited to the following:

- Communication to the school body at large
- Coordinate with other school groups as needed
- On-track within timelines and scheduled outcomes

Serve as a resource to direct parent inquiries and initiatives to the appropriate school group.

Parent Association Chair

The Parent Association Chair is appointed (by vote) by the current members (Committee Chairs) of the PA. The term is, ideally, two years. The PA Chair may or may not be the PA representative for Charter Council.

The PA Chair's main responsibility is to ensure that all Committees are in communication and coordination with the appropriate school councils and other committees as necessary. The PA Chair maintains a list of active volunteers that include, but are not limited to: Class Parents, Parent Education, and Festivals.

Additional Parent Involvement

To encourage additional parent involvement WSCS maintains a list of participation opportunities for parents

Possible volunteer activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Service on a school committee or council
- Assisting in the classroom
- Assisting during festivals
- Service as "class parent"
- Service as Parent Association or Charter Council representatives
- Providing refreshments and entertainment for school functions, faculty meals.

We recognize the uniqueness of requiring parents/guardians to volunteer; the intention is to focus on the joy of service while recognizing that the WSCS truly needs the active support of its participants. Volunteering is not a requirement, but highly encouraged.

Administration/Finance Committee

The Administration/Finance Committee drafts policy relating to faculty and administrative issues, reviews and amends existing policy, and drafts and revises the operating budget of the school.

Festival Committee

The Festival Committee works closely with the faculty to provide meaningful and enlivened celebrations for the children and parents. Grades one through eight will each have a parent representative to oversee individual class festival participation. School festivals, which may include Sprites' Night, the Lantern Walk and the Spring Festival, provide an opportunity for our school community to join together in wonderful seasonal celebrations. With full participation, our festivals can be truly remarkable, and give us a great sense of unity within the school community.

Fundraising Committee

Fundraising is a function of the Woodland Star Educational Foundation (WSEF), an independent nonprofit corporation established to support Woodland Star Charter School. WSEF's board includes Woodland Star parents, and its Fundraising Committee works hard on behalf of the school.

Garden/Site Committee

The garden/site committee is composed of faculty and parents who create long-term landscape/garden/site use plans for the campus. They work together with the volunteer coordinator to organize community work days and special events.

Communication and Redress

Woodland Star encourages positive communication. Constructive criticism and concerns should be funneled through the appropriate channel, following the redress procedure outlined in this handbook. Concerns pertaining to your child should be brought directly to the attention of your child's teacher. Everyday complaints, concerns, or suggestions may be taken to the Executive or Associate Director.

Settling Disputes

Disagreements may arise in any community; such differences are an inevitable consequence of human interaction. In a majority of these situations, the parties involved resolve the problems amongst themselves. The procedure for redress is a sequential series of steps designed to assist in the resolution of disagreements in those instances where the parties are unable to settle their differences.

Definition of Redress

Redress as used here refers to the resolution of disagreements. In particular, these disagreements are situations or circumstances thought by the aggrieved party or parties to be unjust or injurious. This procedure is intended to deal with problems that are essentially interpersonal in nature; problems that are not interpersonal are normally referred to the appropriate committee and/or to the school director.

Purpose of Redress Procedure

The overall purpose of this procedure is to perpetuate a climate of collegiality, mutual trust and respect by resolving differences in a timely, objective and equitable manner.

Responsibility for Redress Procedure

The Charter Council is responsible ultimately for the resolution of disagreements and the redress procedure; however, authority for the process is routinely delegated as described below.

Basic Principle

Ideally, disagreements are resolved at the lowest level possible. Direct speech is strongly encouraged and begins by engaging directly the person involved before bringing the issue to other individuals. In the event that a disagreement involves a subject/specialty teacher, individuals are encouraged to go directly to that teacher as opposed to bringing the issue first to the class teacher. The class teacher can certainly be brought into the conversation as deemed necessary once the specialty/subject teacher has been notified of the concern.

Levels of Resolution

Level 1: Direct Resolution

- The direct resolution process consists of a meeting or meetings between the parties involved without others in attendance.
- An attempt at direct resolution is to be made prior to requesting administrative resolution.

Level 2: Facilitated Resolution and/or Administrative Resolution

- Facilitated resolution consists of either party accessing the Stewards group to initiate resolution with use of a Steward.
- The administrative resolution process consists of a meeting between the involved parties with a member of the school administration in attendance.
- An attempt at administrative and/or facilitated resolution is to be made prior to mediated resolution.

Level 3: Uniform Complaint Policy

- If a conflict remains unresolvable community members can file a Uniform Complaint. Filing a Uniform Complaint is done in writing, utilizing the Uniform Complaint form available in the office. The complaint is submitted to the school director or a Charter Council member and will be presented to the Charter Council. This step can be employed after all other steps have been exhausted and the issue remains unresolved. Complaints must be signed but in some instances and/or at the request of the complainant, the identity of the complainant may not be revealed. In these instances, however, the school's ability to provide relief is limited.

Level 4: Mediated Resolution

The mediated resolution process consists of a meeting or meetings between the parties involved with a disinterested third party in attendance. This option will be made available in rare instances and with Administrative approval, and only when Administrative and/or Facilitated Resolution have been used (or deemed not appropriate in the particular circumstance). In most cases, the mediator is a trained professional without any direct connection to the school. As an alternative to such an outside mediator, a member of the school community may serve as mediator with the express approval of all parties involved. It is expected that the parties involved will seek mediated resolution with the understanding that the professional mediator's decision will be final.

Note: All community members, at any point in the conflict resolution process, have the option of bringing their concerns to the public comments section of the Charter Council's regular monthly meetings. Concerns can be brought by the individuals directly to the meeting or emailed to a council member to be read aloud during the public comment portion of the meeting. Anonymous concerns are not allowable. Typically, information received during the public comments portion of the meeting is not responded to immediately but may be agendaized for further discussion or follow-up efforts designated, if the Council feels this is warranted.

Exceptions

This procedure is designed to moderate the effects of and to assist in the resolution of all in the school community. An exception will normally be made in the case of conflicts involving students. In those cases, every effort will be made to resolve the conflict at levels 1 or 2.

Exceptions to this protocol may also be made in issues involving sexual harassment (also see Appendix A: Student Policy #12 –Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation, Bullying and Retaliation Prevention Policy), child abuse or other law enforcement issues.

Electronic Communication Policy

Communication is most effective face-to-face, when eye contact and other social cues clarify the content of conversation. In order to encourage effective communication, email among parents about school matters is reserved for information sharing only. Experience has shown that group discussion by email is often destructive and is at best an incomplete form of communication. Please use email/parent square messages among your class and school communities only to communicate objective and school-related information. Disputes or disagreements need to be handled in a medium other than email/parent square messaging. Sending individual or group e-mails/parent square messages of a contentious or negative nature is strongly discouraged and failure to comply with this policy may result in being removed from our communication platform, Parent Square.

Woodland Star Faculty

Teachers' Mission Statement

Woodland Star Charter School is a unique educational experience, providing a nurturing, humanitarian environment that fosters a love of learning. The teachers are committed to presenting a worldview that embraces the diversity of humankind, and are actively pursuing their own personal and professional growth.

In addition to their primary role as class teachers, the faculty ensures the quality of programs and maintains the highest possible standards in the conduct of the school's activities. They participate in financial, personnel, policy and program decisions. It is also their role to encourage and facilitate cooperation and communication between home and school.

All Woodland Star class teachers must possess a California teaching credential and they are strongly encouraged to be Waldorf trained or sufficiently experienced in the Waldorf methods to effectively deliver the curriculum.

Faculty Organization & Involvement

The health of the school is dependent on the care given it by its community of teachers. Prior to the beginning of the school year, teachers attend several sessions educating them in Waldorf methods. There are on-going faculty training opportunities throughout the year.

During their weekly meetings, the faculty takes up the work that sustains the life of the school. They study pedagogical concepts, do artistic work together, report on happenings within the school, announce forthcoming events and recognize the needs of the school and decide how those needs should be met.

Beyond the full time faculty, specialty teachers are hired to share a variety of subjects with the children, such as handwork, Spanish, music, and movement. Class teachers may step into the role of specialty teacher when they bring their talents and expertise into classrooms other than their own.

Involved in the many facets of the school, class teachers act as advisors on the school committees and serve on the Charter Council. Two members of the faculty are voting members of the Charter Council and a faculty member is present at Parent Association meetings and Woodland Star Educational Foundation meetings. Additionally, the entire faculty meets weekly to discuss the life of the school and community, continually making short and long-range decisions about the educational program and environment for the children. Given that the purpose of our school is to meet the educational needs of the child, the primary role of the faculty is to implement a curriculum designed to meet those needs. Clearly, the direction put forward by the Faculty provides the guiding principles inherent in all the workings of the school. A Pedagogical Director leads the faculty in accomplishing their tasks. This PD works with the administration to ensure that a developmentally appropriate curriculum anchored best practices is brought to the children.

The Faculty conducts class parent evenings to foster understanding of the education and to support the social life of the class. The first grade teacher are encouraged to make one home visit with each class family with the intention of creating healthy, open dialogue between teacher and parent. Parent conferences are held each fall and spring. During both conference periods, student assessment forms will be sent out to parents. A written report and the student assessment form is also sent to the families at the end of the school year. The teacher is always available for a scheduled conference with concerned parents at any time during the school year. Open communication is the best support for the child's development. The Faculty engages in ongoing work for individual growth and for the harmony of the school. Members of the Faculty are expected to seek inspiration through continued education and are strongly supported in their efforts to do so.

Parent Engagement

Expectations of Parent Participation

Enrollment at Woodland Star requires a commitment on the part of parents to the education of all children in the school community. Each family is asked to devote at least fifty hours of volunteer time per year.

There are a number of ways parents can become involved in the life of the school and fulfill their parent participation commitment. There are various ways to support your class teacher both in school and out of school. Assisting in specialty classes, making crafts, cleaning the classrooms, doing laundry, sewing and making costumes, organizing camping and field trips all ways that parents can help.

Festivals and fundraising events are two other areas that need parent involvement, not only for the success of the event, but to strengthen the bonds of the community. Fundraising is integral to our financial prosperity. Parents' involvement in fundraising activities is in direct relation to Woodland Star's continued ability to offer a full artistic curriculum. It is desired that all parents participate. The public funding model for our school meets the bare minimum of our school's financial health. The gifting of money, time, and resources is what we must rely upon to ensure our school's financial health. Participating in the Family Giving Program, working on fundraising programs and events, development of our resources both within and outside of the school, solicitation of monetary gifts and involvement in outreach activities all contribute to raising the needed monies to support our school's operations. To help with fundraising activities, watch for announcements in our newsletter or contact the office.

School and Family Partnership Agreement

The Woodland Star Charter School is founded on the ideal that the education of children, if it is to be successful, must involve the parents and school working together. A Waldorf-inspired education is richer and deeper when parents understand the philosophical basis of the methodology and the goals towards which the education strives. WSCS wishes to create a strong partnership between home life and school through parent participation, in order to create the strength of community that supports the balanced, healthy development of human capacities and achievement in the children.

WSCS requests all families to understand that enrollment in WSCS signifies a choice to participate in a specific approach to education. Families thereby agree to work together with the school, by bringing the curriculum and values of the school into life at home.

The partners agree to the following:

The School Will:

- Provide a safe and positive learning environment.
- Offer a quality Waldorf-inspired program.
- Maintain regular ongoing communication with the parents through parent square announcements, the quarterly newsletter and an updated website.
- Inform parents of the progress of the class through frequent letters from the teacher and regular parents meetings. Through these letters and meetings, the parent community will be informed and encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education.

- Provide time for at least two parent/teacher conferences per child per year.
- Involve teachers in professional development and mentoring when necessary.
- Resolve conflicts by following the redress policy as described in the Parent Handbook.
- Provide opportunities for parent education throughout the year.

The Family Will:

- Provide a rhythmic, quiet and safe home life with early bedtime, healthy foods, and warm layers of clothing when the weather is cold.
- Ensure children are dressed in compliance with the dress code as articulated in the Parent Handbook.
- Assume responsibility for the values, attitudes, and behavior of their children.
- Learn about Waldorf education and support the school's educational philosophy at home by deepening their knowledge of the curriculum.
- Work towards the elimination of the young child's exposure to all electronic media (TV, movies, video games, and computers).
- Read the Parent Handbook.
- Be responsible for child's attending school regularly and being on time.
- Read and respond to all school communications in a timely manner.
- Ensure that the child abides by the school rules of behavior and dress.
- Attend scheduled class parent meetings and conferences throughout the year.
- Participate in school fundraising activities and, as much as is financially possible contribute to the Family Giving Program.
- In addition to the above, your child's class teacher may have other specific recommendations that he/she may bring to the class.
- Attend parent education evenings.

Ways to Volunteer

- Assist in the classroom
- Serve on Parent Association, Charter Council or a Committee.
- Serve as a Class Parent.
- Volunteer at one of the Festivals, events or fundraisers sponsored by the school.
- Attend educational evenings and assemblies.
- Participate in and drive for class field trips if invited by a teacher.
- Assist with class plays – costuming sets, lighting, etc.

Our parents are a talented group, but only you know what your special skills are. If you have other ideas about ways in which you may help WSCS, please speak to your teacher or the School's Director.

Commitment to Parent Education

Parents of a child attending Woodland Star Charter School have responsibilities not necessarily associated with other public schools. First and foremost is a willingness to understand and embrace the philosophy of the school. Parents who embrace and support the educational philosophy at home enhance the student's experience. Parents are required to attend class meetings.

Class Parents

Class teachers may request a parent to serve as the class parent. The class parents provide the link between the class teacher and the rest of the parents of the children of that class. They help in relaying information and forming the community of the classroom. Their functions may vary, depending on the needs of the class teacher. In general, a class parent is asked to:

- Convey messages from the class teacher to all parents of the class
- Plan field trips with teachers
- Organize special craft activities for the class
- Serve as, or find another parent to serve as, the class historian
- Help organize parent evenings with the class teacher

It is in the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect that we list the areas of parent participation. Families of Woodland Star students are expected to be active participants in their children's education and the life of the school. We would hope that parents agree to partake in the following activities:

- attend the zoom State of the School meeting, parent-teacher conferences, class parent evenings, festivals, and assemblies
- read the parent handbook and commit to school philosophies and policies
- participate in the Family Giving Program
- join a committee or task group, and/or volunteer to support school activities
- support the class teacher and specialty teachers
- read and understand the redress procedure

Your child's teacher may have specific recommendations in addition to those listed above.

School Wide Initiatives

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that events that impact the school are routed through the Charter Council and/or Faculty Group so that time and resource requests made of the parents are closely monitored and evenly distributed throughout the year.

Guidelines

When an individual wishes to plan a school-wide event that requires parent or financial resources, they should make a written request to the Charter Council, or present their idea during the public comment section of a Charter Council meeting, providing a detailed outline of the event and the resources needed. The Charter Council will consult the school calendar to select a possible date, and if necessary then confer with the Administration and Faculty.

Directions

First, document your initiative in writing and either contact a Charter Council representative to relay or bring the initiative forward at the next Charter Council meeting (during the public comments section). The Charter Council will hear initiatives and follow up accordingly.

Recommended Reading

- Waldorf Education by Jack Petrash
- Simplicity Parenting by Kim John Payne
- You Are Your Child's First Teacher by Rahima Baldwin
- Beyond the Rainbow Bridge: Nurturing Our Children from Birth to Seven by Pamela Bradley and Barbara Patterson
- Lifeways: Working with Family Questions and More Lifeways by Gundrun Davey and Vons Boors
- All Grown Up and No Place to Go: Teenagers in Crisis by David Elkind
- Waldorf Education: A Family Guide by Pamela Fenner Johnson and Karen Rivers
- The Recovery of Man in Childhood and The Way of a Child by Cecil Harwood
- Who's Bringing them Up or How to Break the TV Habit by Martin Large
- The Book Whisperer by Donalyn Miller

Appendix A:

Harassment, Discrimination, Intimidation and Bullying Prevention Policy

It is the policy of Woodland Star Charter School to create and maintain a learning environment where students and employees are treated with dignity, decency and respect. It is also the policy of Woodland Star Charter School to maintain an environment that encourages and fosters appropriate conduct among all persons and respect for individual values. Accordingly, the School is committed to enforcing this Harassment, Discrimination Intimidation and Bullying Prevention Policy at all levels in order to create an environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, intimidation and bullying. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on race, religious creed (including religious dress and grooming practices), color, national origin (including language use restrictions), ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, or any other legally protected category is unlawful and undermines the character and purpose of the School. Such discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying violates School policy and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to anyone on campus at the School or those attending School sponsored activities.

Any form of retaliation against anyone who has complained or formally reported discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying or against anyone who has participated in an investigation of such a complaint, regardless of whether the complaint relates to the complaining person or someone else, will not be tolerated and violates this policy and the law.

Definitions

Discrimination: Discrimination is adverse treatment of any person based on the protected class or category of persons to whom he/she belongs and such treatment limits students from participating or benefiting from school activities or services.

Harassment: Harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct prohibited by law directed toward, or differential treatment of, a student because of his/her membership (or perceived membership) in any protected group or on any other prohibited basis. The harasser can be a student, a School official or employee, or someone who is not an employee of the School, such as a vendor or parent.

Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive or degrading remarks, verbal abuse, or other hostile behavior such as insulting, teasing, mocking, name calling, degrading or ridiculing another person or group
- Racial slurs, derogatory remarks about a person's accent, or display of racially offensive symbols
- Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact, comments, questions, advances, jokes epithets or demands
- Physical assault or stalking
- Displays or electronic transmission of derogatory, demeaning or hostile materials
- Graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet

Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by the School.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a form of harassment based on sex, including sexual harassment, gender harassment and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions. It generally involves unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive

behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. The following is a partial list of violations:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Offering educational benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- Visual conduct: leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters
- Verbal conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations
- Physical conduct: touching, assault, impeding or blocking movements

Intimidation: Intimidation includes adverse actions intended to fill another with fear, to overawe or cow, as through force of personality or by superior display of wealth, talent, etc., or to force another into or deter from some action by inducing fear.

Bullying: Bullying may take place in a variety of hostile acts that are carried out repeatedly over time. The acts involve a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. It may be physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), verbal (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or psychological (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, or promoting social exclusion, extortion or intimidation). Bullying is any severe or pervasive action or conduct directed toward one or more students that have the effect of one or more of the following: 1) places a reasonable student in fear of harm to that student's person or property; 2) causes a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health; 3) causes a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance; 4) causes a reasonable student to experience interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the School.

Other types of bullying:

- Sexual bullying includes many of the actions typical of bullying behavior with the added actions of exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment and sexual abuse (touching, physical contact, sexual assault).
- Bias or hate-motivated bullying is a bias against or hate for a person or group. Examples include taunting one's race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disabilities. The bullying behavior may also be aggressive, antagonistic, and assaultive.
- Hazing is a form of aggressive behavior that usually involves intimidation and humiliation during an initiation for a student organization or body, club, group or sports team. It may involve conduct that is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current or prospective pupil. Hazing does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- Cyberbullying involves bullying conduct that is created or transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager communicating any of the following: 1) a message, text, sound or image; 2) a post on a social network Internet Web site, including a "Burn Page," an impersonation of another student, and a false profile.

Retaliation: Retaliation is any adverse action taken against a student because he or she filed a charge of harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying complaint to the School or another agency or participated in an investigation about the same (such as an internal investigation or lawsuit), including as a witness. Retaliation also includes adverse action taken against someone who is associated with the individual opposing the perceived harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying.

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying or Retaliation

Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation prohibited by this policy, or any student who has witnessed such discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation, should immediately report the circumstances in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The School will investigate any conduct that violates this policy, even in the absence of a complaint, and take remedial action where appropriate.

A student may make a complaint, written or oral, to any of the individuals listed below:

- Their teacher or other school personnel
- The Administrator of the School

Complaints may be submitted to the Director by any of the following methods:

- By phone at 707 996 3849
- By email at chopewell@woodlandstarschool.org
- By mail at 11700 Dunbar Road Glen Ellen, CA 95442

Any teacher, or other school employee that receives any complaints of misconduct, or personally observes, learns about from others, or reasonably suspects has occurred, shall report the same to the Director, so that the School may attempt to resolve the claim internally. Any School personnel that witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation shall take immediate steps to intervene when it is safe to do so.

Investigation and Disposition of Complaints

The School will conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation that provides all parties appropriate due process and reaches reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected. The investigation, conducted by a qualified investigator(s) (who may be a School employee), will include an interview with the alleged student-victim and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). It may also include interviews with the person who made the initial report, the complainant (if not the alleged victim), the alleged wrongdoer and/or any other person who may have information regarding the incident, each of whom are encouraged to cooperate with any investigation. The investigator may also review any relevant documents.

The School will endeavor to complete its investigation within thirty (30) days of a report of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation.

Confidentiality of the complaint and investigation will be kept by the School to the extent possible, but note that the investigation will not be completely confidential.

The investigator (if a third party) will report his/her findings to the Director and/or Charter Council Board of Directors. Where the investigator concludes that a violation of this policy has occurred, the Director and/or Board of Directors will take prompt and appropriate remedial action, including disciplinary action. Depending upon the circumstances, disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion. Discipline for a violation of this policy is not progressive, so a first violation of this policy may warrant suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.

Every complaint will trigger the creation of an investigatory file. The investigatory file will consist of the initial complaint, the final investigative report, including a record of the remedial action to be taken, if any, and all documents created, used or reviewed during the investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Director shall notify the complainant of the manner in which it has resolved the matter. If, within 30 days after notification of resolution, the complainant does not agree with the resolution, the complainant may appeal the matter to the Board of Directors of the School by filing a notice of appeal stating the reasons for the appeal and specific disagreement with the School's resolution of the complaint. The Charter Council Board of

Directors will provide the student with a final decision of the School's resolution 5 days after the Board of Directors' next regularly scheduled board meeting. If the student does not agree with the final determination of the Board of Directors, the student may appeal to the California Department of Education using the appeal process adopted in the School's Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Appendix B:

Board Policy #: [BP091119a]

Adopted/Ratified: [September 11, 2019]

Revision Date: [October 25, 2023]



Woodland Star Charter School Attendance Policy

It is the intent of the Charter Council Board of Woodland Star Charter School (“Charter School”) to ensure that students attend school every day on time. Consistent school attendance is critical to school success. Being present for classroom instructional time is essential for students to reach their goals and achieve their dreams. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to an increased likelihood of poor academic performance, disengagement from school, and behavior problems.

Definitions

- “Tardy”: Charter School starts at 8:20 am daily. Students shall be classified as tardy if the student arrives after that time.
- “Unexcused Absence”: A student shall have an unexcused absence if the student is absent or is tardy for more than thirty (30) minutes without a valid excuse.
- “Truant”: A student shall be classified as a truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse three (3) full days in one school year, or if the student is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three (3) occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Any student who has once been reported as a truant and who is again absent from school without valid excuse one or more days, or tardy on one or more days, shall again be deemed a truant. Such students shall be reported to the Executive Director or designee.
- “Habitual Truant”: A student shall be classified as a habitual truant if the student is reported for truancy three (3) or more times within the same school year. This generally occurs when the student is absent from school without a valid excuse for five (5) full days in one school year or if he student is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on five (5) occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof.
- “Chronic Truant”: A student shall be classified as a chronic truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse for ten (10) percent or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date.

Excused Absences for Classroom Based Attendance

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or this Attendance Policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including an absence for the benefit of the student’s mental or behavioral health;
2. Medical, dental, ophthalmologic, or chiropractic appointments;
 - a. Students in grades 7-8, inclusive, may be excused from school for the purpose of obtaining confidential medical services without the consent of the student’s parent or guardian.
3. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer;

4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family;
 - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one (1) day if the service is conducted in California or three (3) days if the service is conducted out of state.
 - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as parent or guardian, grandparent, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any other relative living in the student's household.
5. Participation in religious instruction or exercises in accordance with Charter School policy:
 - a. The student shall be excused for this purpose on no more than four (4) school days per semester (88 school days).
6. For the purposes of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.
7. Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent, including absences to care for a sick child. (The school does not require a note from the doctor for this excusal).
8. Spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this section shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the Executive Director.
9. For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Election Code section 12302.
10. Attendance at the student's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
11. Authorized parental leave for a pregnant or parenting student for up to eight (8) weeks, which may be extended if deemed medically necessary by the student's physician.
12. Authorized at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee, based on the facts of the student's circumstances, are deemed to constitute a valid excuse.
13. A student who holds a work permit to work for a period of not more than five (5) consecutive days in the entertainment or allied industries shall be excused from school during the period that the student is working in the entertainment or allied industry for a maximum of up to five (5) absences per school year subject to the requirements of Education Code section 48225.5.
14. In order to participate with a not-for-profit performing arts organization in a performance for a public-school student audience for a maximum of up to five (5) days per school year provided the student's parent or guardian provides a written note to the school authorities explaining the reason for the student's absence.
15. For the purpose of participating in a cultural ceremony or event. "Cultural" for these purposes means relating to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people.
16. For the purpose of a middle or high school pupil engaging in a civic or political event as indicated below, provided that the pupil notifies the school ahead of the absence. A "civic or political event" includes, but is not limited to, voting, poll working, strikes, public commenting, candidate speeches, political or civic forums, and town halls.
 - a. A middle school or high school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision is required to be excused for only one school day-long absence per school year.
 - b. A middle school or high school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision may be permitted additional excused absences in the discretion of a school administrator.
17. For the following justifiable personal reasons for a maximum of five (5) school days per school year, upon advance written request by the student's parent or guardian and approval by the Executive Director or designee pursuant to uniform standards:
 - a. Appearance in court.
 - b. Observance of a holiday or ceremony of the pupil's religion.
 - c. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester.
 - d. Attendance at an employment conference.
 - e. Attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization.

A student who is absent due to an excused absence will be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the excused absence that can be reasonably provided and will receive full credit upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time. The teacher of the class from which a student is absent shall determine which tests and assignments are reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the student missed during the excused absence.

Method of Verification

When a student has been absent returns to school, the student must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Signed, written note from the student's parent/guardian, or parent representative;
2. An email from parent/guardian or parent representative verifying the reason for the absence;
3. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
 - a. Name of student;
 - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative;
 - c. Name of verifying employee;
 - d. Date or dates of absence; and
 - e. Reason for absence.
4. Healthcare provider verification
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, Charter School staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. A healthcare provider's note of illness will be accepted for any reported absence. When a student has had ten (10) absences in the school year for illness verified by methods listed in #1-#3 above without a healthcare provider's note, any further absences for illness must be verified by a healthcare provider.

Note: While absences should be excused the same day they occur, we understand that some circumstances may prevent that from happening. All absences must be excused within three (3) business days or will be considered unexcused.

Insofar as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

Students should not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency.

Unexcused Absences/Truancy for Classroom Based Attendance

Students shall be classified as truant if the student is absent from school without a valid excuse three (3) full days in one school year, or if the student is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three (3) occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Executive Director or designee.

The Executive Director, or designee, shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy and chronic absenteeism, including working with the family to resolve the attendance problem. A student's progress and learning may be affected by excessive absences. In addition, the Charter School is fiscally dependent on student attendance and is negatively impacted by absences. If all attempts to resolve the student's attendance problem are unsuccessful, the Charter School will implement the processes described below.

ROCESS FOR UPHOLDING THE ATTENDANCE POLICY

Process for Student Who are Not in Attendance on First Day of School:

When students are not in attendance on the first five (5) days of school, the Charter School will attempt to reach the parent/guardian daily for each of the first five (5) days to determine whether the student has an excused absence, consistent with the process outlined in this policy. If the student has a basis for an excused absence, parents must notify the school of the absence and provide documentation consistent with this policy. However, consistent with the process below, students who are not in attendance due to an unexcused absence by the sixth (6th) day of the school year due to an unexcused absence will be disenrolled from the Charter School, after following the Involuntary Removal Process described below, as it will be assumed that the student has chosen another school option.

1. Students who are not in attendance on the first day of school will be contacted by phone to ensure their intent to enroll in the Charter School.
2. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll but have not attended by the third (3rd) day of the school year and do not have an excused absence will receive a letter indicating the student's risk of disenrollment.
3. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll but have not attended by the fifth (5th) day of the school year and do not have an excused absence will receive a phone call reiterating the content of the letter.
4. Students who have not attended by the sixth (6th) day of the school year, and do not have an excused absence will receive an Involuntary Removal Notice and the CDE Enrollment Complaint Notice and Form. The Charter School will follow the Involuntary Removal Process described below, which includes an additional five (5) schooldays for the parent/guardian to respond to the Charter School and request a hearing before disenrollment.
5. The Involuntary Removal Process can be started immediately upon the Charter School receiving documentation of the student's enrollment and attendance at another public or private school (i.e., a CALPADS report).
6. The Charter School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet.
7. Within thirty (30) calendar days of disenrollment, the Charter School will send the student's last known school district of residence a letter notifying it of the student's failure to attend the Charter School.

Truancy Process:

1. Each of the first two (2) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over thirty (30) minutes will result in a call home to the parent/guardian by the Executive Director or designee. The student's classroom teacher may also call home.
2. Each of the third (3rd) and fourth (4th) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over thirty (30) minutes will result in a "Truancy Letter #1" from the Charter School notifying the parent/guardian of the student's "Truant" status. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Charter School. Letters not signed and returned to the office within seven (7) days will be followed by a phone call from the Executive Director or designee.
3. Upon reaching seven (5) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over thirty (30) minutes, the parent/guardian will receive "Truancy Letter #2 – Habitual Truant Classification Notice and Conference Request," notifying the parent/guardian of the student's "Habitual Truant" status and a parent/guardian conference will be scheduled to review the student's records and develop an intervention plan/contract. Additional conferences may be requested by the Executive Director or Class Teacher for unexcused absences 6-9. In addition, the Charter School will consult with a school counselor regarding the appropriateness of a home visitation an/or case management.
4. Upon reaching ten (10) unexcused absences or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes, the student will be referred to a Student Success Team (SST) and/or the School Attendance Review Team (SART). Both the SST and SART process require parental/guardian participation. In addition, the parent/guardian will receive a "Habitual Truancy Re-classification and Referral to SART Meeting Letter #3." 5. The SART panel will be composed of the Executive Director, Director of Student Services, Director of Intervention, and a certificated teacher designated by the Executive Director.
5. The SART panel will discuss the absence problem with the parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and the student's family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.
 - a. The SART panel shall direct the parent/guardian that no further unexcused absences or tardies can be tolerated.

- b. The parent/guardian shall be required to sign a contract formalizing the agreement by the parents to improve the child's attendance or face additional administrative action. The contract will identify the corrective actions required in the future, and indicate that the SART panel shall have the authority to order one or more of the following consequences for non-compliance with the terms of the contract:
 - Parent/guardian to attend school with the child for one day
 - Student retention
 - After school tutoring
 - Required school counseling
 - Loss of field trip privileges
 - Loss of school event privileges
 - Mandatory Summer school
 - Required remediation plan as set by the SART
 - Notification to the District Attorney
6. The SART panel may discuss other school placement options.
7. Notice of action recommended by the SART will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian.

If the conditions of the SART contract are not met, the student may incur additional administrative action up to and including disenrollment from the Charter School, consistent with the Involuntary Removal Process described below. If the student is disenrolled after the Involuntary Removal Process has been followed, notification will be sent within thirty (30) days to the student's last known school district of residence.

For all communications set forth in this process, the Charter School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to update the Charter School with any new contact information.

If student is absent ten (10) or more consecutive school days without a valid excuse and the student's parent/guardian cannot be reached at the number or address provided in the registration packet and does not otherwise respond to the Charter School's communication attempts, as set forth above, the student will be in violation of the SART contract, and the SART panel will recommend that the student be disenrolled in compliance with the Involuntary Removal Process described below. The Involuntary Removal Process can be started immediately upon the Charter School receiving documentation of the students' enrollment and attendance at another public or private school (i.e. CALPADS report.)

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 the Charter School's intent to remove the student ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The Involuntary Removal Notice must be provided to the parent or guardian no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the proposed disenrollment date.

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:

1. The charges against the student
2. An explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action
3. The CDE Enrollment Complaint Notice and Form

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 a parent's or guardian's 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 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) calendar 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 re-occur.

Referral to Appropriate Agencies or County District Attorney:

It is the Charter School's intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student's success, and the School will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family. For any unexcused absence, the School may refer the family to appropriate school-based and/or social service agencies.

If a student's attendance does not improve after a SART contract has been developed according to the procedures above, or if the parents fail to attend a required SART meeting, the Charter School shall notify the County District Attorney's office, which then may refer the matter for prosecution through the court system. Students twelve (12) years of age and older may be referred to the juvenile court for adjudication.

Non-Discrimination

These policies will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to the characteristics listed in Education Code section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, pregnancy, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Reports

The Executive Director, or designee, shall gather and report to the Board the number of absences both excused and unexcused as well as students who are truant, and the steps taken to remedy the problem.

Positive Attendance Improvement Strategy

School Administration and faculty will work together to design and implement an attendance improvement program that is positive and supportive of all families, and update it annually