



# Sierra Foothill

Charter School

4952 School House Road  
Catheys Valley, CA 95306

## Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook

2018 - 2019 School Year

Mindy Bolar, Principal/Superintendent

Office Phone: 209-742-6222

This handbook is a “living” document. SFCS looks to its students, parents, and guardians to have input on its structure and content. The SFCS Governance Committee plays an integral role in updates of this document.

*Please sign and return the “Acknowledgement of Receipt and Acceptance” page (Appendix I)*

Board Approved \_\_\_\_\_

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***Welcome to Sierra Foothill Charter School (SFCS)!***  
***We are proud to be a free public charter school that is open to all.***

**SFCS Mission**

To provide a rigorous, well-rounded education – with a focus on science and sustainability – that helps students acquire the academic and personal skills they need to excel in higher education, think creatively, engage in a diverse society, and pursue their dreams.

**SFCS Vision**

To establish educational excellence as a cornerstone of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for Catheys Valley and the greater foothill community.

To fulfill our Mission and Vision, SFCS offers:

- An integrative, place-based, college preparatory curriculum for all students.
- A cooperative and caring learning environment.
- A balanced approach to the development of the mind and body.
- Opportunities for collaboration between students, staff, families, and the community.

SFCS emphasizes hands-on approaches to learning and discovery. It's not what SFCS teaches that is innovative, but how. Research shows that children learn academic concepts best by first experiencing them in familiar and practical ways with their own hands. SFCS will teach California state-mandated curriculum standards through an inquiry-based approach to learning that has been demonstrated to increase student motivation and achievement.

**Individualized Inquiry-Based Instruction**

Inquiry-based learning is a student-centered, active learning approach focused on questioning, critical thinking, and problem solving. Students will be individually challenged in daily studies. In addition to direct skills instruction, teachers will provide structured and guided projects in which students “discover” what they need to learn. Research suggests that this challenging process of discovery makes for more lasting knowledge.

**A Well-Rounded Approach to California State Standards**

SFCS students will meet or exceed standards of the California Department of Education in science, mathematics, English language arts, social sciences and history, and physical education. SFCS curriculum will include instruction in music and the arts, Spanish language, and practical skills needed for success in school and life.

## **Sierra Foothill Charter School Administration**

Sierra Foothill Charter School is considered a Single Site School District. As such, our principal has the responsibilities of a superintendent. The **SFCS Principal/Superintendent** has the primary responsibility for the school. If you have a question that concerns the school, please direct it to:

### **Mindy Bolar**

Principal/Superintendent

[principal@sierrafoothillcharterschool.org](mailto:principal@sierrafoothillcharterschool.org)

(209) 742-6222

## **Sierra Foothill Charter School Instructional Staff**

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Long Term Independent Study

Coordinator/Teacher

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**Sierra Foothill Charter School Support Staff**

**Robin Cook**

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Business Manager

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## **Sierra Foothill Charter School Board**

Sierra Foothill Charter School is governed by a corporate Board of Directors (“Board”) in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which are consistent with the terms of its charter. The Board consists of no less than five (5) and no more than nine (9) voting members, at least two of whom are parents. The Board serves on a voluntary basis. Members do not receive compensation for their time and efforts. The Board is made up of community members with expertise in areas critical to school success, including but not limited to: education (curriculum, instruction, assessment), school finance, fundraising, facilities, governance, business (administration, management), and law.

The Board is responsible for the *development of policies to ensure student success, promote the school’s mission and vision*, and to *provide fiscal oversight*. In addition, the Board is fully responsible for the *operation and fiscal affairs* of SFCS. Current Board members are:

- Chris Ramirez, Interim Board Chair, [mpa2228@yahoo.com](mailto:mpa2228@yahoo.com), 209-617-8438
- Angelina Brouillette, Vice Chair, [angelinabr2003@yahoo.com](mailto:angelinabr2003@yahoo.com), 209-966-6361
- Jeff Aranguena, Member MCUSD/MCOE, [jaranguena@mcusd.org](mailto:jaranguena@mcusd.org), 209-347-7416
- Corinne Dedini, Member, [cdedini@aol.com](mailto:cdedini@aol.com), 209-626-9503
- Amber Edwards, Member, [aclassicedwards@gmail.com](mailto:aiclassicedwards@gmail.com), 209-742-5611
- Kori Smith, Member, [californiakori@gmail.com](mailto:californiakori@gmail.com), 209-617-9722

### **Board Meetings**

The Sierra Foothill Charter School Board typically holds regular meetings the fourth Tuesday of every month at the school. Occasionally, the Board holds special meetings. Agendas are posted on the bulletin board outside the office, outside of the school gate, and on the website at least three days prior to regular meetings and 24 hours prior to special meetings. Unless closed session is specified, meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

## **General Information**

### **Hours of Instruction**

8:30AM- 2:00PM on Mondays

8:30AM-3:15PM on Tuesdays-Fridays

### **After School Program Hours**

2:00-6:00PM on Mondays

3:15-6:00PM on Tuesdays-Thursdays

3:15-5:00PM on Fridays

Children may arrive starting at 8:00 AM, when supervision is available. Breakfast is served from 8:00-8:15AM daily. The SFCS Office is open from 8:00AM-4:00PM each school day.

### **School Meals**

SFCS participates in the National School Lunch Program, offering free and reduced priced meals to those who qualify. All school families are requested to submit an application for this program. Applications are sent home at the beginning of the school year and available in the school office.

Meal prices are as follows:

*Student Breakfast:* \$1.75 full price, \$.30 reduced price, milk \$.35

*Student Lunch:* \$3.75 full price, \$.40 reduced price, milk \$.35

Menus will be sent home each month. Meals should be paid for in the office before the start of the school day. Families may pay in advance for several weeks at a time. Please see Appendix H for further information regarding the School's meal charge procedures.

### **After school snacks**

Students participating in the After School Program are offered, free, reduced, and full priced snacks. The full price of a snack is \$1.50 and the reduced price is \$0.15.

### **Communication**

Sierra Foothill Charter School does its best to keep families informed of what is happening on campus through a variety of means:

- Teachers communicate regularly with parents via classroom blogs, web pages, Class Dojo, classroom newsletters, email, or other tools.
- The school emails and sends home a bulletin at the beginning of each week.
- The office sends announcements and reminders via email.
- SFCS maintains a website with school information at [www.sierrafoothillcharterschool.org](http://www.sierrafoothillcharterschool.org).
- SFCS maintains a Facebook page and encourages parents and guardians to "friend" us for frequent bits of news and photos.

SFCS strives for open communication. If you have information that would be helpful to us, or if you have questions, please let us know. We welcome your input and would like to hear from you.

### **School and Classroom Visitations**

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. All visitors are required to sign in at the office before entering any classroom. Visitation requiring serious private discussion with the teacher should be pre-arranged so as not to disrupt the teaching and learning process, and so they have time to focus on visitors. Parental involvement means so much to our students and is appreciated by staff as well. Research has shown that parent involvement in their child's education is the most powerful way to ensure success. SFCS believes that the

parent-school partnerships are the key to academic and social success. We welcome you!

### **Parent/Guardian Participation/Volunteer Request**

Upon registration of your student, each parent and caregiver becomes a member of the Sierra Foothill Charter School Family and is highly encouraged to participate actively in the school. Sierra Foothill Charter School is committed to bringing your child a great education, with a focus on the sciences and project-based learning, plenty of personal attention, and a rich learning environment that includes music and the arts. We need you! You have special gifts and talents that will benefit each and every student here at SFCS.

SFCS will have sign-ups for volunteering at school-sponsored activities offered throughout the year. All stipulations and requirements covered in the “Volunteer” section below apply.

### **Back to School Night**

Back to School Night is a great opportunity to visit your child’s classroom, learn about curriculum and classroom procedures, and to briefly experience your child’s daily life at school. Back to School Night is held in August.

### **Open House**

Near the end of the school year, Sierra Foothill Charter School will hold an Open House. Much student work will be on display. This is a great opportunity to celebrate all of the milestones accomplished throughout the school year.

### **Nutrition and Wellness**

Please do not send candy, gum, or soda, as students will not be allowed to consume them at school. The California Department of Health has made student nutrition into a law. Simply put, public school children can only be provided with nutritious foods and snacks. It is our goal and part of our charter to educate your children in a healthy lifestyle. Please help and support us on this very challenging and student-centered wellness policy. Your child’s first recess of the day is a snack recess. Please provide your child with nutritious snacks, or purchase a breakfast that can be saved until snack time.

## **SFCS Admission Procedures**

If you are receiving this handbook, you have already been through the Application Process. Our policy is included here for your reference.

### **Application Process**

The Charter School application process is comprised of the following:

1. Parent/guardian attendance at a school tour or phone conference
2. Completion of a student enrollment application

Registration packets for students who are admitted will also gather the following:

1. Registration Form
2. Proof of Residency

3. Proof of Immunization or Exemption note signed by a Doctor (See Appendix F)
4. Home Language Survey
5. Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
6. Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
7. Release of records

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether the school has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Charter School will advertise on the SFCS website and in the local newspaper, and hold a public random drawing to determine those students who will be offered admission. Existing students will be guaranteed enrollment in the following school year and will be exempt from the lottery.

The following category of students will also be exempt from the lottery and will be offered admission if space is available:

- Siblings of enrolled students (taken in order that their enrollment applications were received)
- Home School students who have been in the program for at least two trimesters may request in-seat placement for the following school year (taken in order that their re-enrollment applications were received)

If space is available after admitting siblings of enrolled students or Home School students, the following category of students will be exempt from the lottery and will be offered admission, subject to a "small percentage" limitation that the total number of students allowed under the exemption not exceed 10 percent of total enrollment:

- Children of founders, full-time teachers and/or staff members (taken in order that their enrollment applications were received)

If space remains, a weighted lottery system will be used for the remaining non-exempt students and enrollment preferences in the form of weightings shall be as follows:

1. Residents of the District (weighting 4:1)
2. All other applicants (weighting 1:1)

This admissions process will be amended as required by future changes to the Education Code. At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a waiting list according to their draw in the lottery. This waiting list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. Children who complete the application process after the open enrollment period will be added to the waiting list in the order applications were received. Classrooms will be filled off the waiting list. Each year's waiting list is independent of previous years.

If a lottery is necessary, the following estimated application, public random drawing, and admission schedule and process is proposed, and may be amended by the Charter School Board as necessary.

### *January – Open Enrollment Window Opens*

Enrollment applications available at school administrative office or online at the Charter School's website.

### *April – Open Enrollment Window Closes and Lottery Held*

Public random drawing conducted (if necessary). Admission notification and enrollment packets are distributed upon student's selection at public random drawing.

### *Two Weeks After Lottery Notification*

Completed registration form, proof of residency, and proof of age requirements are due back to the Charter School within two (2) weeks of the date of the public random lottery. Remaining enrollment documents including proof of immunizations and proof of withdrawal from prior school and district of residence, are due back to the Charter School by August 1.

**NOTE:** Existing students are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year and are exempt from the lottery, as long as a re-enrollment form is completed and submitted during the open enrollment period.

Siblings of enrolled students are also exempt from the lottery and will be offered admission if space is available (taken in order that enrollment applications were received).

## **Volunteering at SFCS**

SFCS came together through the hard work and dedication of community volunteers. In order to sustain our quality programs in the face of increasing State budget cuts and provide the best academic environment possible for our students, parent and guardian support is crucial. SFCS encourages you to choose a volunteer role that suits your personality and other commitments. Keeping in mind volunteers may not perform duties that expose them to confidential information; options include, but are not limited to:

- volunteering in the classroom
- tutoring students
- working with students in the Learning Garden
- assisting with field trips
- assisting with morning or lunch supervision
- assisting with recess supervision
- mentoring service learning projects
- assisting teachers with photocopying
- assisting the office staff
- collating classroom or homework assignments
- stuffing children's folders
- assisting with grounds and garden care
- assisting with fundraisers or other school events
- serving on school committees

There may be tasks you can help with at a time convenient for you at home (cutting out items for class projects, for instance.) *If you have something you would like to help us with, please let those in the office know.* In addition to the information provided here, you will be receiving a separate letter regarding volunteering at school. Please read the descriptions of the various activities in this handbook and in the letter and choose one or more that best match your interests and talents, or suggest a new task to us. (If you are already committing time, still please fill out the form contained in the letter and submit it with your child(ren)'s other first day of school paperwork.)

Unfortunately, becoming a volunteer is no longer as easy as it used to be. State law requires that all school volunteers be fingerprinted, pass a background check, and show proof of tuberculosis (TB) clearance from within the past four years. If you would like to volunteer at the school—and we encourage you to do so—please contact the Office Manager to obtain the appropriate paperwork for fingerprinting, background check and receive information about TB clearance (refer to Appendix E).

Parents/guardians who volunteer on field trips where they agree to drive students in their cars and/or stay overnight with students must go through the volunteer process, and there are a few more steps involved in clearance process when it comes to transporting students. The Office Manager can assist with these additional necessary steps.

## **Fundraising Activities**

SFCS is dependent on the generosity of enrolled families and the community to make up for the state's budget shortfalls in order to provide the best educational experiences possible for students. Another great way to volunteer at SFCS is to organize, host, or participate in fundraising activities.

SFCS has pursued a variety of fundraising opportunities in the past, including Pick-a-Parties. Pick-a-Parties are a chance to host an event in which you have a personal interest and, at the same time, raise money to support SFCS school programs. For instance, if you enjoy cooking, you could host a one-time cooking class. If you have a talent for scrapbooking or card making, you could host a party to share with others your creative ideas and get them started on making scrapbook pages or cards of their own. If you enjoy football, you could host a game day football party. You provide the idea, venue, and parameters (for instance, 8 people for \$25 each -- or whatever is appropriate and comfortable to you). SFCS will help as needed with creating a flyer, advertising the event through various means, signing up attendees, and providing any needed volunteers to help make the event go smoothly. Events could be for adults only, for families, or for children.

Some examples include:

Learn to Can Fruits Vegetables  
Camp Out

Karate Lesson  
Tie Dye extravaganza

Softball Game  
Horseback Riding Lesson  
Painting and a Picnic  
Make Your Own Holiday Cards  
Fishing at the River  
Reverse Drawing  
Golf Tournament  
Hike event  
Flea Market

Kite flying  
Learn to Rope  
Paint a Plate  
Pumpkin Carving  
Catalogue Fundraiser  
Bake Sale  
Target Tournament  
Spa Day  
Frock Swap

Anyone with an interest to share, a passion to teach, or just something plain fun to do, who would like to turn it into a Pick-a-Party, please contact the front office.

SFCS is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. As such, all donations to SFCS are tax deductible.

## **General Procedures and Responsibilities**

### **Attendance requirements and State funding**

State law requires attendance in a full-time school program, and thus the state bases SFCS's funding on our school's Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Only children in seats or enrolled in an Independent Student Program "count" toward SFCS's ADA funding level. Even if a child's absence is "excused" (see below), the absence will negatively affect SFCS's ADA in the amount of *approx. \$38 per child per day, which adds up quickly!* SFCS encourages parents/guardians to keep sick children at home. However, since charter schools are allowed to enroll students in an Independent Study Program for as little as one to ten days, SFCS also encourages those with sick children to enroll those children in Independent Study for the days the children are ill. This will also help your child keep up with assignments in class. SFCS will follow all state mandated attendance procedures for charter schools.

### **Independent Study Program for Illness**

If your child becomes ill, we request that you contact the school office as soon as you know your child will miss school. On your behalf, the Office Manager will request an Independent Study contract from your child's teacher, indicating the work to be done at home, as your child is able. Not only will this allow SFCS to report your child's attendance to prevent revenue loss, but it will keep your child from falling behind in class. Independent Study assignments must be completed by the student while absent and turned in when the student returns to school. Contact the Principal/Superintendent for more information.

### **Independent Study Program**

SFCS recognizes that there are times when students must be absent for personal reasons over a short period of time. Should you anticipate an absence of *even one day because of a personal reason*, please request an Independent Study (IS) contract by calling the office with this request or sending a note. *Due to the impact on a student's instructional program,*

*please note that the maximum number of Independent Study contract days for personal reasons is limited to 10 per year. Preparing and processing Independent Study contract materials is a time-consuming task for teachers and office staff, so providing at least three days notice prior to the student's absence for personal reasons is requested.* Independent Study contracts must be signed by a parent/guardian prior to the anticipated absence. Independent Study assignments must be completed by the student while absent *and turned in when the student returns to school.* Incomplete Independent Study contracts are treated as unexcused absences. Contact the Principal/Superintendent for more information.

### **Long Term Independent Study Program/Home School Program**

SFCS recognizes that parents/guardians are their child's first and most important teachers. Research tells us that parent involvement makes a big difference. Some parents/guardians prefer to educate their children at home rather than in a classroom environment. SFCS respects this choice and will work with parents/guardians to make long term Independent Study (IS) the way to fulfill state law requiring attendance in a full-time school program. Like short term Independent Study Programs, long term Independent Study Programs require parents/guardians to sign a contract. Long term IS programs also require a meeting with a teacher and the turning in of an attendance form and sample school work at least once per month (more often can be arranged). If you are interested in this option, please contact the Principal/Superintendent or the Home School Program Teacher for more information.

### **Absences**

Absences may be excused only for: (1) personal illness or injury, (2) medical or dental appointments that can't be made outside the school hours, and (3) attendance at the funeral of an immediate family member. *Please send a note to the office within three days of an absence, or the absence will be counted as unexcused.* Unexcused absences, an unusually high number of excused absences, or a pattern of tardiness will be reviewed by the teacher and Principal/Superintendent, and discussed with parents/guardians as necessary due to the potential impact on student achievement.

### **Tardiness**

When your child must be absent or late.... *It is your responsibility to phone the school prior to 9:00 AM.* This policy is made for the safety of your child. *School lunch must be ordered by 8:45AM to ensure your child receives a lunch.* Please don't forget to call! (209-742-6222) Students are responsible for promptly completing any make-up work.

### **Homework**

Homework is important and intended to be an extension of learning. Requirements and specific procedures are determined by each teacher. However, in general SFCS students are asked to read and/or be read to every evening, and to practice basic math skills as necessary. Establishing a regular time each day for homework and a quiet place to complete it supports the development of positive study habits. If your child struggles to complete homework or it takes more time than expected, please speak with your child's teacher.

## **Medications**

Prescription or over-the-counter medicines must be accompanied by written instructions signed by a parent/guardian or physician. *All medication must be kept in the school office and dispensed by an adult.* Students who have a condition requiring daily, ongoing administration of medication must have written instructions, signed by the physician and parent/guardian, and on file in the school office. Medications must be updated at the beginning of each school year. The school does not keep any over-the-counter medications on site and school personnel are prohibited from administering any other medicine, including aspirin and calamine lotion.

## **Reporting Responsibilities**

School employees are mandated by law (PC§11166) to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect (either physical or emotional). All employees have attended training sessions to enhance their knowledge and awareness of this subject. Additionally, Education Code §48900.2 requires enforcement of the SFCS sexual-harassment policy.

## **Music**

All students at SFCS have the opportunity to receive music instruction. The SFCS band program is for students in grades 5-8. (Students in grades 1-4 who have band instrument experience may also audition.) Band is *optional* for all students, but highly encouraged. Students in grades TK-2 will be learning foundational music skills such as rhythm and singing. Students in grades 3-4 grade will be learning how to play the ukulele and singing.

## **Library**

Students will be given regular opportunities to check out books and other materials from the school library. It is important that these materials be kept in good condition and returned to the library by the due date. Families will be charged for lost or damaged books.

## **After School Activities**

*All students must check in with their parent or designated caregiver upon dismissal from school before they may return to school grounds for non-school activities.* Students who are dismissed prior to 3:15 may not return to school until after their class dismissal, to avoid interference with instruction of other students. Students wishing to stay for an adult-supervised, organized activity should have evidence of parent/guardian permission to do so. Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately and follow school behavior rules whenever they are involved in activities on school property. SFCS staff does not supervise activities that are not school-sponsored/organized.

## **Leaving Campus**

Students must be signed-out by authorized persons in order to leave campus during the school day. *Only authorized persons (those listed on the student's emergency card) will be allowed to take your child from school. Please keep emergency cards up to date. If you need someone not listed on the emergency card to take your child from school, you must send a signed, dated note so stating.*

## **Progress Reports**

Between trimesters, teachers will keep parents/guardians informed of student progress and share work that has not been completed or areas of concern. At any time during the school year, parents/guardians who need more information are welcome to contact the teacher for a conference.

## **Conferences**

SFCS will schedule parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first trimester. By this time, teachers will have become very familiar with each student's strengths and needs. They will be able to discuss performance and needs noted on the report card with parents. At this first conference, parents/guardians can also express the goals they have for their children, thus continuing a solid network of communication that addresses each individual child. Teachers will contact parents/guardians for additional conferences when needed during the remainder of the school year. Parents/guardians are invited to request a conferences at any time during the school year when they would like more information about their child's progress.

## **School Policies and Procedures**

For further information on these or other SFCS policies and procedures, please visit the school website, [sierrafoothillcharterschool.org](http://sierrafoothillcharterschool.org). Copies can also be obtained in the School office.

## **Transitional Kindergarten**

Sierra Foothill Charter School offers a high-quality transitional kindergarten (TK) program for eligible children who do not yet meet the minimum age criterion for kindergarten. The program assists children in developing the academic, social, and emotional skills they need to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

### **Eligibility**

Sierra Foothill Charter School's TK program shall admit children whose fifth birthday lies between September 2nd and December 2nd. If space permits, children born close to these dates may be considered for TK program placement (see Appendix G).

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

Sierra Foothill Charter School's TK program is based on a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate. Students who complete the TK program shall be eligible to continue in kindergarten the following school year. A student shall not attend more than two years in a combination of transitional kindergarten and kindergarten.

## **Student Academic Expectations**

Learning and proficiency are the primary focus areas at SFCS. All curricula are aligned with the California State Standards. SFCS staff provide differentiated instruction so that all students can learn. Performance is assessed with instruments aligned with the state standards, such as SFCS benchmark assessments and Early Literacy Assessments. Students scoring below grade level are provided with intervention strategies and programs to improve their skills.

A strategic plan is developed for each student performing below grade level to document and address observed strengths and areas for growth. Each student is monitored for improvement at regular intervals. If progress is less than expected, students are referred to a Student Study Team (SST) composed of parents/guardians, the Principal/Superintendent, the classroom teacher, and additional staff as appropriate. At a SST Meeting, the team determines additional supports needed and plans next steps to accelerate and monitor the student's progress.

## **Promotion/Acceleration/Retention**

### **Promotion**

Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade-level standards of expected student achievement.

### **Acceleration**

Acceleration is the process of advancing pupils at a more rapid rate than experienced by most, and may be considered when pupils are performing significantly above grade level (approximately 2 grades above level or at or above the midpoint for the highest performance level on State standardized tests).

#### *Acceleration from Kindergarten to First Grade*

A student enrolled in kindergarten may be admitted to the first grade at the discretion of the Principal/Superintendent or designee and with the consent of the parent/guardian, upon determination that the child is ready for first-grade work.

Admission shall be subject to the following minimum criteria:

1. The student is at least five years of age.
2. The student has attended a public school kindergarten for a long enough time to enable school personnel to evaluate his/her ability.
3. The student is in the upper five percent of his/her age group in terms of general mental ability.
4. The physical development and social maturity of the student are consistent with his/her advanced mental ability.
5. The parent/guardian of the student has filed a written statement with the school district approving the placement in first grade.

### *Acceleration at Grades 1-8*

When a high academic achievement is evident, the Principal/Superintendent or designee may recommend a student for acceleration of courses or grade placement. The student may be promoted one grade to a higher grade level for one or more (subjects) courses. The student's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

### **Retention**

As early as possible in the school year and in students' school careers, the Principal/Superintendent or designee shall identify students who may be at risk of retention or recommended for retention in accordance with law, Board policy, and the following criteria.

Students shall be identified on the basis of a combination of multiple measures. The following indicators of academic achievement shall be used:

1. Teacher grades and classroom assessments
2. State-wide achievement test scores (e.g. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress)
3. Other performance-based assessments designed by the school/district
4. Attendance
5. In the case of English Language Learners, student progress toward proficiency in use of the English language
6. In the case of special needs students, individual progress toward completion of Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan objectives

When a student is identified as being at risk of retention or recommended for retention, the Principal/Superintendent or designee shall so notify the student's parents/guardians in writing early in the school year. The student's parent/guardian shall be provided an opportunity to consult with the teacher(s) responsible for the decision to promote or retain the student. (Education Code 48070.5)

Before retaining a student, the Principal/Superintendent or designee shall determine that:

1. The student has not met standards of expected student achievement.
2. Remedial help has been provided consistently but has not sufficiently prepared the student for advancement.
3. Appropriate support targeted to the student's needs and maturity will be provided in addition to retention.

Parent agreement with the decision is suggested but not required except at the kindergarten level.

## **Reclassification/Redesignation of English Language Learners**

English language learners shall be re-designated as fluent English proficient when they are able to comprehend, speak, read and write English well enough to receive instruction in the regular program and make academic progress at a level substantially equivalent to that of students of the same age or grade whose primary language is English and who are in the regular course of study. (Education Code 52164.6)

The following measures shall be used to determine whether an English language learner shall be reclassified as fluent English proficient: (5 CCR 11303)

1. Assessment of English language proficiency utilizing the English Language Proficiency Assessments of California (ELPAC) as the primary criterion. Student overall performance levels of 3 or 4 in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are necessary to consider reclassification.
2. Recommendation of the student's classroom teacher based on objective data that may include passing marks in English Language Arts areas or the Report Card.
3. Results of performance on California Assessment of Student Performance indicating scores at the expected grade level.
4. Parent/guardian opinion and consultation during a re-designation interview.
5. *Notification of Reclassification* letter signed by parent/guardian and filed in student cumulative record folder.

The Principal/Superintendent or designee shall provide subsequent monitoring and support for re-designated students, including but not limited to monitoring the performance of re-designated students in the core curriculum in comparison with their native-English speaking peers, monitoring the rate of re-designation, and ensuring correct classification and placement.

## **Health and Wellness at SFCS**

Sierra Foothill Charter School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Sierra Foothill Charter School that:

- SFCS will engage students, parents/guardians, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades TK-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety

of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

- SFCS participates in available federal school meal programs, including the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program.

SFCS will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services. To view SFCS's full Wellness Policy, please request a copy from the office.

## **Homeless Education Policy**

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Sierra Foothill Charter School ensures that homeless students have access to the same free and appropriate public education provided to other students within the district, and ensures that homeless children are not segregated or stigmatized on the basis of their status as homeless. SFCS provides homeless students with access to education and other services necessary for these students to meet the same challenging academic standards as other students. The Principal/Superintendent or designee shall ensure that placement decisions for homeless students are based on the student's best interest as defined in law and administrative regulation.

## **Dressing and Grooming**

Rules and regulations are established to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. The purpose of the student dress and grooming guidelines is to encourage students to come to school properly attired to participate in the educational process or school-sponsored activity.

There are certain things that are not appropriate to wear to school:

- Shoes should have a back to them (not strapless) and should be comfortable for active participation and play.
- Flip flops are not allowed.
- Blouses or shirts should cover the waist and not be transparent without an undershirt.
- Skirts or shorts may not be shorter than mid-thigh.
- Low rise pants/shorts and baggy pants/shorts that slip down are not acceptable.
- Hats and caps are not to be worn backwards or sideways on the head, and not inside classrooms (except those worn for religious or safety reasons). A hat for sun protection during recess, gardening and outdoor service learning projects is strongly advised.
- Glasses, other than prescription, shall not be worn inside school buildings.

Prescription sunglasses shall not be worn inside school buildings without a valid medical note on file in the office.

- No perfume or cologne should be worn at school.

In cases of questionable dress and/or grooming not covered by the guidelines, the Principal/Superintendent will determine the appropriateness and make the final decision. Students will be calling home to arrange for an acceptable change of clothes, if necessary.

## **Toys and Electronics**

Personal toys and equipment are not allowed at school except when pertaining to the curriculum (as in sharing time in the primary grades or special projects in any grade). Exemptions from this policy are a student's personal computer, Ipad, Chromebook or other electronic device to be used for the sole purposes of school related work and or activities.

Likewise, electronic equipment is not permitted to be used at school without specific permission from the teacher or Principal/Superintendent. Again, students are not allowed to use electronic devices during breaks, lunch, and recess before or after school to listen to music, take photos, send text messages, make or receive phone calls or use the internet without prior permission. This includes personal music players, hand-held video games, iPods, tablets or other technology devices.

If permission is given, these items should be tucked out of site in clothes pockets or backpacks during school hours. If students are using any electronic device without permission during school hours, the teacher/staff member will take the device and keep it until the end of the day. The second time a device is confiscated a parent/guardian will be required to come to school to pick up the device. The third time a device is confiscated will result in loss of privilege to have a device on campus for 20 days. Further incidences of inappropriate use of electronic equipment (may include the use of a friend's device) will result in loss of privileges for the remainder of the year and possible suspension or other disciplinary action.

SFCS is not responsible for any lost or stolen private property or confiscated phones/electronics/devices. In an emergency, staff will assist a student in calling home from a school phone. Cell phones are permitted on campus but students are required to get specific permission from the teacher or Principal/Superintendent to make/receive calls during school hours, including nutrition breaks and on the bus.

## **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for SFCS Computer Systems**

The Sierra Foothill Charter School Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP") is to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by users online, prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information, and to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). As used in this policy, "user" includes anyone using the computers,

Internet, email, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications or equipment provided by SFCS (the “network”) regardless of the physical location of the user. The AUP applies even when SFCS-provided equipment (laptops, tablets, etc.) is used off campus.

SFCS will use technology protection measures to block or filter, to the extent practicable, access of visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, and harmful to minors over the network. SFCS reserves the right to monitor users' online activities and to access, review, copy, and store or delete any electronic communication or files and disclose them to others as it deems necessary. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of SFCS property, network and/or Internet access or files, including email.

SFCS will take all necessary measures to fortify the network against potential cyber security threats. This may include blocking access to SFCS applications — including but not limited to email, data management and reporting tools, and other web applications — outside the United States and Canada.

### **Acceptable Uses of the SFCS Computer Network or the Internet**

SFCS must verify each year students using the computer network and Internet access for that school year have a signed page acknowledging this policy. Students who are under 18 must have their parents or guardians sign this page and SFCS must keep it on file. Once signed, that permission/acknowledgement page remains in effect until revoked by the parent/guardian, or the student loses the privilege of using SFCS’s network due to violation of this policy or is no longer an SFCS student. Employees and other users are required to follow this policy. Even without signature, all users must follow this policy and report any misuse of the network or Internet to a teacher, supervisor or other appropriate SFCS personnel. Access is provided primarily for education and SFCS business. Staff may use the Internet, for incidental personal use during duty-free time. By using the network, users have agreed to this policy. If a user is uncertain about whether a particular use is acceptable or appropriate, he or she should consult a teacher, supervisor or other appropriate SFCS personnel.

### **Unacceptable Uses of the Computer Network or Internet**

These are examples of inappropriate activity on SFCS website, but SFCS reserves the right to take immediate action regarding activities that (1) create security and/or safety issues for SFCS, students, employees, schools, network or computer resources, or (2) that expend SFCS resources on content SFCS in its sole discretion determines lacks legitimate educational content/purpose, or (3) other activities as determined by SFCS as inappropriate.

- Violating any state or federal law or municipal ordinance, such as: accessing or transmitting pornography of any kind, obscene depictions, harmful materials, materials that encourage others to violate the law, confidential information or copyrighted materials;
- Criminal activities that can be punished under law;
- Selling or purchasing illegal items or substances;

- The unauthorized collection of email addresses (“harvesting”) of email addresses from the Global Address List and other SFCS directories;
- Obtaining and/or using anonymous email sites; spamming; spreading viruses;
- Causing harm to others or damage to their property, such as:
  1. Using profane, abusive, or impolite language; threatening, harassing, or making damaging or false statements about others or accessing, transmitting, or downloading offensive, harassing, or disparaging materials;
  2. Deleting, copying, modifying, or forging other users' names, emails, files, or data; disguising one's identity, impersonating other users, or sending anonymous email;
  3. Damaging computer equipment, files, data or the network in any way, including intentionally accessing, transmitting or downloading computer viruses or other harmful files or programs, or disrupting any computer system performance;
  4. Using any District computer to pursue “hacking,” internal or external to SFCS, or attempting to access information protected by privacy laws; or
  5. Accessing, transmitting or downloading large files, including "chain letters" or any type of "pyramid schemes".
- Engaging in uses that jeopardize access or lead to unauthorized access into others' accounts or other computer networks, such as:
  1. Using another's account password(s) or identifier(s);
  2. Interfering with other users' ability to access their account(s); or
  3. Disclosing your own or anyone's password to others or allowing them to use your or another's account(s).
- Using the network or Internet for Commercial purposes:
  1. Using the Internet for personal financial gain;
  2. Using the Internet for personal advertising, promotion, or financial gain; or
  3. Conducting for-profit business activities and/or engaging in non-government related fundraising or public relations activities such as solicitation for religious purposes, or lobbying for personal political purposes.

### **Student Internet Safety**

Students under the age of eighteen should only access SFCS accounts outside of school if a parent/guardian supervises their usage at all times. The student's parent/guardian is responsible for monitoring the minor's use;

1. Students shall not reveal on the Internet personal information about themselves or other persons. For example, students should not reveal their name, home address, telephone number, or display photographs of themselves or others;
2. Students shall not meet in person anyone they have met only on the Internet; and
3. Students must abide by all laws, this Acceptable Use Policy and all SFCS security policies.

### **Penalties for Improper Use**

The use of an SFCS account is a privilege, not a right, and misuse will result in the restriction or cancellation of the account. Misuse may also lead to disciplinary and/or legal action for both students and employees, including suspension, expulsion, dismissal from SFCS employment, or criminal prosecution by government authorities. SFCS will attempt to tailor any disciplinary action to the specific issues related to each violation.

## **Disclaimer**

SFCS makes no guarantees about the quality of the services provided and is not responsible for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from use of the network or accounts. Any additional charges a user accrues due to the use of the SFCS network are to be borne by the user. SFCS also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement, accessible on the computer network or the Internet, is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of SFCS, its affiliates, or employees.

## **Standards Of Behavior**

Our goal at Sierra Foothill Charter School is to provide a safe, positive and supportive instructional environment to enable students to achieve their educational goals. We set high expectations for student behavior to ensure that we provide the best opportunities to learn.

At Sierra Foothill Charter School, students are part of a school-wide community of learners and are expected to be good citizens who are:

- Trustworthy
- Respectful
- Fair
- Caring
- Responsible

## **General Rules For Students**

Follow adult instructions.

Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Use appropriate language and “tone”.

Be respectful to everyone.

Follow classroom and playground rules.

Appropriate behavior can be encouraged with a focus on character education. In order to help students reach their full potential, SFCS has implemented a program called *Core Virtues*. Appendix A provides further information about this beneficial program and outlines ways SFCS recognizes positive citizenship.

Students who exhibit inappropriate and/or dangerous behavior are subject to disciplinary action including on-campus suspension, off-campus suspension and referral for expulsion. Further information can be found in Appendices B and C.

## **Playground Rules**

- Play fairly and respectfully.
- Care for the safety of others and yourself.

- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- Eating while playing is not allowed.
- Tackling, shoving, dog-piling, and other rough play is not allowed.
- Equipment must be used properly.
- Play in appropriate areas and on equipment as permitted.

### **Lunchtime Rules**

- Students are to stay seated while eating until a lunchtime supervisor indicates they may be excused. Students may continue eating if they need more time.
- Students are responsible for their own trash, including picking up whatever has fallen onto the floor, and should recycle appropriately.
- Students are expected to use appropriate manners while eating.
- Students are not to “trade” or give-away their food from home.
- Students are encouraged to take home lunch they do not finish or open.
- No gum, candy or soda is permitted.

### **Disciplinary Action**

As we further improve school climate, a school goal is to reduce misbehavior and office referrals by setting clear rules and expectations, rewarding appropriate behavior, utilizing progressive discipline, and providing individualized interventions for students with chronic behavior concerns.

While most students consistently behave safely and appropriately, there are times when misbehavior warrants intervention and consequences. Teachers and other staff use a variety of classroom and playground behavior management strategies to address such behavior. When these strategies are not successful in changing that behavior and/or serious incidents occur, it is necessary for additional action to be taken. Action taken is dependent upon severity and/or frequency of the infraction and the developmental level of the student. Discipline is used as a means to teach and reinforce appropriate behavior.

Careful consideration is given to individual situations, so that the school’s response to the student is appropriate, fair, and effective. Consequences may be increased in cases of repeat offenses. Suspensions will be considered when behavior is disruptive and detrimental to the operation of the school. In the case of extreme acts of violence, threats, and/or possession of disruptive, harmful, or illegal items at school, students are subject to immediate action, which may include short or long term suspension or emergency expulsion in accordance with regulations. See Appendix C for further explanation of suspension and expulsion procedures.

Progressive consequences may include the following:

- Verbal warning
- Problem solving assignments
- Loss of privileges
- Loss of Dojo Points
- Talk with Principal/Superintendent
- Parent/guardian notification

Parent/guardian conference  
Referral to Student Study Team (SST)  
Behavior Contract  
In-school Suspension  
Home Suspension  
Expulsion

For students in grades 5-8, greater emphasis is placed on developing a sense of responsibility for one's behavior and making reparation for the harm committed against another person and/or the school community. As such, a system of accountability is used. With each misbehavior, parents/guardians will be notified and students will lose additional privileges or receive additional consequences. Community services acts, approved by the Principal/Superintendent, may be used for reparations and to reinforce the value of contribution to the school community.

### **Vandalism**

Parents/guardians are responsible for the full extent of any and all damages at school or on the bus done by their child. This includes the cost of labor as well as materials or repairs. In the event such vandalism occurs, SFCS will appraise the damage and cost of repair and bill the parents/guardians of the children involved.

### **Communication Regarding Misbehavior**

Misbehavior is more readily re-directed when all adults are working together as a team to support disciplinary action and positive changes in a student. Clear communication is critical in maintaining a cohesive home-school connection. Teachers will keep parents/guardians informed of any behavior concerns in class. Parents/guardians will be contacted by telephone and/or in writing the same day, when possible, if their child receives a referral to the office. Students receiving a discipline referral will be seen by the principal and given a consequence as appropriate. Parents/guardians and teachers will be informed of behavior incidents addressed by the Principal/Superintendent. For more serious offenses, a conference will be held to address the behavior. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the teacher or Principal/Superintendent with questions or concerns regarding disciplinary actions, policies, or procedures.

## **Appendices**

- A. Core Virtues Information
- B. Bullying Policy
- C. Suspension and Expulsion Rules
- D. Notification of Rights under FERPA
- E. Becoming a Volunteer
- F. Vaccination Requirements in California Schools
- G. Transitional Kindergarten (TK)/Kindergarten Grade Placement Guidelines
- H. Meal Charge Procedures
- I. Acknowledgement of Receipt (*Sign and Return to Office*)

Appendix A:

## **Core Virtues**

### **What are Core Virtues?**

Core Virtues are a practical, non-sectarian approach to character education. Each month the teachers highlight a key intellectual, moral, or civic virtue, such as respect, responsibility, diligence, honesty, generosity, or perseverance.

Why teach character?

A person's "character" is the summation of his or her habits, attitudes and attributes. Because those qualities are learned, they can also be purposefully taught. Good character doesn't happen automatically, and it's too important to be left to chance. The effectiveness and well-being of individuals, their organizations, and their society depend on it.

But what values should we teach?

Virtues highlighted each month in the Core Virtues program are common ground, consensus virtues - not controversial social or political agenda. A partial list includes: respect, responsibility, diligence, gratitude, honesty, generosity, perseverance, courage, loyalty, compassion, openness to inquiry, and humility. The program objective is to ignite the imagination of the young, inspiring them to do and be their best. The program is a catalyst for academic success because it encourages the habits of the heart and mind that are necessary for quality scholarship.

How does Sierra Foothill Charter School incorporate this program?

SFCS begins the school year by introducing the idea of character and virtues - its meaning and importance. The school then focuses each month on one of the core virtues by bringing in ideas for discussion. The program has a list of quality children's literature that provides inspirational or insightful examples of virtue in action. The reading of these well written and often beautifully illustrated stories helps children and cultivates a vocabulary of virtue. This is also an opportunity to recognize students who are demonstrating the virtues regularly and have them act as positive role models for others.

## **Bullying Policy**

Sierra Foothill Charter School recognizes that bullying and intimidation have a negative effect on the school's environment and the education process. Students who are intimidated and fearful cannot give their education the single-minded attention they need for success. Bullying can also lead to more serious violence. Every student has the right to an education and to be safe in and around school.

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is a pattern of abuse over time and involves a student being "picked on." Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, pictures, drawings or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation. Cyber-bullying, is defined as any of the bullying activities described above occur on an on-line, chat, Facebook, Twitter or any other social media or virtual setting.

### **Bullying/Cyber-bullying Prohibited**

Sierra Foothill Charter School and staff shall not tolerate any bullying on school grounds or at any school activity on or off campus.

### **Staff Intervention**

SFCS expects staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene, unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. Staff members shall not directly intervene in a fight or physical altercation. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the school Principal/Superintendent for further investigation.

### **Report Bullying**

SFCS expects students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying, to report it to the school Principal/Superintendent for further investigation. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to the consequences listed below.

### **Investigation Procedures**

Upon learning about a bullying incident, the Principal/Superintendent or designees shall contact the parents of both the aggressor and the victim, interview both students, and thoroughly investigate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent/guardian and family issues.

**Consequences/Intervention**

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation

and may include counseling, a parent/guardian conference, detention, suspension and/or expulsion. Depending on the severity of the incident, the Principal/Superintendent may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising the students involved, providing staff support for students as necessary, reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate, and developing a supervision plan with the parents/guardians.

## **PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

### **A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students**

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

### **B. Enumerated Offenses**

Students may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the student:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal/Superintendent or designee's concurrence.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of, any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
5. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
7. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
8. Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, vaping devices, chew packets and betel.
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
11. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
12. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
13. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e., a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
14. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code 261,

266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.

15. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
16. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
17. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing of another.
18. Aiding or abetting as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.
19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property.
20. Committed sexual harassment.
21. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence.
22. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.

The above list is not exhaustive and depending upon the offense, a pupil may be suspended or expelled for misconduct not specified above.

Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

**C. Suspension Procedure: Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures.**

1) Conference

- Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal/Superintendent or designee with the student and his or her parent/guardian and, whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal/Superintendent.
- The conference may be omitted if the Principal/Superintendent or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.
- At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense.
- This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the student waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason, including, but not limited to

incarceration or hospitalization.

- No penalties may be imposed on a student for failure of the student's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended student shall not be contingent upon attendance by the student's parent or guardian at the conference.

## 2) Notice to Parents/Guardians

- At the time of the suspension, the Principal/Superintendent or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay

## 3) Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

- Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.
- Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal/Superintendent or designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal/Superintendent upon either of the following determinations: 1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

### **D. Authority to Expel**

A student may be expelled either by the Board following a hearing before it or by the Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Panel should consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the student or a member of the governing Board. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

### **E. Expulsion Procedures**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal/Superintendent or designee determines that the student has committed an expellable offense.

The expulsion hearing will be presided over by the Board Chair or the chair of the Administrative Panel. In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a

recommendation to the Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the student makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the student. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
- A copy of the SFCS's disciplinary rules, which relate to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

#### **F. Special procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses**

SFCS may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the SFCS Governing Board, administrative panel, or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the student.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. SFCS must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating

within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.

5. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, SFCS must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to SFCS. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the student being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent/guardian, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the

complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

### **G. Record of Hearing**

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

### **H. Presentation of Evidence**

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay, and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the expelled pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of a written recommendation to the Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing.

If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the student shall be immediately returned to his/her educational program.

### **I. Written Notice to Expel**

The Principal/Superintendent or designee following a decision of the Board to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall include the following:

- 1) Notice of the specific offense committed by the student.
- 2) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the School.
  - i. The Principal/Superintendent or designee shall send written notice of the decision to expel to the Student's District of residence and the State Board of Education or designee.
  - ii. This notice shall include the following:
    - a) The student's name

b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

### **J. Disciplinary Records**

The School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the School. Such records shall be made available for the Chartering Agency's review upon request.

### **K. No Right to Appeal**

The student shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from SFCS as the SFCS Board of Directors decision to expel shall be final.

### **L. Expelled Students/Alternative Education**

Students who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including but not limited to programs within the County or their school district of residence.

### **M. Rehabilitation Plans**

Students who are expelled from the School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the student may re-apply to the School for readmission.

### **N. Readmission**

The decision to readmit a student or to admit a previously expelled student from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the SFCS Board following a meeting with the Principal/Superintendent and the student and parent/guardian or representative, to determine whether the student has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the student poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Principal/Superintendent shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The student's readmission is also contingent upon the School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission or admission.

## Appendix D:

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Sierra Foothill Charter School receives a request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the school Principal/Superintendent a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Principal/Superintendent will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/guardians or eligible students who wish to ask Sierra Foothill Charter School to amend a record should write the school Principal/Superintendent, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specifying why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, including the release of information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes\*, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent or as required by law or court order.
4. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent/guardian or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent/guardian, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school

may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent/guardian or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202

*\*For information regarding requests for information related to immigration status, please see the Policies and Procedures to Respond to Immigration Issues and Promote a Safe and Secure Learning Environment for All posted on the school website or request a copy in the office.*

Appendix E:

## **Becoming a Volunteer: A Guide through the Clearance Process**

Thank you for your interest in volunteering your time to Sierra Foothill Charter School. In order to adhere to applicable laws, you will need to go through a clearance process. Fingerprint clearance can take anywhere from 3 days to 6 weeks, so please plan accordingly, and start the process sooner rather than later, if at all possible.

We realize that the clearance process can be time consuming and inconvenient, but it is crucial to ensuring the safety of the students in our charge. Please know that your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

### **1) TB Testing**

The first step in the clearance process is to obtain verification that you are free from tuberculosis (TB) infection. This verification is required by law every 4 (four) years, and can be obtained through a simple skin test or certificate of clearance from a healthcare provider. If you have had a TB test done within the past 4 years, and have proof of your TB clearance for the School, there is no need to be re-tested.

For the skin test, a harmless fluid is placed under your skin on your arm. A very small needle is used, so you will only feel a slight pinch. You must then return to the healthcare provider to have the results assessed and recorded. You will be provided with a written verification of the findings. The Mariposa County Health Department, 5085 Bullion Street, 966-3689, testing services are \$5.00, as follows:

<b>Skin Testing/Risk Assessment</b>	<b>Assessment of Skin Testing</b>
Second (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) Tuesday of the month by appointment 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM 2:00 PM – 5:30 PM	Return Friday 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

For a certificate of clearance, a healthcare provider will assess your risk for TB considering several factors and may provide you with a signed document stating you are not at risk for having TB. This document can be provided to the School to satisfy this requirement.

### **2) Waiver**

SFCS has a waiver/release form you will need to sign in order to volunteer at school. You can pick it up from the school site or download it from our website.

### **3) Fingerprinting**

SFCS has a “Request for Live Scan Service” form you can either pick up from the office or download from the website. You can then have your fingerprints taken by nearly any law enforcement agency. The Department of Justice (DOJ) charges a \$32 fee to run fingerprints through a database for clearance purposes. Due to budgetary constraints, SFCS cannot cover the fee. Therefore, you will need to pay the fee in order to obtain the necessary DOJ

clearance.

If you obtain this service from one of the locations listed below, you will not incur any additional fees in addition to the \$32 DOJ fee. Other agencies may charge a fee, so be sure to call ahead.

<b>Where</b>	<b>When</b>
Mariposa County Sheriff's Department 5099 Old Highway North, Mariposa Phone: 209/966-3615 or 800/774-8314 FAX: 209/742-5090	Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00 – 4:00PM

**4) Turn in Forms**

The next step is to submit to the office a copy of your TB clearance and your signed waiver/release form.

**5) Wait to be Notified**

The last step is to simply wait for your fingerprints to be processed. SFCS will contact you when you have been cleared to volunteer.

Appendix F:

## **Vaccination Requirements in California Schools**

SB 277 became law on January 1, 2016. This law eliminates the personal belief exemption to the immunization requirements for all public and private school students in California under the Health and Safety Code Section 120325(c). SB 277 maintains an exemption to the vaccine requirements for students who have medical necessity.

Under this law, vaccinations will be required of children first entering public school, or when they enter the seventh grade, after July 1, 2016. However, this law also provides a physician with authority to grant a medical exemption to the vaccination requirement when a physician believes that medical circumstances of the child, in her/his judgment and discretion, warrant such an exemption. The statute specifically states that the physician may consider the child's family medical history in determining whether to grant the exemption.

SB 277 also exempts from its requirements students who are privately homeschooled or who are enrolled in independent study public schools **if** the students do not receive classroom-based instruction. However, the law does not specifically define whether attending any amount of classes as part of an independent study program constitutes participation in "classroom-based" instruction for purpose of this exemption. We understand that the Department of Health will be providing guidance on SB 277 and this exemption and regulations may be adopted. The School's legal representatives will be consulted on this issue should additional guidance on this law become available.

The passage of SB 277 does not prohibit a student who qualifies for an Individualized Education Program from accessing any special education and related services required by his/her Individualized Education program.

This Legal Alert provides an overview of the deadlines and requirements which classroom-based charter schools must follow in order to be in compliance with the law:

### **Important Deadlines Regarding SB-277:**

- If a student has filed a letter or affidavit with the school before January 1, 2016 stating beliefs opposed to immunization, that student may continue to be enrolled without showing proof of the required immunizations until the student enrolls in the next grade span. Under the law, "grade span" is defined as: birth to preschool; kindergarten and grades 1-6, inclusive, including transitional kindergarten; and grades 7-12 inclusive.
- After July 1, 2016, schools shall not unconditionally admit for the first time, or admit or advance any student to the 7th grade, unless the student presents documentary proof that they have been immunized for his or her age. Schools must also record the immunizations of each new student in the student's permanent enrollment and scholarship record on a form provided by the Department of Health and Safety.

- A school must periodically review the immunization records of each new student admitted conditionally pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 120340 (for example, because of a temporary medical condition or if the student has received some but not all required immunization doses and are not currently due for any doses at the time of admission) to ensure that the student has been fully immunized against the specified diseases listed in Health and Safety Code Section 120335 within the time periods designated by regulation of the Department of Health and Safety. A school must prohibit further attendance of any student admitted conditionally who fails to obtain the required immunizations within the time limits allowed in the Health and Safety Regulations.

## **Transitional Kindergarten (TK)/Kindergarten Placement Guidelines**

**DOB: September 2, 2013 – December 2, 2013                      Register in TK**

**DOB: December 3, 2012 – September 1, 2013                      Register in Kindergarten**

- If the parent/guardian of a child born August 1, 2013 - September 1, 2013 requests TK placement, the student may be placed on a waiting list for TK placement. If there are spots available at the start of the school year and it is determined by staff to be in the best interest of each student, students on the TK waiting list will be enrolled. Priority for TK placement is given to students born between September 2 - December 2, 2013.
- If the parent/guardian of a child born between December 3-15, 2013 requests TK placement, the child will be placed on a waiting list for TK placement. If there are spots available at the start of the school year and it is determined by staff to be in the best interest of each student, students on the TK waiting list will be enrolled. Priority is given to students born between August 1 - December 2, 2013.
- No student born after December 15, 2013 will be considered for TK, but may enroll the following school year in kindergarten.

### **Procedures for Requests for Alternative Grade Placement:**

If a parent/guardian requests placement in a grade other than that for which the student is age-appropriate, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. If the parent/guardian provides records indicating that a student has successfully completed Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten in another district or private school in the United States, the student may be placed in the following grade. If not, the student is registered in the age-appropriate grade and begins the school year in that grade.
2. Once the school year begins, the parent/guardian may request of the teacher consideration for placement in another grade.
3. Within six weeks of this request, the teacher will conduct an evaluation of the student which includes academic skill level, progress in current program, and overall developmental readiness.
4. A Student Study Team (SST) Meeting will be called within six weeks of the request which includes the parents/guardians, current teacher, and Principal/Superintendent. This meeting may also include the school psychologist, a teacher at the requested grade, and others who may contribute pertinent information about the student. The purpose of the meeting is to review the request, the evaluation results, the recommendation of the teacher/staff, and arrive at a decision regarding the placement which best serves the needs of the student. If consensus is not reached, the Principal/Superintendent will make the final decision which will be provided in writing and added to the SST Meeting documentation.

Appendix H:

## **Sierra Foothill Charter School Meal Charge Procedures**

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish consistent meal account procedures. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the school. The goals of these procedures are:

- To treat all students with dignity and respect
- To support a positive experience for students during meal service
- To minimize meal charges and encourage parents/guardians to pre-pay for all meals
- To encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payment and to promote self-responsibility of the student
- To establish a procedure regarding charges and collections of charges

### Free/Reduced Meal Application

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to submit free/reduced meal application forms annually, as well as when their household information or income changes. Applications can be submitted at any time and are available during registration at the school.

### Pre-paid Meal System

Parents/guardians are encouraged to pre-pay for meals in the school office to establish an account balance using cash and checks. Parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their student's breakfast/lunch account activity.

Prior to the completion and approval of the Free and Reduced-price application, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay for all meals in full, as applications cannot be applied retroactively.

### Scope of Responsibility

**Business Manager:** Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the parents/guardians in writing of outstanding balances each month.

**Parent/Guardian:** Responsible for ensuring that their child has been provided the means to obtain a meal(s) and/or provide them with a meal from home.

Principal/Superintendent or designee: Responsible for maintaining records of the efforts made to collect unpaid meal charges and, if applicable, financial documentation showing when the unpaid meal balance has become an operating loss.

### Administration

Students will be allowed to charge a maximum of \$100.00. SFCS is committed to working directly with the parent/guardian and will not discuss a child's negative debt with said student(s). It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the school personnel to appropriately handle meal charges.

SFCS will initiate communication to notify parents/guardians regarding their child's outstanding meal balances via letters and phone calls.

Since second meals are optional, all are sold at full price, even to students who qualify for Free/Reduced meal pricing.

Beginning the second week of May, meal charging will no longer be allowed.

- a) Parent/Guardian will be sent a written request for "Payment in Full".
- b) All charges may be carried over into the next school year if the debt has been incurred less than 90 days before the end of the fiscal year or if the parent/guardian enters into a repayment plan prior to the end of the fiscal year.
- c) Graduating eighth graders must pay all charges in full by the last day of school.

The school's efforts to collect debt shall be consistent with California Department of Education (CDE) guidance, and 2 CFR 200.426. The school will not spend more than the actual debt owed in efforts to recover unpaid meal charges.

Appendix I:

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE  
OF PARENT/GUARDIAN/STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2018-2019**

STUDENT NAME(S):

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME(S):

WE ACKNOWLEDGE that we have received a copy of the 2018-19 Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook. We have read and understood all sections of the Handbook, and we agree to abide by its directions and procedures.

We understand that this is a living document, and that any and all policies or practices can be changed by a vote of the School Board.

Student 1 Signature:

Date:

Student 2 Signature:

Date:

Student 3 Signature:

Date:

Student 4 Signature:

Date:

**Parent/Guardian Signature:**

Date: