# SYVCS Student & Family Handbook

**Adopted by the Board of Directors January 21, 2025**

**Table of Contents:**


**Introduction....3**
**Mission Statement....3**
**Governance and Leadership....3**
**Parent Teacher Student Organization....3**
**The School Day: Arrival and Dismissal Times....4**
**Car Line....4**
**Parking....4**
**Volunteering....5**
**Parent Volunteer Guidelines....5**
**Communication....5**
Parent Square....5
Dragon Tracks/Tuesday Folder....5
Online Gradebook....5
**Buddy Program....6**
**Dragon Families....6**
**Field Trips....6**
**Community Service....6**
**Attendance Policies....6**
**Absence Verifications....6**
**Tardiness....7**
**School Actions to Support Attendance....7**
**Independent Study....7**
**Dress Code....8**
**Cell Phones and Other Electrical Devices....8**
**Computer Use Policy....8**
**Bullying....9**
Prevention....10
Actions Upon Recognition....10
Disciplinary Actions....11
**Consequences of MIsconduct....11**
**Serious Discipline Violations....11**
**Additional School Policies....12**
Classroom Food Policy....12
Graduation Requirements....13
Complaint Procedure....13
Acknowledgement of Student/Family Handbook....13
**Appendix A: Annual Notifications....14**
Cancer Prevention Act....14
Concussion/Head Injuries....14
Dangers of Synthetic Drugs....14
Education of Foster and Mobile Youth....15
English Learners....15
Human Trafficking Prevention....15
Immunizations....15

Involuntary Removal Process.....16
Lost or Damaged School Property.....16
Mental Health Services.....17
Nondiscrimination Statement.....17
Oral Health Assessment.....17
Safe Storage of Firearms.....17
Section 504.....18
Special Education /Students with Disabilities.....18
State Testing.....18
Student Records.....18
Uniform Complaint Procedure.....19
School Meals and Student Wellness.....19
Work Permits.....20
**Appendix B: Complete Policies.....20**
Title IX Policy Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sex.....20
Progressive Discipline and Suspension & Expulsion Policy.....20
Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, And Bullying Policy.....20

**Introduction**

Welcome to Santa Ynez Valley Charter School!

The information included within this Student/Family Handbook should help to provide an overview of the SYVCS school programs and expectations for student success. With a great partnership between students, families and staff, our school and students continue to grow and develop.

In addition to the information contained here, additional information can also be found on our school website at www.syvcs.org as well as by contacting the school office at 805-686-7360.

Thank you for being a valuable part of our school community.

**Mission Statement**

Santa Ynez Valley Charter School (SYVCS) is founded to work collaboratively to create a supportive, innovative, and academically challenging educational environment that nurtures its students and prepares them for high school and beyond through strong curricular articulation. SYVCS will also emphasize preparation of its students for a successful and rewarding future by developing both academic and nonacademic skills.

**Governance and Leadership**

SYVCS is governed by a Board of Directors made up of community members that represent the school community, including parents and teachers. The Board meets regularly to oversee the finances and policies of the school. The Board delegates the daily operation of the school to the Executive Director and other administrators. More information about the Board can be found on the school website. If you have an interest in serving on the Board, please contact the current Board President or the Executive Director.

**Parent Teacher Student Organization**

The Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) provides opportunities for parents, teachers and students to collaborate in the support of school programs with activities and fundraisers. The PTSO coordinates room parent and other volunteer activities, funds instructional materials for teachers, provides playground equipment and organizes staff appreciations and lunches. The main fundraisers are the annual Jog-a-Thon and Carnival. Parent participation in PTSO is strongly encouraged and details can be found on the school website.

**The School Day: Arrival and Dismissal Times**

Students should arrive on campus no earlier than 7:45am. Morning announcements and the flag salute begin at 7:55am and all students are expected to arrive at school no later than 8am. Parents and families are encouraged to stay and join our school community for the morning announcements and flag salute.

Release times are as follows Monday through Thursday:

| | |
|---|---|
| TK | 12:30 |
| Kindergarten | 1:30 |
| 1st Grade | 2:15 |
| 2nd through 8th Grades | 3:00 |

All students are released at 1pm on Fridays except TK (12:30). Friday early release is used for teacher professional development. In addition to Friday Early Release, the school calendar notes early release

days throughout the year for conference weeks, etc. All-school 12pm release times occur on Halloween and the day before week-long holidays.

Students should be picked up or should walk home from school no later than 3:15pm Monday through Thursday and 1:30pm on Fridays, unless they are participating in after school activities.

Students should not play on the playground before or after school, unless they have been given specific permission and are supervised by a staff member. After school, students will wait by the flagpole for their parents to arrive to pick them up. Students whose parents arrive in the car line will be called by a staff member to come to their car.

**Car Line**

The Car Line is used to drop off and pick up students. To help ensure student safety and efficient traffic flow, please slow down and use extreme caution when driving in the school zone. The right lane should be used to pick up or drop off students, and the left lane for thru traffic. Please pull all the way forward when dropping off or picking up.

In the afternoon, a staff member will help facilitate student pick up. Please use the right lane, roll your window down, and identify who you are picking up to the staff member. Please ensure your child is seated and strapped in the car as safely and quickly as possible. Please do not leave your car unattended in the Car Line, as this is not a parking area at any time during the day.

**Parking**

Marked parking spaces and gravel parking along Tyndall Street should be used when getting out of your car to come on campus. Please respect any “No Parking” signs. The VIP Parking spot is a reserved space and should only be used with permission from the designated user. When parking on the street within the neighborhood, please help us be good neighbors by ensuring that driveways and walkways are not blocked so that homeowners can access their home.

**Volunteering**

Parent participation is an integral part of our school; it is one of the assets that make our school so strong. The volunteer commitment was written into our charter because the founding parents strongly believed that parents who are actively involved in their child’s education enhance the likelihood that their child will succeed in school. As part of our school culture, families are encouraged to contribute a minimum of 3 hours of volunteer time per child per month (5 hours per month if you have multiple children attending), with a total of 36 hours (60 hours for multiple students) during each school year. While encouraged and appreciated, volunteering is not mandatory. No student will be denied continuing enrollment for a family’s inability to volunteer.

**Parent Volunteer Guidelines**

- All volunteers are required to sign in at the front office upon arrival and sign out when leaving.
- All volunteers must wear a visible office issued identification badge.
- Please silence your phone while on campus. If necessary, please step outside the classroom to use your phone to text or make phone calls.
- Due to confidentiality, please refrain from taking pictures and/or videos of students and staff.
- Confidentiality is a legal obligation. Do not discuss the academic or behavioral progress of any student with anyone, including the student’s parents.
- All disciplinary matters must be addressed by SYVCS staff. If you observe a disciplinary situation, please notify a staff member immediately.

- If you need to speak with a teacher regarding a personal issue or your child's progress, please schedule a meeting with that teacher at a time when you are not acting in a volunteer capacity.
- Student restrooms may not be used by adults during school hours; please use the staff restrooms.

**Communication**

Open communication is essential to the success of each child. In addition to face-to-face communication, informal and formal conferences, the following are some of the ways that we communicate with parents about student programs.

**Parent Square**
The school uses ParentSquare to create a school directory and to send/receive information about school activities and events. SYVCS creates and maintains class message groups in ParentSquare for official school communication. Parent email addresses are not visible to others through these message groups, and only SYVCS staff and room parents can post to these group emails.

**Dragon Tracks/Tuesday Folder**
Dragon Tracks is a weekly newsletter that is sent to all families and staff on ParentSquare. and posted on the SYVCS website. Parents are required to read the weekly updates; they contain important information about school activities and often contains time-sensitive information.

**Online Gradebook**
Students and families in grades 5-8 have access to an online gradebook where teachers will post assignments and updated grades. It is recommended that students and parents check grades weekly and contact individual teachers with questions about grades.

Occasionally parents may have concerns about the classroom environment or hear about concerns from other parents. The best practice in helping to resolve issues is to speak to the classroom teacher in the first instance and follow up with an administrator if necessary.

**Buddy Program**

The SYVCS Buddy Program helps to build a strong and healthy school community, where students learn academic, social-emotional, and interpersonal skills through cross-grade level academic activities. All grade levels will participate in the Buddy Program, with specific buddy classes, times, and activities determined by collaboration between teachers.

**Dragon Families**

Every month students meet in their school families to collaborate on activities and engage in discussions. Each family is comprised of a student from each grade level (K-8). The activities are led by 8$^{th}$ grade students and a staff member.

**Field Trips**

Field trips allow teachers to extend valuable learning experiences to students outside the classroom. Each teacher works to identify field trip opportunities that are appropriate for their grade level and curriculum. Middle School Students have the opportunity to go on one or more overnight field trips each year, which range from 2 to 3 nights. The cost of field trips is partially supported by fundraising and each class often fundraises to defer the cost of field trips.

**Community Service**

The promotion of a life-long commitment to strong citizenship and community service begins at SYVCS. In keeping with the commitment by parents to serve the school community, students in grades 6-8 will provide 10 hours of community service each year. 8th graders will also complete two additional hours of political/civic service to meet graduation requirements.

**Attendance Policies**

SYVCS recognizes that regular, on-time attendance is essential to a student's success. It is the legal responsibility of parents/guardians to see that their children attend school.

School funding is negatively impacted by absences regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. SYVCS revenue is based upon average daily attendance (ADA). This ultimately affects the services, programming and staffing that can be offered on campus.

Recognizing the importance of attendance, we are asking that parents make every attempt to minimize absences due to personal business and vacations when school is in session. We encourage families to plan their vacations during school vacation time, using the school calendar, and miss only those times that are necessary for appointments, returning for the remainder of the day. Inquire with the office about a temporary independent study plan at least a week in advance if your child needs to be out of school for an extended period of time.

**Absence Verifications**

Absences from school must be verified by the student's parent or legal guardian in person, by written note, or by telephone. Please call the SYVCS office to report an absence before 8:15am. Any absence not reported by a parent will be considered unexcused.

All absences are classified as Excused, Unexcused or Preplanned as defined below:

- Excused absences are those absences due to illness, immediate family bereavement, or doctor appointments that cannot be scheduled during non-school hours. When a student is absent more than 3 consecutive days during the school year for illness, the school may require verification by a physician.
- Preplanned absences are absences that are prearranged with the office and for which the school can provide an independent study packet. Please report preplanned absences at least 1 week in advance and work with your child's teacher to ensure that your child completes all work assigned during the absence.
- Unexcused absences include all other absences not considered excused. This includes personal business and family emergencies. Students with excessive unexcused absences (more than three per school year) are considered truant and may be referred to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

Per CA Education Code 48260: "Any pupil …who is absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year or tardy/absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, is a truant and shall be reported to the [County] attendance supervisor…"

**Tardiness**

Any arrival after 8:05 a.m. is considered tardiness. Students who are late to school in the morning must report to the office for a tardy slip. Tardies are considered unexcused unless supported by a doctor's note. All tardies will be entered into the Student Information System.

**School Actions to Support Attendance**

SYVCS will take the following actions to support positive student attendance and to prevent excessive tardiness:

School Actions for Unexcused Tardies

| | |
|---|---|
| 1-3 | Parent notification (phone call or email) |
| 4-6 | Student may lose lunch or recess time for each additional tardy |
| 7-10 | Tardiness Intervention conference with Student, Parent/Guardian, Director |
| 10+ | Student referred to the County's School Attendance Review Board |

School Actions for Unexcused Absences

| | |
|---|---|
| 1-2 | Parent notification (phone call or email) |
| 3-4 | Attendance meeting with Student, Parent/Guardian, Director |
| 5- | Student referred to the County's School Attendance Review Board for Truancy<br>Possible recommendation for involuntary removal pursuant to the school's procedures |

**Independent Study**

Students who have a planned absence of 3 or more days can request an independent study packet. Whenever possible, short-term independent study should be requested from the office at least one week in advance to provide the school with the opportunity to gather the work assignments for a student's absence.

The independent study agreement will outline the dates of independent study, assignments to complete, and the date the independent study agreement is to be turned in. All student work completed must be turned in with the independent study agreement. The student, parent and teacher must sign the independent study agreement.

A student who completes the independent study agreement, as assigned, will be marked in attendance for the days of independent study.

**Dress Code**

The purpose of the school dress code is to provide only what guidance is necessary to maintain a safe and healthy school environment. The dress code should allow teachers to focus on teaching, while also giving students, along with their families, the opportunity to make choices about attire based on individual and family values. The following guidelines are minimal in order to promote staff and student attention to the education that school is intended to provide.

All students must honor the dress code policy while at school:

1. All clothing, backpacks, book covers, etc., must reflect appropriate subject matter (no references to alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products, no gambling, no weapons, vulgarity, profanity, politics, or hate speech, no violent or sexually explicit language or images etc.).
2. Clothing may not display content that is offensive or degrading to students or staff on the basis of gender, cultural, religious or ethnic values.
3. Hats, hoods, beanies and sunglasses must be removed upon entering the classroom. Headwear for religious, cultural, or disability related attire will be permitted.

4. Clothes must allow for all movement and activity in which the student is expected to participate. (Recommendation that tank tops have a solid back with a 1” minimum strap, shorts have a minimum of 4” inseam, and skirts/dresses fall mid-thigh). Shirts must meet the waistline of bottoms when standing naturally. Undergarments are not permitted to be shown (waistbands and straps excluded.)
5. Close-toed, closed-heeled shoes must be worn at all times with safety being the concern. Proper athletic shoes must be worn during P.E. classes.
6. Accessories, which may include earrings, necklaces, bracelets, watches, etc., are permitted when student safety or learning is not compromised.
7. Pajamas or sleepwear may not be worn unless designated as an 8th grade privilege or all-school spirit/dress up day.

In any matter concerning dress code, the administration has the final authority.
The administration is committed to enforcing the dress code equitably, consistently, supportively, and with the least possible interruption to students’ education.
Exceptions to the dress code can be granted by the administration as needed to honor religious practices as well as for educational accommodation.

**Cell Phones and Other Electrical Devices**

Cellular phones and other electrical devices including smart watches on campus can create a great distraction to the learning environment. All electronic devices must be turned off and placed in a student’s backpack between the hours of 7:55am and 3pm, unless otherwise authorized by school staff. If cell phones or other electrical devices are used during regular school hours, without specific permission by school staff, including recess, lunch, and passing periods, they may be confiscated. Parents may pick up these items in the office during regular school hours.

**Computer Use Policy**

The school's information technology resources, including email and Internet access, are provided for educational purposes. For the purposes of this policy, the word “computer” is used to describe any technological device used for the purposes of education at SYVCS. Adherence to the following policy is necessary for continued access to the school's technological resources:

Students must:
1. Respect and protect the privacy of others.
    a. Use only assigned accounts.
    b. Not view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
    c. Not distribute private information about others or themselves.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.
    a. Observe all network security practices, as posted.
    b. Report security risks or violations to a teacher or network administrator.
    c. Not destroy or damage data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission of the owner.
    d. Conserve, protect, and share these resources with other students and Internet users.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
    a. Not infringe copyrights (no making illegal copies of music, games, or movies!).
    b. Not plagiarize.
4. Respect and practice the principles of community.
    a. Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
    b. Report threatening or discomforting materials to a teacher.

c. Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
d. Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
e. Not use the resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school's discipline policy.
f. Not send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
g. Not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business, unless approved as a school project.

Students may, if in accord with the policy above:

1. Design and post web pages and other material from school resources.
2. Use direct communications such as online chat, or instant messaging with a teacher's permission.
3. Install or download software, if also in conformity with laws and licenses, and under the supervision of a teacher.
4. Use the resources for any educational purpose.

Consequences for Violation

Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources.

Supervision and Monitoring

School and network administrators and their authorized employees monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions, and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement.

**Bullying**

Santa Ynez Valley Charter School believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The staff, students, parents and school community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

In accordance with California Education Code Sections 200, 220, 233, and 48900, the following policies are in place at Santa Ynez Valley Charter School. A copy of the Charter School’s complete Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, & Bullying Policy is available for review on the website or through the main office.

Definition

Physical, verbal, written or other means of harassment, sexual harassment, threats, intimidation, cyber-bullying, causing bodily harm or injury to or committing hate violence against any student or school personnel. Cyber-bullying includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats or other harmful texts, sounds or images on the Internet, social media or other technologies such as a telephone, computer or any wireless communication device. Cyber-bullying also includes breaking into another person’s electronic account and assuming that person’s identity in order to damage that person’s reputation.

**Prevention**

The best way to deal with bullying is prevention. All students, staff, parents, and the school community must work together to create a positive and collaborative school climate that aims to prevents bullying from happening. The school community can take the following steps to prevent bullying at Santa Ynez Valley Charter School and all school sanctioned events:

- Be friendly, kind, and courteous in all actions and interactions
- Work to get to know each other personally
- Demonstrate through our actions that we are worthy of mutual trust
- Have the courage to speak out when any student or staff member is anything other than courteous, kind, and friendly in words or in actions
- Be a positive role model -- demonstrate through your actions that you are committed to a positive and welcoming culture for all student, staff, parents, and community members at Santa Ynez Valley Charter School
- All staff will periodically review the definition of bullying and remind students of these steps to prevent bullying. Parents and students should also review this information periodically to help prevent bullying and remind students of ways to act in a positive manner
- Santa Ynez Valley Charter School will support all students with appropriate ways to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and interact positively in social situations. This will include, but not limited to, ways to show respect for individual and cultural differences, as well as appropriate positive behavior strategies
- Be alert for any signs of bullying as outlined above in the definition of bullying and report any bullying behaviors immediately to a responsible adult

**Actions Upon Recognition**

It is the responsibility of all students and staff to be aware of and recognize bullying behaviors. Should any bullying behaviors be observed on campus or during any school-sanctioned activity, Santa Ynez Valley Charter School:

- Expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the appropriate staff member, school Director or designee.
- Students may submit an anonymous note to a staff member concerning bullying.
- Staff who witness such acts will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.
- The Director or designee will promptly investigate each complaint of bullying within a reasonable amount of time.
- The school will make reasonable efforts to keep a report of bullying and the results of investigation confidential. As appropriate, the Director or designee may notify parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators as well as involve counselors, mental health professionals or law enforcement.

**Disciplinary Actions**

Any student who engages in bullying on campus, during any school sanctioned activity, or off campus in a manner that causes or is likely to cause a substantial disruption of a school activity or school attendance, is in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with school policies and procedures, up to and including suspension and expulsion.

**Consequences of MIsconduct - General**

Teachers and other staff members at SYVCS will intervene when a student’s behavior is inappropriate to the learning environment. The purpose of interventions is to help the student learn appropriate behavior and maintain the safety of the school environment. In most cases teachers will attempt to redirect a

student using an initial verbal warning. Continued infractions will result in the issuance of a written Discipline Notice.

All Discipline Notices will be issued with consideration for the age of the student and the age-appropriateness of the behavior.

- For minor disagreements and disputes, students have the option of resolving the issue mediated by a teacher or staff member.
- For dress code infractions, students have the option of calling home for a change of clothing or may wear other clothing available at school.
- For situations that may require a change in environment, students may be asked to go to the office or to another supervised classroom.

All consequences of misconduct will be reset at the beginning of each new school year and students shall start a new school year with a clean slate. All discipline actions taken by the school are considered private and may not be disclosed to other parties.

The following behaviors include, but are not limited to, those for which a student may be issued a Discipline Notice:

1. classroom disruption
2. inappropriate physical contact
3. unsafe behavior
4. disregard/disrespect towards other students and adults
5. teasing/bullying/harassing
6. inappropriate language
7. disregard for playground rules
8. misuse/abuse of school or personal property
9. using cell phones during regular school hours including lunch, recess and passing periods
10. cheating, plagiarism
11. other violations of the Rules of Student Conduct

When a student is issued a Discipline Notice, a copy will be sent home with the student for parent signature and returned to the school office the following day. A copy of the Notice is also retained by the student's homeroom teacher and the Director or designee.

**Serious Discipline Violations**

Suspension (CA Education Code 48900-48926)

Serious violations of the Education Code will result in the student being suspended from school. These violations include:

1. Fighting; including participating, threatening, encouraging, intimidating, and harassing
2. Possession of dangerous objects or anything that looks like a dangerous object
3. Using, possessing, or selling drugs or any drug paraphernalia
4. Stealing or destroying property or possessions, including graffiti and/or vandalism
5. Consistently interrupting school or classroom activities
6. Sexually harassing other students or name-calling
7. Continuously displaying profanity or using vulgar language
8. Robbery or extortion, or receiving stolen property
9. Truancy or excessive tardiness
10. Displaying or participating in hate violence

When all attempts at correcting a student's behavior have proven unsuccessful, and/or after repeated offenses resulting in student suspensions, or in cases of extreme, unsafe behavior as addressed in the California Education Code, a student may be recommended for expulsion from SYVCS.

Expulsion (CA Education Code 48900-48926)

A decision to expel shall be based on a finding of one or both of the following:

1. Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct, or
2. Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.

The administrators of Santa Ynez Valley Charter School are required by law to suspend from school, and shall recommend expulsion from the school for the following offenses:

1. Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense
2. Possession of any knife, weapon, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil
3. Unlawful possession of any controlled substance
4. Robbery or extortion
5. Assault or battery, as defined in Sections 240 and 242 of the Penal Code, upon any school employee
6. Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm
7. Brandishing a knife at another person. As used in this section, "knife" means any dirk, dagger, or other weapon with a fixed, sharpened blade fitted primarily for stabbing, a weapon with a blade fitted primarily for stabbing, a weapon with a blade longer than 31/2 inches, a folding knife with a blade that locks into place, or a razor with an unguarded blade
8. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance
9. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault

**Additional School Policies**

**Classroom Food Policy**

SYVCS recognizes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. Staff, students, and parents will keep all classroom food activities free of nuts. Parents will be given the option, each school year, to request that staff only give their children food that has been provided by their parent. Parents can do this by notifying the office and teacher in writing of their request. As part of their request, parents will be strongly encouraged to bring non-perishable food to the classroom, where it can be kept for classroom food activities.

**Graduation Requirements**

Santa Ynez Valley Charter School recognizes the importance of creating an academically challenging educational environment that prepares students for high school and beyond. SYVCS also recognizes that participation in end of school activities is a privilege that students can earn. To support the school's mission and student achievement, the following graduation requirements are established.

Students must meet or exceed the following requirements to participate in the end of year activities:

- Earn a cumulative 2.0 (C) Grade Point Average for all three (3) Trimesters of 8$^{th}$ Grade. GPA will include all courses where letter grades are awarded including Physical Education and Elective classes.

- Cumulative GPA will be calculated as an average of all three (3) trimester report cards.
- No F's during the 3rd Trimester
- Complete a minimum of 10 hours of community service during their 8th grade year
- Not earn a Level 1 or be suspended within the final 3 weeks of the school year
- Return all school owned materials prior to the last week of school

Students not meeting these requirements will be provided an alternative educational activity during the end of year activities.

Goals established within a 504 or Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be considered for students with disabilities. The 504 or IEP team will meet to consider participation in end of the year activities for any student with a disability who may not meet the established graduation requirements.

SYVCS will provide students and parents with a copy of the graduation requirements during the first trimester of school. Students and parents will return a signed copy of the graduation requirements acknowledging that they have read and understand the graduation requirements. SYVCS will notify parents in writing following each grading period where their child is not meeting the graduation requirements and will work with parents to create an academic support plan that will help their child meet graduation requirements.

**Complaint Procedure**

When any member of the SYVCS community, including but not limited to students, parents or employees, have a complaint about a matter of school policy or procedure, concern over the actions of another community member, or a serious misunderstanding which develops between or among parties at SYVCS, it should be resolved through the Internal Complaint Policy.

Any complaint alleging failure to comply with state and federal laws, and/or discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying should be resolved through the Uniform Complaint Policy.

Complaints alleging sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault or battery should be resolved through the Title IX Policy.

The appropriate complaint form and full description of the policy can be requested from the school office.

**Acknowledgement of Student/Family Handbook**

All students and parents will sign that they have read the SYVCS Progressive Discipline Policy, Computer Use Policy, Bullying Policy and Student/Family Handbook, and that they agree to follow the rules and procedures which it describes.

## Appendix A: Annual Notifications

### Cancer Prevention Act

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

Because the vaccine is more effective when given at younger ages, two doses of HPV vaccine are recommended for all kids between the ages of 9 to 12 years, and the second dose should be given before the start of 8th grade. Students who wait until later to get their first dose of HPV vaccine may need three doses. HPV vaccination can prevent over 90 percent of cancers caused by HPV. HPV vaccines are very safe, and scientific research shows that the benefits of HPV vaccination far outweigh the potential risks.

### Concussion/Head Injuries

A concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.

Because SYVCS has elected to offer an athletic program, we must immediately remove from a school-sponsored athletic activity for the remainder of the day an athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during that activity. The athlete may not return to that activity until the athlete is evaluated by, and receives written clearance from, a licensed health care provider. If the licensed health care provider determines the athlete has a concussion or head injury, the athlete shall also complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than 7 days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet must be signed and returned by the athlete and the athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete initiates practice or competition. This requirement does not apply to an athlete engaging in an athletic activity during the regular school day or as part of a physical education course. The concussion information sheet can be found at this link.

### Dangers of Synthetic Drugs

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

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

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

counterfeit pills, and cocaine. Fentanyl mixed with any drug increases the likelihood of a fatal overdose. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to tell if drugs have been laced with fentanyl without additional testing, because fentanyl cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted when used as a lacing agent.

**Education of Foster and Mobile Youth**

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

For the full policy/annual notice please refer to this link on our website.

**English Learners**

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

**Human Trafficking Prevention**

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

In accordance with the California Healthy Youth Act, SYVCS is responsible for providing age-appropriate instruction on the prevention of human trafficking. Parents have the right to excuse their child from this instructional content by notifying the Director in writing at any time.

**Immunizations**

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

**Involuntary Removal Process**

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). [A31] The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action. The hearing shall be consistent with the Charter School's expulsion procedures. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the Charter School's suspension and expulsion policy.

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

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

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

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

**Lost or Damaged School Property**

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

**Mental Health Services**

The Charter School recognizes that when unidentified and unaddressed, mental health challenges can lead to poor academic performance, increased likelihood of suspension and expulsion, chronic absenteeism, student attrition, homelessness, incarceration, and/or violence. Access to mental health services at the Charter School and in our community is not only critical to improving the physical and emotional safety of students, but it also helps address barriers to learning and provides support so that all

students can learn problem-solving skills and achieve in school and, ultimately, in life. The following resources are available to your child:

- Special education services – if you believe your child may have a disability, you are encouraged to directly contact the Dean of Students, TJ Berry.
- Prescription medication while on campus – if your child requires prescription medication during school hours and you would like assistance from School staff in providing this medication to your child, please contact the Office Coordinator, Alexis Van Dyke.

For community mental health resources please refer to our Resources web page.

**Nondiscrimination Statement**

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

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

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

**Oral Health Assessment**

Students enrolled in kindergarten in a public school or while enrolled in first grade if the student was not previously enrolled in kindergarten in a public school are required to have an oral health assessment completed by a dental professional. Please contact the main office if you have questions about this requirement.

**Safe Storage of Firearms**

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

**Section 504**

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

qualifying for accommodations under Section 504 may make a referral for an evaluation to the Executive Director.

**Special Education /Students with Disabilities**

We are dedicated to the belief that all students can learn and must be guaranteed equal opportunity to become contributing members of the academic environment and society. The Charter School provides special education instruction and related services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEA") and Education Code requirements. These services are available for special education students enrolled at the Charter School. We offer high quality educational programs and services for all our students in accordance with the assessed needs of each student. The Charter School collaborates with parents, the student, teachers, and other agencies, as may be indicated, in order to appropriately serve the educational needs of each student.

Pursuant to the IDEA and relevant state law, the Charter School is responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating children enrolled at the Charter School with known or suspected disabilities to determine whether a need for special education and related services exists. This includes children with disabilities who are homeless or foster youth. The Charter School shall not deny nor discourage any student from enrollment solely due to a disability. If you believe your child may be eligible for special education services, please contact the Executive Director.

**State Testing**

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

**Student Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights include:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 5 business days after the day the Charter School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Charter School Executive Director or designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Charter School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

For more information on FERPA please visit this link on our website.

**Uniform Complaint Procedure**

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

1. Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group on the basis of the actual or perceived characteristics.
2. Complaints alleging a violation of state or federal law or regulation.
3. Complaints alleging noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees. A student enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity.
4. Complaints alleging noncompliance with the requirements governing the Local Control Funding Formula ("LCFF") or Local Control and Accountability Plans ("LCAP") under Education Code sections 47606.5 and 47607.3, as applicable.
5. Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding child nutrition programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 49490-49590.
6. Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding special education programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 56000-56865 and 59000-59300.

The full UCP can be viewed on our website at this link.

**School Meals and Student Wellness**

Pursuant to California law, SYVCS shall make available a nutritionally adequate breakfast and a nutritionally adequate lunch free of charge and with adequate time to eat, during each schoolday to any student who requests a meal without consideration of the student's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one (1) free breakfast meal and one (1) free lunch meal during each schoolday. This shall apply to all pupils.

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

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

Charter School shall allow students, teachers, and staff to bring and carry water bottles. Water bottles may be excluded from libraries, computer labs, science labs, and other places where it is deemed dangerous to have drinking water. Charter School may develop additional policies regarding the types of water bottles that may be carried.

Charter School shall encourage water consumption through promotional and educational activities and signage that focus on the benefits of drinking water and highlight any water bottle filling stations that are located on campus.

**Work Permits**

Beginning August 1, 2024, any minor seeking the signature of a Charter School verifying authority on a Statement of Intent to Employ a Minor and Request for a Work Permit-Certificate of Age will be issued, before or at the time of receiving the signature of the verifying authority, a document clearly explaining basic labor rights extended to workers. An infographic explaining these rights is available at: https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Know-Your-Rights-FINAL.pdf

**Appendix B: Complete Policies**

**Progressive Discipline and Suspension & Expulsion Policy**

**Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, And Bullying Policy**

**Title IX Policy Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sex**