



ASPIRE East Palo Alto Charter School

CHARTER RENEWAL PETITION

For the term July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2029

Submitted August 1, 2026

Original Charter Approved by Ravenswood School District
September 1997

Last Charter Renewal Approval
August 23, 2018

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Affirmations, Declarations, and Assurances

Affirmations And Declaration

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Jenna Ogier-Marangella, hereby certify that the information submitted in this renewal petition for a California public charter school named Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School, to be operated by Aspire Public Schools (“Aspire”), and to be located within the boundaries of the Ravenswood School District (the “District”) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I understand that if awarded a charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- The Charter School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Aspire Public Schools declares that it shall be the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Aspire East Palo Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(6)]
- The Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- The Charter School shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case it will hold a public random drawing to determine admission. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or of that student’s parent or legal guardian within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(A)-(C)]
- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- The Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”).

- The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- The Charter School shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (“CTC”) certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher’s certificated assignment. The Charter School may use local assignment options authorized in statute and regulations for the purpose of legally assigning certificated teachers, in the same manner as a governing board of a school district. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(l)(1)]
- The Charter School shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- The Charter School shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades, and health information. If the pupil is subsequently expelled or leaves the school district without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the school district shall provide this information to the Charter School within 30 days if the Charter School demonstrates that the pupil had been enrolled in the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(3)]
- The Charter School may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(n)]
- The Charter School shall adhere to each of the conditions in Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D), including: (A) not discouraging a student from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Charter School for any reason; (B) not requesting a student’s records or requiring a parent, guardian, or student to submit the student’s records before enrollment; (C) not encouraging a student currently attending the Charter School to disenroll or transfer to another school for any reason; and (D) providing a copy of the California Department of Education (“CDE”) notice regarding the requirements in Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D) to a parent/guardian or student if the student is 18 years of age or older: (i) when a parent/guardian or student inquires about enrollment, (ii) before conducting an enrollment lottery, or (iii) before disenrollment of a student. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A)-(D)]
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(2)]
- The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School’s educational programs. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)]
- The Charter School shall comply with any applicable jurisdictional limitations to the locations of its facilities. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]
- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47612(b) and 47610]

- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”).
- The Charter School shall comply with the California Public Records Act, Government Code Section 7920.000, *et seq.* (“CPRA”).
- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, 34 CFR Part 99 (“FERPA”).
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code Section 54950, *et seq.* (“Brown Act”).
- The Charter School shall comply with Government Code Section 1090, *et seq.*, as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1 (“Section 1090”).
- The Charter School shall comply with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 81000, *et seq.* (“PRA”).
- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

Introduction and Overview

We present this renewal charter petition for Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School (“EPACS” or “Charter School”). EPACS is a Transitional Kindergarten through Eighth Grade (TK-8) school located in the Gardens neighborhood of East Palo Alto, and part of the Bay Area Region of the Aspire Public Schools network. EPACS has had an enrollment of between 449 and 532 scholars since returning from the pandemic, averaging 510 students. As a snapshot of our demographics, the percentages below are representative of our student body based on October 2025 CBEDS (California Basic Educational Data System) reporting:

- 86.6% Socio-Economically Disadvantaged (SED),
- 88.9% Hispanic or Latino, 5.3% African American, 2.4% Pacific Islander
- Less than 1% of the following races/ethnicities: White, Filipino, and Two or More Races
- 51.4% English learners (ELs),
- 14.7% students with disabilities (SWD)¹

For the most recent year of online-published school performance data, EPACS’s students have shown stronger performance relative to the average of the local public school sector across multiple California Dashboard indicators. Listed below are highlights of our success. For details and additional citations, see the next section, Charter Renewal Criteria.

- **Stronger Performance on Math.** In 2025, EPACS’s overall math DFS score (-108.9) outperformed the District (-132.1) and the weighted average of local Comparison Schools (-118.0).² Digging deeper into the 2025 math CAASPP DFS scores of EPACS’s statistically significant subgroups (socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino students), our scholars outperform the District and weighted average of the Comparison Schools. Comparing 2025 math DFS performance to the traditional public schools in the District, EPACS ranks 2nd out of 5. Further, in terms of the percentage of students that Met or Exceeded Standard on the 2025 math CAASPP, EPACS’s rate of 13.5% is nearly double the District rate (7.1%).
- **Stronger Performance on ELA.** In 2025, EPACS’s overall ELA DFS score (-95.1) outperformed the District (-105.4) and the weighted average of the local Comparison Schools (-96.0). When disaggregating the 2025 ELA CAASPP DFS scores by EPACS’s statistically significant subgroups (socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino students), our scholars outperform the District and the weighted averages of the Comparison Schools. Comparing 2025 ELA DFS performance to the traditional public schools in the District, EPACS ranks 2nd out of 5. Further, in terms of the percentage of students that Met or Exceeded Standard on the 2025 ELA CAASPP, EPACS’s rate (15.2) is better than the weighted Comparison School average (14.4%) and the District rate (12.1%).

¹ California Department of Education. DataQuest: 2025-26 Enrollment by Subgroup; DataQuest: 2025-26 Enrollment by Ethnicity. Accessed June 1, 2026.

² For purposes of having comparative performance data points, this petition includes performance averages of local public schools (“Comparison Schools”), which consists of all the public schools located within Ravenswood City District. Those schools’ grade spans include the grades served by EPACS.

- **2025-26 i-Ready Results Exceed Minimum Growth Targets.** In 2025-26, EPACS exceeded i-Ready's standard of minimum growth expectations for a majority of its grades in both math and ELA. The overall and schoolwide picture of the growth data demonstrates that EPACS's actions to increase our scholars' ELA and math performance (described in the enclosed Performance Improvement Plan) are yielding positive results.

The EPACS core school model centers several elements of school design described in detail in Element 1. The following school model elements are examples of programming that are especially emphasized or unique to EPACS, as an Aspire Bay Area school:

- **Inclusion Model:** EPACS is an inclusion school that welcomes *all* learners, with students kept in the general classroom environment as much as possible – aligned with the least restrictive environment principle. 15% of EPACS's student population has an Individualized Education Plan. They are supported by an in-house inclusion team consisting of nine special education instructional assistants, three case managers, a bilingual school psychologist, a mental health technician, and an occupational therapist. To avoid dependency and promote independence, students are intentionally exposed to multiple instructional assistants rather than being assigned only one. EPACS also has two learning centers and a sensory room. Further, the school supports students with AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) devices as needed.
- **Mental Health & Wellness Programming:** EPACS's wellness model operates through its Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and is run by an in-house Behavioral Wellness Team, which includes the dean of students, mental health therapist, lead special education instructional assistant, community schools director, and student support manager. The team meets regularly to create and adjust individual student wellness plans by analyzing attendance data, grades, parental input, and teacher input. Among the menu of mental health supports are 4-to-8-week counseling cycles, social skills groups (covering topics such as anger management), and weekly check-in/check-outs with a trusted adult staff member. For socioemotional learning programming, EPACS uses Wayfinder during Advisory – *e.g.* with lower grades practicing breathing techniques and social skills, and upper grades engaging in goal-setting and performance monitoring.
- **Enrichment & Extracurricular Activities:** EPACS offers a range of extracurricular and enrichment activities that contribute to its distinct school culture. Student affinity groups include our Black Student Union, Asian American and Pacific Islander Club, and Latino Leadership Alliance – each meeting monthly with a faculty leader. Sports offerings include volleyball, basketball, and flag football. EPACS also has a 1.5-acre garden where families have their own garden beds to plant and harvest independently. The garden is maintained by a dedicated manager who collaborates with teachers to lead curriculum-connected lessons, such as plant life cycles. We are honored that the garden program recently received a three-year grant extension of approximately \$120,000 from the Franklin and Katherine Johnson Family Foundation.
- **School Fit & Sense of Community Belonging:** EPACS's breadth of stakeholders – alumni, students, parents, community partners, and more – share a strong sense of community identity developed over its nearly 30 years of existence. EPACS has alumni who now teach at the school. Approximately 25 students have parents who also attended the school. Our longstanding cultural

events are *community* events – including the Latin American Celebration which has been running annually for 25 years, as well as the annual African American History Celebration. When it comes to fostering family unity, EPACS’s restorative justice circles are not only for students; Principal Kawi also facilitates such conversations for our students’ parents when needed. Further, our Family Effort Unit encourages families to contribute to local community service, which we celebrate annually.

Aspire Public Schools as a Network of Schools

EPACS is part of Aspire Public Schools, a network of non-profit public charter schools spanning grades TK-12 and serving students in low-income neighborhoods in the Bay Area, Central Valley, and Los Angeles. Grounded in our Core Values, we believe in the power of creating and maintaining learning environments in which students learn with community and through a culture of belonging no matter one’s background or cultural history. We strive to make Aspire and our communities a joyful place to learn, work, and be, together. Our mission is to provide a rigorous, joyful academic experience that cultivates our scholars’ skills, talents, and gifts, such that they may pursue and persist in college or any post-secondary pathway that is authentic to their identities. At our schools, the vision of empowering our scholars to build a fulfilling and liberated future for themselves and their community inspires us into urgent, intentional action each day.

Charter Renewal Criteria

Pursuant to the amendments made to Education Code Section 47607, and the creation of Education Code Section 47607.2, by Assembly Bill 1505 (2019), at the time of charter renewal, a chartering authority shall consider the performance of the charter school on the state and local indicators reported on the California School Dashboard (“Dashboard”).

In addition to the shift toward assessing Dashboard data, Assembly Bill 1505 also created a three-tiered system of evaluating charter schools’ performance based on Dashboard data and metrics as compared to the state average for all students and for subgroups, plus a separate category for Dashboard Alternative School Status schools. Each of the three tiers has unique qualifying criteria.

The three performance categories are as follows:

- High Track – Presumptive renewal if the charter school meets the established renewal criteria—Education Code Section 47607(c)(2).
- Low Track – Presumptive non-renewal if the charter school meets the non-renewal criteria, unless the chartering authority makes a finding to approve for a two-year term—Education Code Section 47607.2(a).
- Middle Track – Renewal unless closure is in the best interest of students, evaluated using the California School Dashboard and Education Code Section 47607.2(b).

Separate from the statutory standard, the CDE also evaluates all charter schools to identify their performance category annually, making that report available to the public. The CDE most recently released the performance category data file in January 2026. According to this file, Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School (“EPACS”) is in the Low Track category for renewal this year.³ We present evidence and data below to demonstrate that EPACS has met the renewal criteria for a two-year renewal.

Education Code Section 47607.2(a)(3) states:

The chartering authority shall consider the following factors, and may renew a charter that meets the criteria [of Low Track] only upon making a written factual finding, specific to the particular petition, setting forth specific facts to support the finding that the charter school is taking meaningful steps to address the underlying cause or causes of low performance, and those steps are reflected, or will be reflected, in a written plan adopted by the governing body of the charter school.

Renewal Criteria and Case for Two-Year Renewal

EPACS affirms that it has begun taking meaningful steps to address the underlying causes of low performance. Please see the enclosed Performance Improvement Plan, which describes EPACS’s “meaningful steps to address the underlying cause or causes of low performance ... in a written plan

³ California Department of Education. “Charter School Performance Category Data File - 2025.” Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/documents/perfcat26updated.xlsx>.

adopted by the governing body of the charter school.” Those actions are yielding results as reflected in 2025-2026 verified data results. Such data demonstrate progress toward reversing the performance parameters by which EPACS is considered Low Track.

A charter school can be deemed Low Track based on Education Code Section 47607.2(a), which states:

(1) The chartering authority shall not renew a charter if either of the following apply for two consecutive years immediately preceding the renewal decision:

[Criterion A] The charter school has received the two lowest performance levels schoolwide on all the state indicators included in the evaluation rubrics adopted pursuant to Section 52064.5 for which it receives performance levels.

[Criterion B] For all measurements of academic performance, the charter school has received performance levels schoolwide that are the same or lower than the state average and, for a majority of subgroups performing statewide below the state average in each respective year, received performance levels that are lower than the state average.

EPACS has been tagged as a Low Track school because it meets statutory Criterion B above given the following:

- On the 2024 and 2025 Dashboards, EPACS achieved academic performance levels schoolwide that are lower than the State averages:

Dashboard Indicator	2024			2025		
	EPACS Status	State Status	EPACS Result	EPACS Status	State Status	EPACS Result
English Language Arts <i>Difference from Standard</i>	-90.1	-13.2	<i>Lower</i>	-95.1	-8.1	<i>Lower</i>
Math <i>Difference from Standard</i>	-103.8	-47.6	<i>Lower</i>	-108.9	-42.4	<i>Lower</i>
English Learner Progress <i>% making progress</i>	45.0%	45.7%	<i>Lower</i>	21.0%	46.4%	<i>Lower</i>

- On the 2024 and 2025 Dashboards, a majority of EPACS statistically significant tested subgroups performed below the state average for the respective subgroup.

Dashboard Indicator	Student Group	2024			2025		
		EPACS	State	EPACS	EPACS	State	EPACS

		Status	Status	Result	Status	Status	Result
<i>ELA - Difference from Standard</i>	<i>English Learners</i>	-110.0	-67.6	<i>Lower</i>	-109.5	-59.9	<i>Lower</i>
	<i>Hispanic</i>	-93.6	-39.3	<i>Lower</i>	-96.7	-33.7	<i>Lower</i>
	<i>SED</i>	-92.7	-40.9	<i>Lower</i>	-96.6	-35.3	<i>Lower</i>
	<i>SWD</i>	-135.5	-95.6	<i>Lower</i>	-136.4	-89.4	<i>Lower</i>
<i>Math - Difference from Standard</i>	<i>English Learners</i>	-116.8	-93.4	<i>Lower</i>	-118.8	-86.1	<i>Lower</i>
	<i>Hispanic</i>	-104.7	-79.2	<i>Lower</i>	-108.4	-73.6	<i>Lower</i>
	<i>SED</i>	-106.1	-78.2	<i>Lower</i>	-111.8	-72.9	<i>Lower</i>
	<i>SWD</i>	-155.9	-124.3	<i>Lower</i>	-152.7	-120.7	<i>Lower</i>
<i>English Learner Progress</i>		45.0%	45.7%	<i>Lower</i>	21.0%	46.4%	<i>Lower</i>

The Charter School documents its performance on the Dashboard indicators, in support of approval of its Petition, below.

For Low Track charter schools, AB 1505 provided that verified data “shall be considered” by the authorizer through a second look process for such renewing charters that were operating on or before June 30, 2020 and for their “next two subsequent renewals until January 1, 2026.” EPACS has been operating since 1997, and this is the school’s first renewal since the passage of AB 1505. While the provisions related to verified data in Education Code Section 47607.2 had sunset, the budget trailer bill (AB 126) approved in July 2026 reinstituted verified data in the evaluation of charter renewals for Low Track charter schools. Therefore, EPACS provides verified data below to be considered by the authorizer.

EPACS California Dashboard Metrics

For the context of EPACS, the CAASPP is available to span elementary-middle schools in grades 3-8. According to the CDE, “Distance from Standard measures how many points above or below (or the distance) each student is from the lowest possible scale score within Level 3 (i.e., Standard Met) on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and California Alternate Assessments.”⁴ In other words, a positive average DFS indicates that students are, on average, scoring above the minimum score for Standard Met. A DFS that improves year over year indicates that students are, on average, moving towards higher mastery of grade-level standards.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (“SBAC”) performance results in 2025 show that EPACS students achieved at higher rates relative to the local public schools with similar SED school populations

⁴ California Department of Education. California School Dashboard: Glossary. Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/about/glossary>.

(92% socio-economically disadvantaged student populations). More specifically EPACS students performed at higher achievement rates with regard to Distance from Standard (“DFS”) in ELA (EPACS -95.1; local public school average -105.4) and higher achievement rates in DFS for math (EPACS -108.9; local public school average -132.1).

Below is a list of comparison public schools (“Comparison Schools”) selected based on their location within the geographic jurisdiction of Ravenswood Elementary District. In the analysis that follows the local school set’s average performance data is cited for comparison to EPACS’s performance.

- Belle Haven Elementary (TK-8)
- Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle (6-8)
- Costano Elementary (K-5)
- KIPP Valiant Community Prep (TK-8)
- Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy (TK-5)

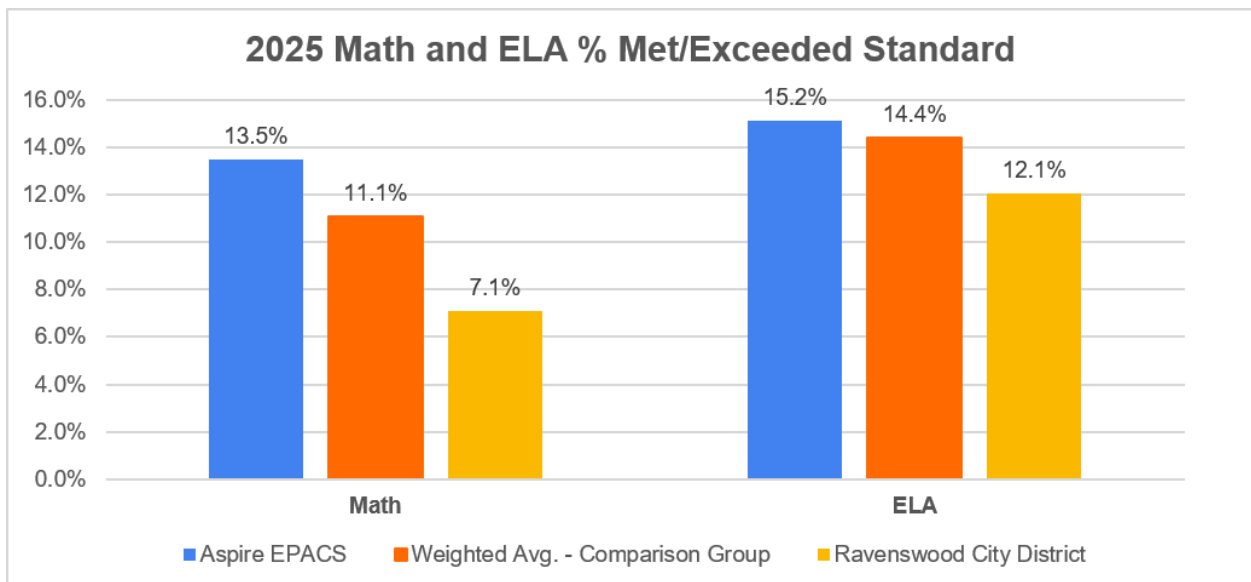
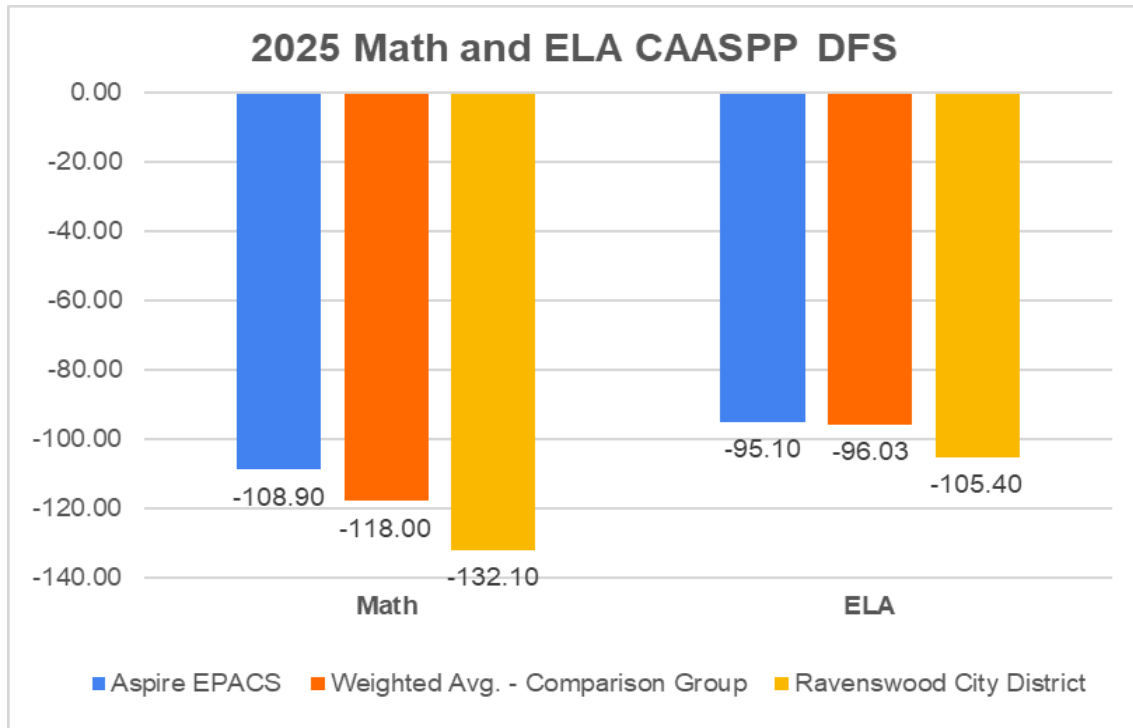
EPACS Outperforms the District and Comparison Schools on the 2025 ELA and Math CAASPP

While EPACS has underperformed in comparison to the State on the ELA and Math CAASPP, a more “apples to apples” comparison would be to evaluate how EPACS has performed against the Ravenswood City Elementary District (“District”) and the Comparison Schools defined above. Based on 2025-26 enrollment, the chart below reveals that EPACS’s proportion of student subgroups has a balance more comparable to the percentages of the District and the weighted averages for the Comparison Schools. For example, the percentage of socioeconomically disadvantaged students at EPACS and District is approximately 92% for both; meanwhile the State’s SED percentage is 28 points less, or 64%.

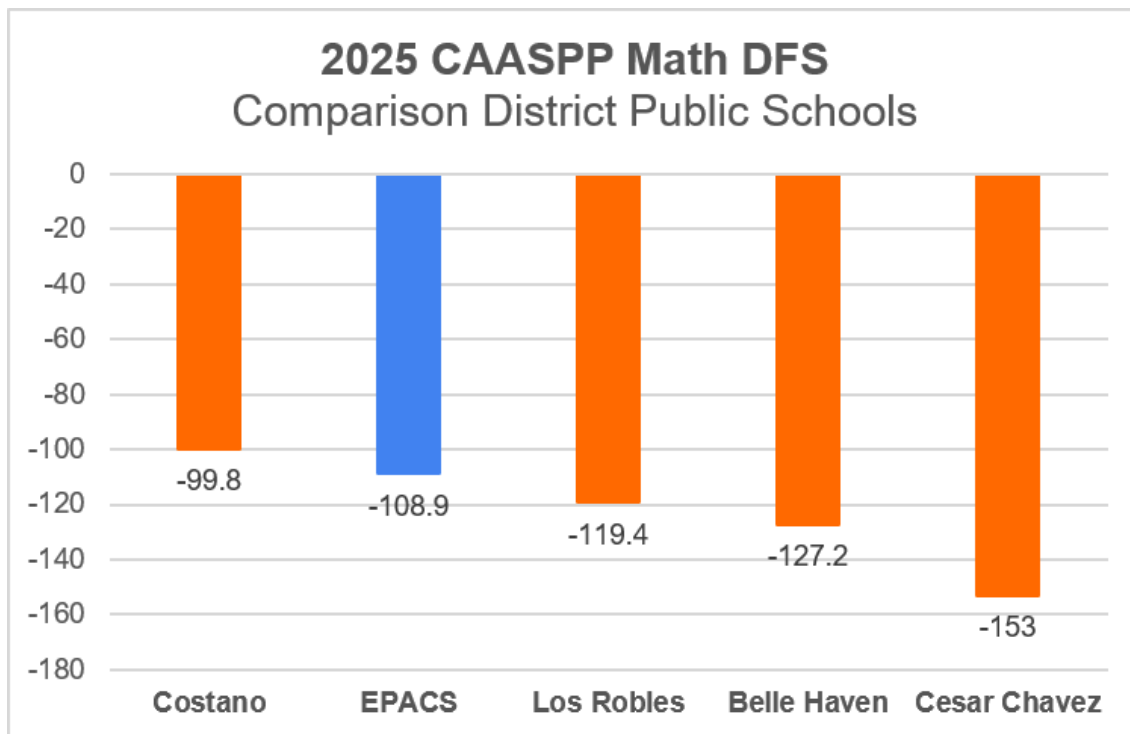
	EPACS	State	Comparison Schools (Weighted Average)	District
<i>SED</i>	91.7%	63.6%	91.6%	91.8%
<i>English Learner</i>	46.4%	17.4%	56.3%	55.6%
<i>SWD</i>	14.9%	14.2%	15.4%	15.7%
<i>African American</i>	5.8%	4.9%	4.1%	4.9%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	86.3%	56.1%	85.4%	82.4%

The Dashboard charts and graphs below show a comparison of Aspire East Palo Alto’s CAASPP Math and ELA DFS performance (Grades 3-8) and the performance averages for the District and Comparison Schools, defined above. The difference between the District and Comparison Schools data is that the Comparison Schools set includes KIPP Valiant Community Prep, while the District data set does not

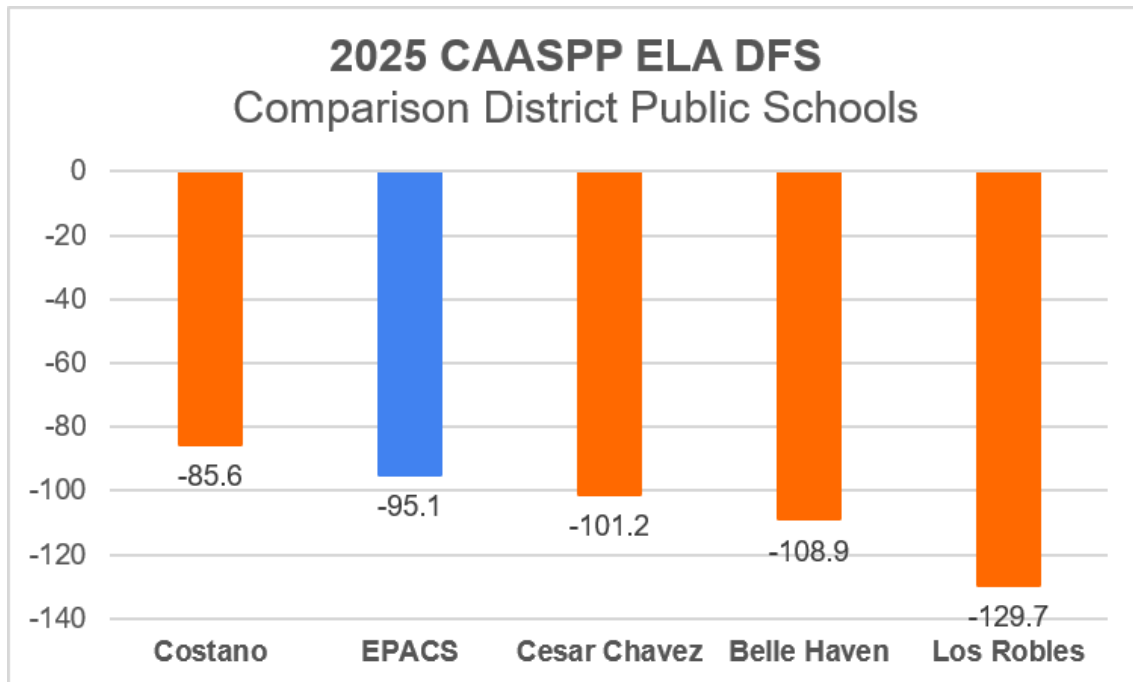
include KIPP Valiant. Below we provide subgroup-level detail results for numerically significant numbers of students tested at EPACS: Hispanic or Latino, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students (SED), English learners, and Students with Disabilities (SWD). Subgroups not shown below indicate that the numbers of students tested in that subgroup were not “numerically significant” for Aspire East Palo Alto as defined by California Dashboard metrics.



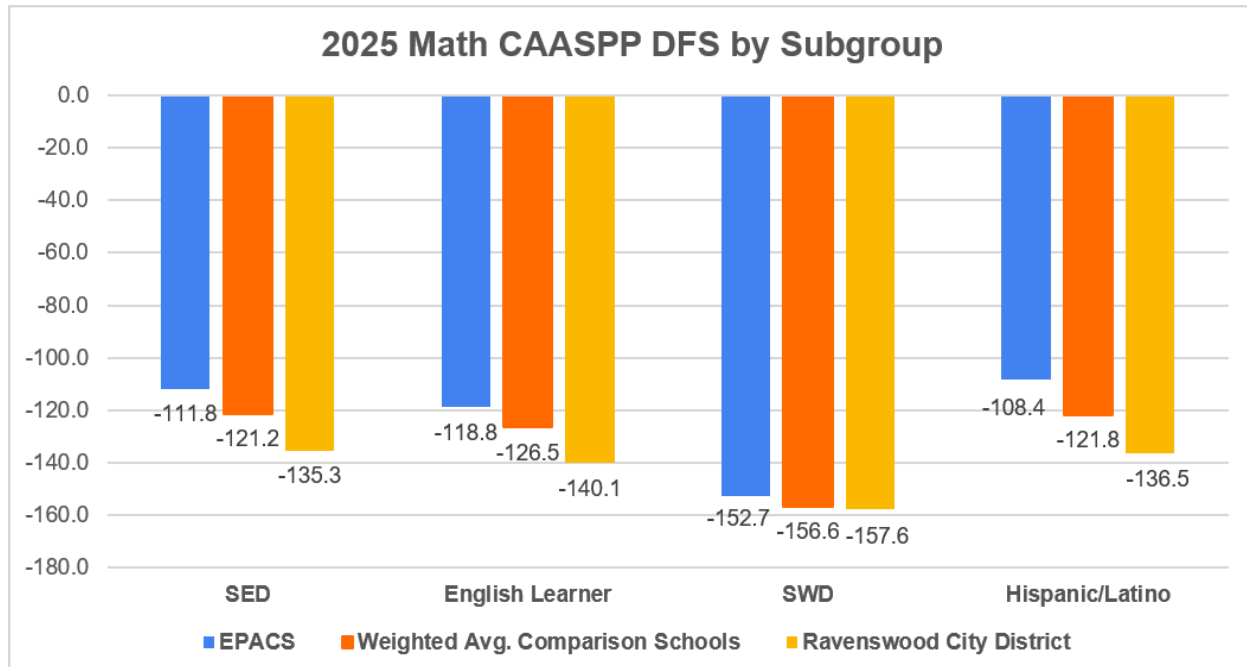
In 2025, the Math and ELA CAASPP Distance from Standard scores for Aspire East Palo Alto are better overall than the District averages and weighted averages of the local Comparison Schools.⁵ Regarding 2025 Math and ELA CAASPP Met/Exceeded Standard rates, Aspire East Palo Alto's percentages overall are greater than the rates for the District and the weighted average for the Comparison Schools. In fact, when it comes to Math performance, EPACS's Met/Exceeded rate is 13.5% nearly double the rate of the Ravenswood City School District (7.1%).

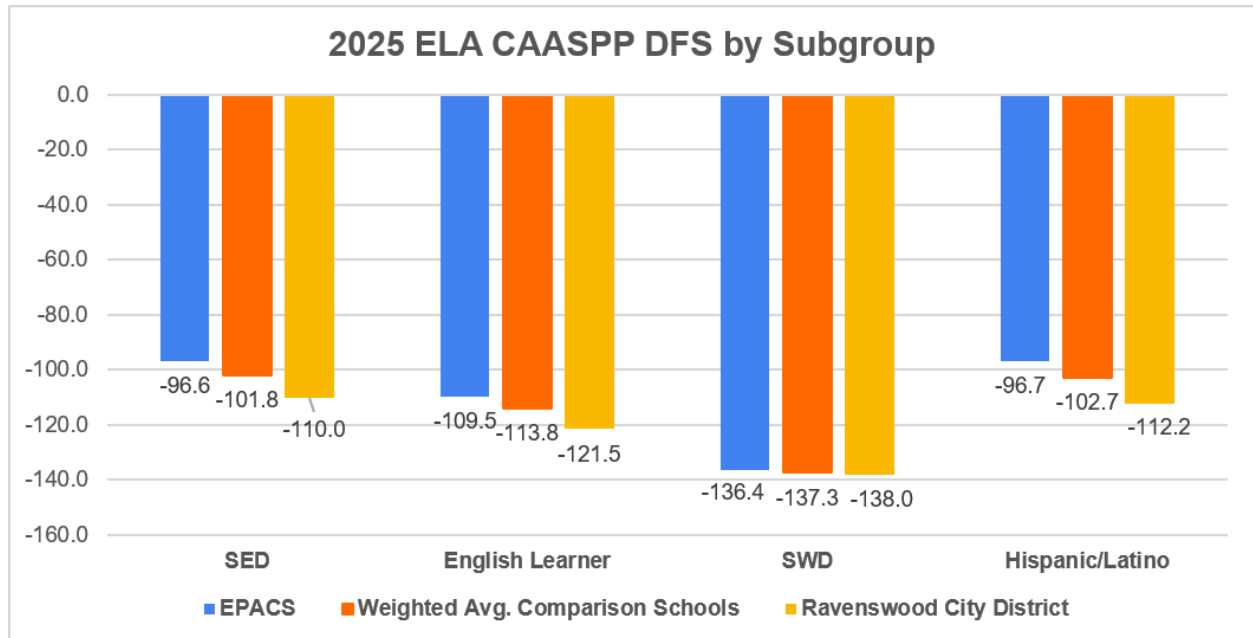


⁵ California Department of Education. California School Dashboards: 2025. Accessed June 1, 2026.



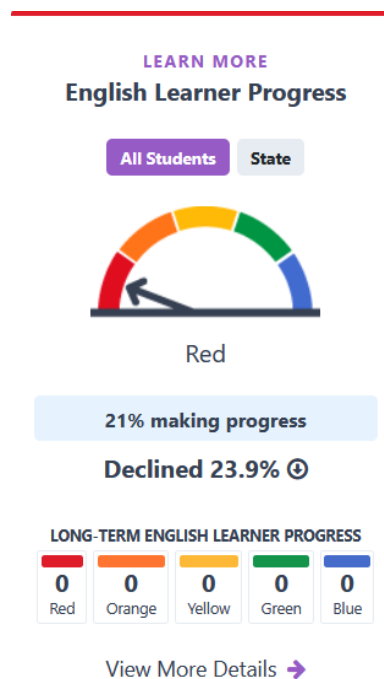
The charts above show how EPACS's 2025 CAASPP Math and ELA DFS levels perform against the four traditional public schools in the District. In both Math and ELA, EPACS ranks as the second-highest performer.





As shown above, digging further into the 2025 Math and ELA CAASPP DFS scores of EPACS’s statistically significant subgroups, our students outperform the respective subgroups of the District and the weighted averages of the Comparison Schools in both subjects.

English Learner Progress Indicator



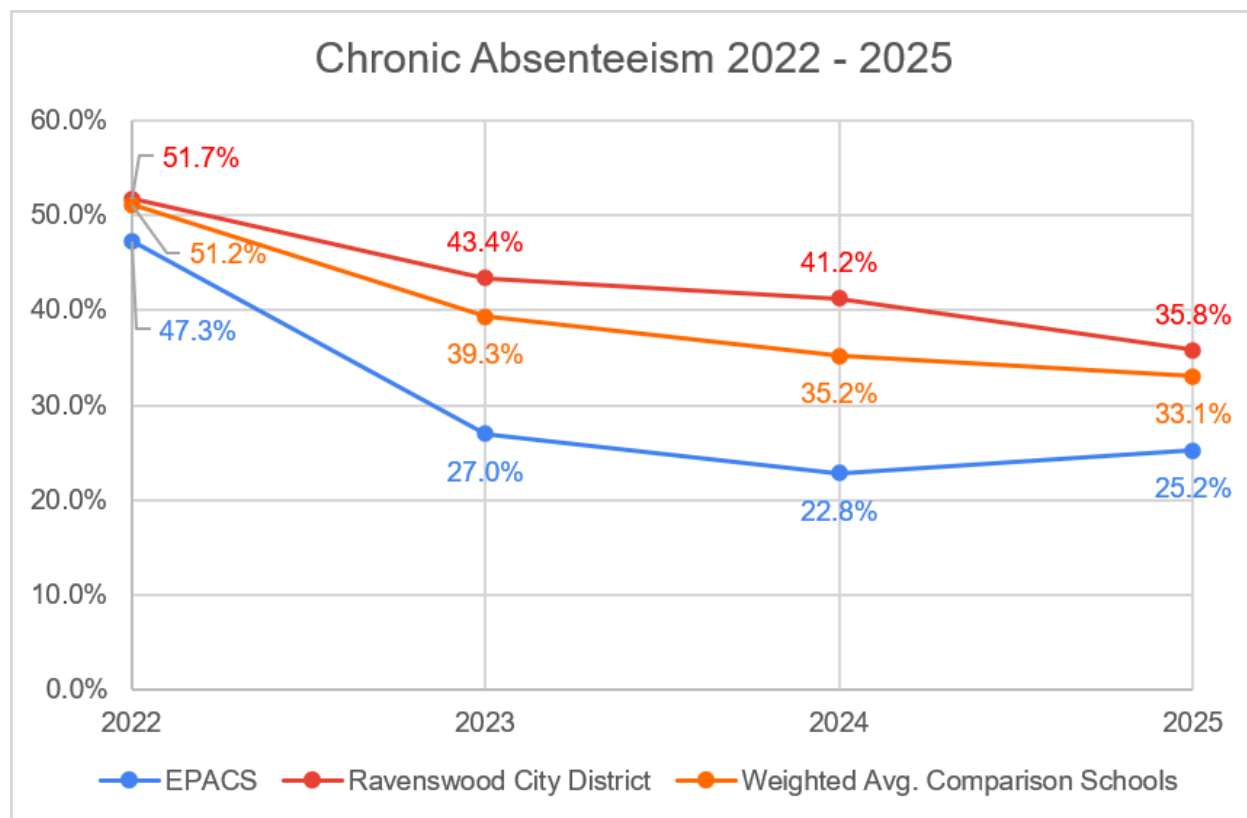
The 2025 Dashboard's English Learner Progress Indicator (ELPI) shows a decline of 23.9 percentage points from 2024. The drop in the English Learner Progress Indicator most likely stemmed from (1) the difficult decision to eliminate the ELL coordinator role to create stronger balanced budgets during the final years of the current charter term, and (2) our assistant principal stepping down in 2024-25 while there pending potential reclassification cases. An additional important factor when considering EPACS's 2025 ELPI performance is that the school serves a unique English learner population. Specifically, 14.3% of our students were classified as "newcomers" in 2024-25. In comparison, the overall percentage of newcomers statewide during the same year was 4.1%.⁶ Newcomers' academic needs tend to be greater in comparison to other English learner subgroups because they tend to start school at lower levels of English proficiency.

Acknowledging a need to improve EPACS's English Learner Progress performance, during the 2025–26 school year, we partnered with the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) through the Differentiated Assistance process. The partnership involved conducting a comprehensive review of EPACS's ELD programming, targeted professional development, and suggested tailored supports for English learners rooted in deep data dives. The school also completed a two-year partnership with Ensemble Learning, a nonprofit that partners with schools to improve outcomes for English learners through professional development, coaching, and strategic planning. During the partnership teachers received training and coaching on the integrated ELD instructional strategy of Question, Signal, Stem, Share, Assess (QSSSA) to improve our English learners' academic discourse, language production, and engagement across grade levels and subject areas.

During the 2026–27 school year, EPACS will strengthen English language development for English learners through regular data cycles with increased coaching support; increased attention to progress monitoring of LTELs, at-risk LTEL students, and newcomers; and improved implementation of designated and integrated ELD through continued professional development support from SMCOE. To implement our ELD program with greater fidelity and accountability, EPACS will establish a Multilingual Learner Committee comprised of school leaders, teachers, and support staff to practice reviewing monitoring data, as well as developing data-tailored interventions with the assets of our faculty community. For more details on current and planned actions to improve EPACS's ELPI performance, see the enclosed Performance Improvement Plan.

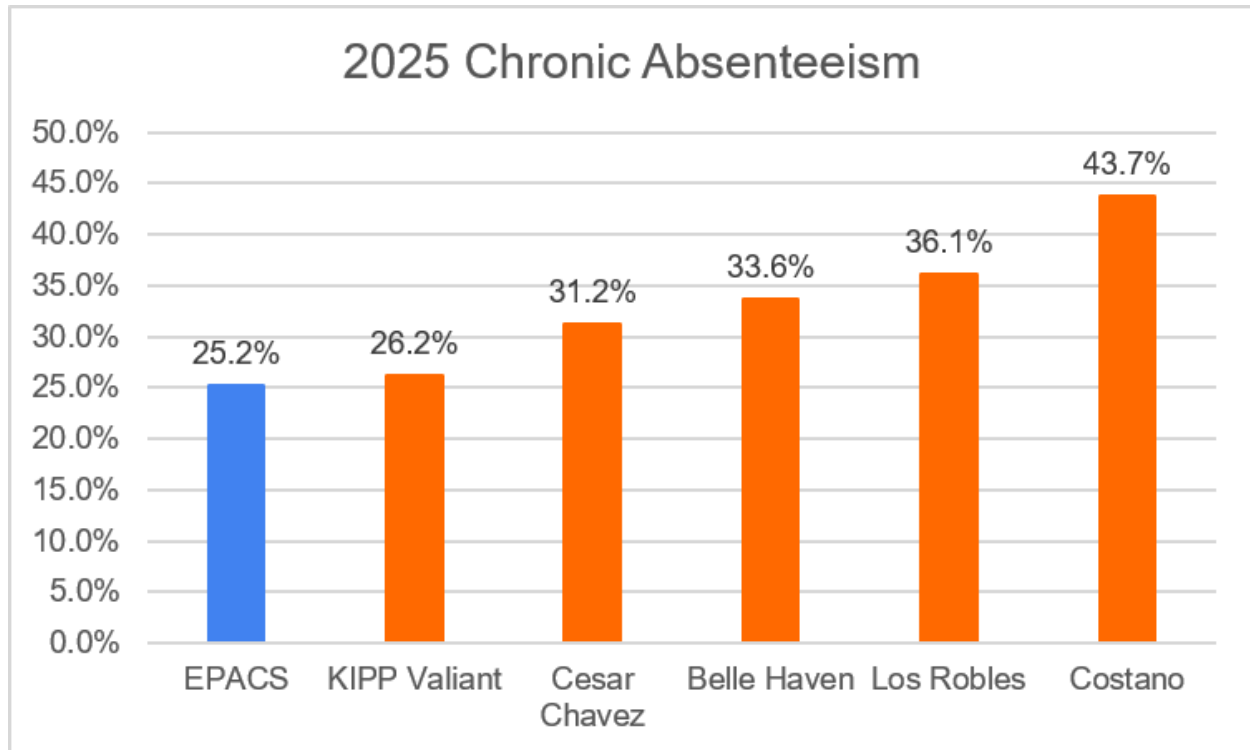
⁶ California Department of Education. "Title III Immigrant Student Demographics." Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ml/t3immdemographics.asp>.

2022 - 2025: EPACS Has Consistently Lower Local Chronic Absenteeism



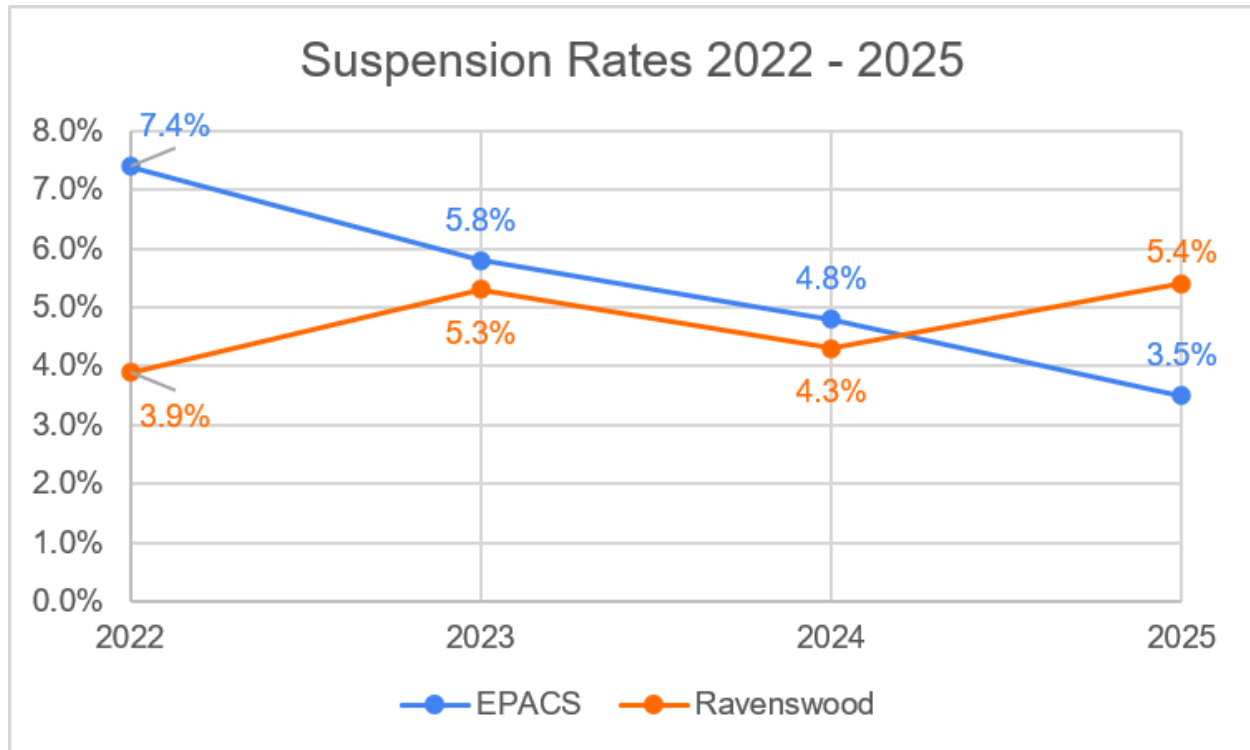
Chronic Absenteeism has been a persistent national public education challenge in recent years, particularly since the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Since the release of the first Dashboard in 2022 following the pandemic, EPACS's suspension rates have been lower than the local District rate and the weighted average of the Comparison Schools. As a result of our efforts to combat pervasive absenteeism, EPACS's rate of chronic absenteeism decreased by 20 percentage points, dropping from 47% in 2022 to 27% in 2023. As seen in the school comparison chart below, EPACS's rate of chronic absenteeism is the lowest among all public schools in the District.

EPACS's attendance success is driven by early intervention, a dedicated attendance team, and a culture of consistent, positive incentives for students. The school has an Enrollment and Attendance Team, co-led by the business operations manager and assistant principal, and with the Principal providing oversight. The Team meets regularly to review Average Daily Attendance and chronic absenteeism data, identifying students moving toward "chronic" status as early as possible – even within the first days of the school year. EPACS also incentivizes student attendance through monthly and semesterly raffles, perfect attendance awards, free dress days, and class parties.



2022 - 2025: EPACS Suspension Rates Steadily Decline, Now Lower than District Rate

Since 2022, EPACS's suspension rates have been steadily declining compared to the local District average, and in 2025 fell below the Ravenswood City Elementary District rate. EPACS attributes the steady fall in suspensions to a drastic improvement in its school climate in the last 5 years. Specifically, the school has expanded its menu of Tier 1 classroom interventions, as well as reinforced its tools for teachers to manage classroom-level behavioral issues independently before there is a need to elevate them to the administrative level. Suspension remains an option for serious or repeated offenses, but EPACS treats it as a last resort. Instead, we have found that alternatives to suspensions, such as Saturday School, to be effective as a logical and restorative consequences for student misbehavior. During Saturday School, students may participate in workshops on subjects such as language use or health to unpack the impact of disruptive behavior and explore responsible decision-making.



Other Performance Measures

Verified Data - EPACS's 2025-26 i-Ready Data Exceeds Minimum Growth Targets

As an additional measure of performance, EPACS uses the nationally norm-referenced i-Ready. For the 2024-25 data presented below, EPACS's participation rate on the assessment was at least 95% for all grades and in Reading and Math. The high participation rate is a clear indicator of student engagement and the effectiveness of our teaching methods. To demonstrate "at least one year's progress for each school year" under the verified data provisions of the legal renewal criteria, the final recommended guidance from the publisher of i-Ready is for a school to achieve the following minimum median growth targets.⁷

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8
<i>Math</i>	80%	60%
<i>Reading</i>	75%	45%

In 2025-26, EPACS exceeded i-Ready's standard of minimum growth expectations for a majority of its grades in both math and ELA, with the exceptions being Grade 5 in ELA, and Grades 4 and 7 in math.

⁷ i-Ready (2023). Using i-Ready Diagnostic as a Verified Data and Academic Progress Indicator for California Charter Schools for Grades K-8: 2023-20234 School Year. Accessed June 1, 2026 from https://i-readycentral.com/download/?res=126178&view_pdf=1.

While there is room to improve the growth of the exceptions, the overall and schoolwide picture of the median growth data below demonstrates that EPACS's actions to increase our scholars' ELA and math performance (described in the enclosed Performance Improvement Plan) are yielding positive results.

As for 2025-26 subgroup performance, with the exception of students with disabilities in math, all of EPACS's statistically significant subgroups met the median % of typical annual growth targets – specifically, the higher targets set for Grades 3-5 provided in the table above.

2025-2026 EPACS i-Ready Median % of Typical Annual Growth		
<i>Subject</i>	Math	ELA
<i>Schoolwide</i>	91%	89%
<i>Grade 3</i>	89%	111%
<i>Grade 4</i>	31%	98%
<i>Grade 5</i>	167%	46%
<i>Grade 6</i>	153%	121%
<i>Grade 7</i>	23%	94%
<i>Grade 8</i>	91%	120%
<i>SED</i>	92%	89%
<i>MLL</i>	100%	82%
<i>SWD</i>	61%	130%
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	96%	89%

EPACS's Balance of Racial and Ethnic Pupils Is Within Range of Local District Schools' Data

<i>Academic Year</i>	African American	Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	White
<i>2025-26</i>	5.3%	88.9%	2.4%	0.7%
<i>2024-25</i>	5.8%	86.3%	2.8%	0.6%
<i>2023-24</i>	7.3%	84.2%	3.7%	1.2%
<i>2022-23</i>	5.3%	86.7%	3.4%	1.5%
<i>2021-22</i>	4.5%	86.9%	3.5%	1.7%

2020-21	4.3%	87.3%	3.2%	1.9%
2019-20	4.6%	88.3%	3.1%	1.7%

In accordance with law, EPACS strives to achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, that is reflective of the general population residing within the district. The racial and ethnic enrollment breakdown of the school for the last charter term is presented above.⁸ Below is a table of enrollment by race and ethnicity for the 2025-2026 school year. EPACS's 2025-26 ethnic subgroup enrollment breakdown falls within the data range of the local comparison school group.

<i>Subgroup</i>	Overall Population⁹	Ravenswood City District¹⁰	Local Comparison Group Range¹¹	EPACS¹²
<i>Total</i>	35,859	2,432	297 - 539	449
<i>African American</i>	9%	4.4%	0.3% - 6.8%	5.3%
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	60%	86.2%	76.4% - 95.4%	88.9%
<i>White</i>	13%	1.0%	0.6% - 1.4%	0.7%
<i>Pacific Islander</i>	8%	5.6%	1.6% - 11.4%	2.4%

⁸ California Department of Education. DataQuest: Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Ethnicity. Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dq census/EnrEthYears.aspx?cds=41689990134197&aggllevel=School&year=2023-24&ro=y&ro=y>

⁹ <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/95000US0631860-ravenswood-city-elementary-school-district-ca/>

¹⁰ California Department of Education. DataQuest: 2025-26 Enrollment by Ethnicity. Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dq census/EnrEthLevels.aspx?cds=41689990134197&aggllevel=School&year=2025-26&ro=y>

¹¹ California Department of Education: DataQuest: 2025-26 Enrollment by Ethnicity: Oakland Unified Report. Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dq census/EnrEthLevels.aspx?cds=0161259&aggllevel=District&year=2025-26&ro=y>

¹² California Department of Education. DataQuest: Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Ethnicity. Accessed June 1, 2026 from <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dq census/EnrEthYears.aspx?cds=41689990134197&aggllevel=School&year=2023-24&ro=y&ro=y>

Element 1: Educational Program

“The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(A)(i)

“The annual goals for the charter school for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii)

Aspire Public Schools Vision, Mission, Values, Equity Focus

Aspire Public Schools Vision

Scholars are prepared and empowered to build a fulfilling and liberated future for themselves and their communities.

Aspire Public Schools Mission

Provide a rigorous, joyful academic experience that cultivates scholar skills, talents, and gifts, such that they may pursue and persist in college or any post-secondary pathway that is authentic to their identities; promote inclusivity and disrupt systems that have historically oppressed marginalized communities, including Black, Latina/o/x, Indigenous, and People of Color; and nurture scholars’ pride in their abilities, identities, and communities.

Aspire Public Schools Values



- **Bienestar (Well-being):** Learning, working, and playing require us to feel safe and well. Our spaces and interactions support physical, emotional, cultural, ethnic, academic, and social safety, allowing us to feel secure enough to bring our full selves each day.
- **Culture of Belonging:** We seek to be known and seen at Aspire, where we can be our authentic selves and be comfortable sharing all aspects of our identities. We respect and celebrate each

other's differences, and approach one another with empathy and understanding—no matter one's background or cultural history. Each person is valued and has a place in this community.

- **Community Partnership:** We are all connected and collectively responsible for the well-being of every member of our extended community. When one of us is let down, we are all let down. When one of us succeeds, we all succeed. Only in partnership and by listening deeply to one another, can we create collective movement.
- **Agency + Self-determination:** Each person has unique dreams. At Aspire, we set a foundation for our scholars to gain knowledge, skills, and power to access and make choices for their families and post-secondary lives.
- **Joy:** We strive to make Aspire and our communities a joyful place to learn, work, and be, together. Our work to shift outcomes is hard, yet we persist and have gratitude and pride in the journey. Joy makes it all possible!

Portrait of a Graduate

A Portrait of a Graduate (also known as a Graduate Profile) is a clear, community-driven vision that defines the skills/competencies that students should have when they graduate from a school, district, or educational network. It goes beyond academic achievement and typically includes a holistic set of competencies to prepare students for success in college, career, and life.

Key Features of a Portrait of a Graduate:

- **Student-Centered:** Focuses on the whole child, including cognitive, social-emotional, and civic development.
- **Community-Informed:** Developed through collaboration with educators, families, students, and community stakeholders.
- **Future-Focused:** Aligns with the demands of a rapidly changing world, including workforce shifts and global challenges.
- **Anchored in Equity:** Often emphasizes equitable outcomes and culturally responsive values.

At the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year, Aspire ACA published the below Portrait of a Graduate:

TK-8th

- **(Justice Seeking Scholar) Thinking Deeply and Fairly** – Understanding what you read and see, noticing when things are unfair, and coming up with smart and fair ways to solve problems in your school or community.
- **(Knowledge of Self and Self-Determination Seeker) Knowing Yourself and Making Good Choices** – Understanding who you are, where you come from, what you believe in, and what you're good at. It also means having the confidence to set goals and make a plan for your future.

- **(Inclusive Community Caretaker) Caring for Your Community and Culture** – Respecting yourself and others, and working hard to make your school or neighborhood a kind, fair, and welcoming place for everyone.
- **(Courageous Communicator) Speaking Up and Using Your Voice** – Having the courage to say what you think and feel in a clear way, helping others be heard, and using your words to make positive changes.
- **(Compassionate Collaborator) Working Together and Caring for Well-Being** – Being a good teammate by listening, showing kindness, managing emotions, and helping others feel their best. Leading by example and working together to reach shared goals.
- **(Resilient Life-Long Learner) Being Flexible, Strong, and Always Learning** – Being able to handle changes, learn from mistakes, and stay curious and excited about learning new things throughout your life

Equity Focus

Aspire is committed to providing equitable opportunities for our students, families, and teammates. We use an equity lens to examine our policies, practices, and systems at Aspire to strive for all groups to increase access and benefit from our work. This belief is woven throughout our core values.

We live in a society that provides some groups more or fewer opportunities based solely on factors they do not control. Aspire was founded to address the long-standing inequities in K-12 education. Every part of our vision to prepare and empower students to build a fulfilling and liberated future for themselves and their communities lives and breathes the mandate to address these inequities. As an organization, we continue to devote significant resources of time and energy to build our collective muscle in order to develop our equity lens to better identify, discuss, and address equity issues impacting our students, schools, and teammates. These equity belief statements provide unequivocal direction and guidance to our team as we go forth on our journey to define who we are and how we approach our work. Since the overwhelming majority of our students are Latina/o/x, when we say that we are using an equity lens to evaluate outcomes and actions we are typically referring to these particular populations.

Following is Aspire’s equity commitments, as well as examples of how we strive to uphold each commitment:

Commitment Statement	School Practices or Model Elements
Understand the significant difference between equity and equality. Every student deserves to receive what they need to succeed (equity), not	● Multi-tiered System of Supports (“MTSS”) ● Aspire Student Learning Framework; rubric for teacher practice and coaching

that every student receives the same amount of resources, instruction, attention, etc. (equality).	• Additional support structures and programming for ELs, such as our designated ELD program
Develop school environments where all students are actively and meaningfully engaged in rigorous instruction.	• Culturally responsive teaching • Foundation of cooperative classroom learning structures/routines and teaching self-management skills • Student academic ownership, <i>e.g.</i> via dialogic learning
Interrupt the “school to prison pipeline” – policies and practices that are directly and indirectly pushing the most at risk students out of school and on a pathway to the juvenile and criminal justice systems.	• During & After School Multi-Leveled Intensive Small Groups • Individual, Group and Family Mental Health Therapy Provided on Campus • Specialize Mentorship Program Provided by Individually You, Collectively Us, Inc.
Engage families as partners in meaningful ways in our work.	• Student Support Teams • English Language Learning workshops for families • Student-led family conferences • Community events
Build the capacity of diverse teams that are more reflective of our students.	• Equity-based professional learning • Diverse hiring panels • Aligned Aspire pre-hiring alignment prior to hiring process for school leaders
Nurture an open, collaborative, and trusting environment because the work is enormous, deeply personal, emotional and often difficult.	• Social and emotional learning via RULER curriculum • Foundation of cooperative classroom learning structures/routines and teaching self-management skills • Mental health programming • Safety/Crisis team meetings and crisis debriefs • Lead teacher teaming structures • Teacher coaching structures
We must continually put the Equity Commitments into action and live by them. Every Aspire	• Latino Leadership Alliance • Black Student Union

teammate is accountable for applying these commitments in every decision, use of resources, and management of talent. The power of our collective and individual dedication to these commitments is reason enough to be hopeful as we pursue our mission and create a more just and equitable world.	● Asian American-Pacific Islander Club ● Aspire Bay Area Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council ● Pro-Black Coordinator programming ● Racial Affinity Groups ● Aligned Regional Aspire Culturally Responsive Professional Development
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Community Need for the Charter School

Nearly three decades ago, a group of parent advocates proposed the idea of a charter school to the Ravenswood City School District in response to a need for high-quality educational options in the community. In 1997, we opened our doors after receiving start-up funds from the School Futures Research Foundation, a nonprofit education foundation established by John Walton of Walmart. In 2003, we merged with Aspire Public Schools, a nonprofit charter management organization committed to providing underserved students with a rigorous, college-preparatory education across California.

Now, in 2026, we continue to serve as a high-quality and trusted option for students and families in the East Palo Alto and Ravenswood community. Over the years, we have remained grounded in our founding mission while evolving to meet the changing academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. Through a focus on equity, inclusion, and culturally responsive practices, we strive to ensure that every student has access to meaningful, engaging, and standards-aligned instruction.

We are proud of the progress we have made and remain confident in our ability to continue growing and improving. By leveraging data-driven instruction, investing in strong family and community partnerships, and maintaining high expectations for all students, EPACS is well-positioned to expand opportunities and outcomes for the students we serve. Our commitment to continuous improvement ensures that we will not only sustain our impact but deepen it—preparing students to thrive in high school, college, and beyond.

EPACS also serves as a vital partner to families and the broader community. By actively engaging families, honoring community voice, and providing a safe and supportive learning environment, the school strengthens trust and collaboration—key components for student success.

All of the students who attend EPACS fit the description of a subgroup that is considered traditionally underserved. All of our students fit under the description of being either socio-economically disadvantaged, Latina/o/x, an English Learner, African American, a student with a learning disability, homeless youth or foster youth. Therefore, EPACS has focused its efforts on developing a multi-tiered

system of support for all students. Our hope is to not only provide the best possible support we can to the students enrolled at our school, but to also recruit more students/families to our school through word of mouth - emanating from families who can testify to EPACS efforts toward supporting the whole child.

EPACS is confident that it is putting forward a concerted, whole-hearted effort to support all students enrolled at its school. We do believe in a continuous improvement model to constantly reflect on our practices and make adjustments to our procedures and/or practices to better our services for the community. As we reflect on our recruitment, retention and ability to provide wraparound services, we do feel we do a lot to support our community. We recognize that as a community school, there are more elements to ensuring an accessible education than providing quality instruction to students. EPACS strives to support students and families in as many ways possible in an attempt to eliminate obstacles that could prevent our students from reaching their full potential.

Additionally, EPACS offers comprehensive Mental Health and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) services for students and families. Students in TK–8 have regular opportunities to build critical social-emotional skills such as self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness. These skills support students in navigating challenges, building positive relationships, and developing resilience both in and out of the classroom.

At EPACS, we use Wayfinder, a research-based SEL curriculum that helps students develop a strong sense of purpose, belonging, and self-identity. Through structured lessons and reflective practices, Wayfinder supports students in setting goals, building emotional intelligence, and strengthening their connection to their learning community.

We also implement the RULER approach, utilizing anchor tools such as the Mood Meter, Meta-Moment, Blueprint, and Charter to help students recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate their emotions. These tools are embedded into daily classroom routines and school culture, equipping students with practical strategies to manage their emotions and interactions effectively.

EPACS has one Mental Health Therapist and one Bilingual School Psychologist who provide individual support, family engagement, and group counseling services. In addition, our robust Wellness Team offers a continuum of support, including daily check-ins, social skills groups, crisis response, and targeted interventions. Together, these systems ensure that students receive the social, emotional, and mental health support necessary to thrive academically and personally.

EPACS's specialized academic services are embedded within the regular school day and begin in the classroom. We are committed to providing instruction that is intentionally scaffolded and differentiated to meet each student's individual learning needs. Teachers incorporate daily small group instruction to provide targeted support and accelerate student growth informed by multiple data points.

Our staff recognizes the diverse learning profiles of our students and intentionally designs lessons that include hands-on activities, movement, visuals, graphic organizers, and environmental print to support access and engagement. As educators serving 21st-century learners, we also prioritize meaningful technology integration to enhance instruction and increase student engagement.

In addition, we explicitly teach and reinforce academic discourse, equipping students with the language and habits needed to engage in thoughtful discussion, articulate their thinking, and collaborate with peers. Above all, EPACS educators are committed to delivering culturally and linguistically responsive instruction that affirms and validates students' identities, backgrounds, and lived experiences.

EPACS has many educational partners that support our day and expanded learning program. Our friends at Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo, Marine Science Institute, Stanford Flying Treehouse, come regularly to provide learning opportunities and hands on learning experiences.

Some of our ExLP partners include Sylvan Learning (1 year), Space Cookies Robotics (5+ years, Nonprofit), Girl Scouts (5+ years, Nonprofit), Stanford Science Bus (5+ years), LIFT Enrichment (3 years), Body Empowerment Project (2 years, Nonprofit), and Music on Schools (3 years).

Extracurricular activities include sports, student council, yearbook club, and our student affinity groups. EPACS students enjoy several educational field trips throughout the school year! Throughout the year, our students participate in a variety of enriching field experiences that extend learning beyond the classroom while strengthening community and engagement. Visits to The Tech Interactive and the Exploratorium provide hands-on STEM opportunities, allowing students to engage directly with interactive exhibits and experiments that deepen their understanding of science and technology. At the California Academy of Sciences, students experience a comprehensive approach to science through its aquarium, planetarium, and natural history exhibits, while the Monterey Bay Aquarium connects learning to marine biology and environmental science in a real-world context.

Our trips also include visits to the San Francisco Zoo and Oakland Zoo, where students explore animal habitats, biodiversity, and conservation efforts. In addition to academic enrichment, we prioritize experiences that build community and encourage personal growth. Trips to California's Great America and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk offer opportunities for team bonding, student engagement, and stepping outside of comfort zones, as students challenge themselves, face fears, and create lasting memories together.

Together, these field experiences provide a balanced blend of academic enrichment, social development, and joyful exploration.

EPACS's Commitment to Diversity, Belonging, and Anti-Racism

At East Palo Alto Charter School, we are committed to providing a safe, nurturing learning environment that honors and affirms students' identities, diverse needs, and lived experiences. To ensure students have agency over their learning and are prepared to pursue their future dreams and aspirations, we plan intentionally with students at the center of every decision. This means meeting students where they are, scaffolding and differentiating instruction, and pushing for deeper understanding through a lens of social justice.

Our approach is grounded in Culturally Responsive Teaching, where we recognize culture as a powerful lever for learning and intentionally build strong relationships, foster student voice, and create meaningful, relevant learning experiences. Through the Ready for Rigor Framework, we build the conditions necessary for deep, independent learning by focusing on four key areas:

- **Awareness:** Educators engage in ongoing reflection of their own identities, beliefs, and biases, and intentionally work to understand the cultural identities and lived experiences of their students. This self-awareness allows us to create inclusive spaces where students feel seen, valued, and capable.
- **Learning Partnerships:** We intentionally cultivate trusting, respectful relationships between students and educators, positioning students as active partners in their learning. By building strong connections, we create a safe environment where students are willing to take academic risks and persist through challenges.
- **Information Processing:** We design instruction that helps students move beyond surface-level understanding to deep, cognitive engagement. Through strategies such as scaffolding, modeling, productive struggle, and opportunities for discourse, students build the skills needed to process, retain, and apply complex information independently.
- **Community of Learners and Learning Environment:** We foster classroom communities that emphasize collaboration, shared responsibility, and high expectations. Classrooms are structured to promote student voice, academic discourse, and a sense of belonging, ensuring that all students contribute to and benefit from the learning environment.

We advance equity by addressing each student's unique needs, inspiring critical thinking about the world and their identities, and partnering authentically with families. We honor the voices, cultures, and backgrounds of our community and work collaboratively with equity-minded stakeholders to ensure meaningful and engaging instruction for all students. East Palo Alto Charter School is dedicated to providing equitable access and outcomes regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or other identity markers, and we actively work to disrupt systemic inequities, including the school-to-prison pipeline.

We recognize that the foundation of schooling in the United States is rooted in a history of white supremacy, and to be a school genuinely committed to collective liberation, we must do the difficult work of recognizing and dismantling all systems of oppression. We recognize that knowledge is power and that education is the weapon our scholars need to fight to improve the trajectory of their families future lineage. We also acknowledge that this work is not easy and that we cannot do it alone. As a

community dedicated to anti-racism and anti-oppression, we will purposefully strive to identify, discuss, and challenge issues of race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other protected identity markers and the impact(s) they have on students, staff, and families.

EPACS serves 449 TK-8th graders from East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park. 99% of our students identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color – 89% are Latinx, 5% are Black or African American, 2% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 4% identify as multiracial/other. 83% of our students qualify for the Free and Reduced Price Meal program, 51% are English Language Learners, and 15% receive Special Education services.

Cultural diversity in schools is not just about representation however; it's about creating an environment where all students can thrive, learn, and grow, both academically and personally. Diversity in the classroom is crucial for fostering a richer learning environment, promoting empathy, and preparing students for a diverse world. It enhances cognitive skills, critical thinking, and creativity by exposing students to various perspectives and challenging their assumptions. Moreover, it helps reduce prejudice, build social skills, and create a more inclusive and accepting atmosphere for all students.

At EPACS we recognize that there is also diversity within races. With approximately 94% of our student population Latina/o/x or African American, we celebrate and uplift the beauty within the variety and differences in each race's diaspora. EPACS also has student groups that provide our students the opportunity to be seen, heard and to connect and learn culturally. Three of those student groups are our Latino Leadership Alliance, Black Student Union, and Asian American-Pacific Islander Club.

Student Population to be Served

Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School, a proud community school, currently serves approximately 450 scholars from transitional kindergarten through eighth grade. Our performance narrative includes historical enrollment data.

Most recent U.S. Census data underscore the diverse nature of East Palo Alto, with 66.5% Latina/o/x, 10.9% Black or African-American, 11.9% White or Caucasian, 5.3% Asian, 6.9% Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian. This diversity is further highlighted by 44.1% foreign-born and 365.9% speaking a language other than English at home.

The CDE has compiled demographic data that reveals Ravenswood Elementary School District enrolled 1,449 students in 2024-2025, the most recent year with publicly available data. The table below summarizes student demographics across Ravenswood City Elementary, Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School, and the East Palo Alto Population. Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School, in line with these demographics, is committed to enrolling a diverse student population.

Subgroup	East Palo Alto Population (2020 Census)	Ravenswood City Elementary 2024-2025	Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School 2025-2026 *Census Date
Total	30,304	1,449	449
Latina/o/x	66.5%	82.4%	89%
White	11.9%	1.5%	1%
Asian	5.3%	0.7%	0%
Black or African American	10.9%	4.9%	5%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	6.9%	7.9%	2%
Two or More Races	14.6%	2%	2%
English Learners	n/a	55.6%	52%
Students With Disabilities	n/a	15.7%	15%
Homeless Youth	n/a	18.4%	2%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	n/a	91.8%	87%

Student Enrollment and Grade Levels Served

Charter School will serve a student enrollment at each grade level and at all grade levels combined in each of the years of the term of the Charter as follows:

	Projected Student Enrollment for Each Year by Grade Level and Total Enrollment	
Grade Level	Year 1 2027-2028	Year 2 2028-2029
TK	20	20
K	40	44

1	44	46
2	44	46
3	44	46
4	44	46
5	54	46
6	60	60
7	60	60
8	50	60
Total	460	474

What it Means to be an Educated Person in the 21st Century

At Aspire East Palo Alto School, being an educated person in the 21st century means developing the knowledge, skills, and mindsets outlined in Aspire Bay Area’s Portrait of a Graduate. An educated scholar is a critical thinker who can analyze information and challenge inequities; a self-determined individual with a strong sense of identity and purpose; a courageous communicator who can express ideas and advocate for self and others; and a compassionate collaborator who contributes to inclusive communities. Through instruction grounded in the Aspire Student Learning Framework, students engage in rigorous, standards-aligned content, take ownership of their learning, and demonstrate understanding through multiple modalities. In a 1:1 technology environment, students use digital tools to research, create, collaborate, and communicate, preparing them to navigate and contribute to an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Collectively, these experiences ensure that students graduate as adaptable, resilient, and lifelong learners equipped to lead, learn, and thrive in the 21st century.

How Learning Best Occurs

Aspire East Palo Charter School’s climate and culture are engaging and inclusive, prioritizing psychological, physical, and emotional safety as our foundation. Our dynamic instructional design empowers students as active participants in their learning, preparing them for college and careers. Through culturally responsive and standards-aligned instruction, we promote deep understanding and high academic achievement for our students.

Our instructional program is designed to develop scholars who embody Aspire Bay Area’s Portrait of a Graduate. Instruction builds students’ capacity as critical thinkers, self-determined learners, courageous communicators, compassionate collaborators, inclusive community caretakers, and resilient lifelong learners. Through culturally responsive, standards-aligned learning experiences, students engage deeply with content, make meaning from multiple perspectives, and connect their learning to themselves, their communities, and the world around them.

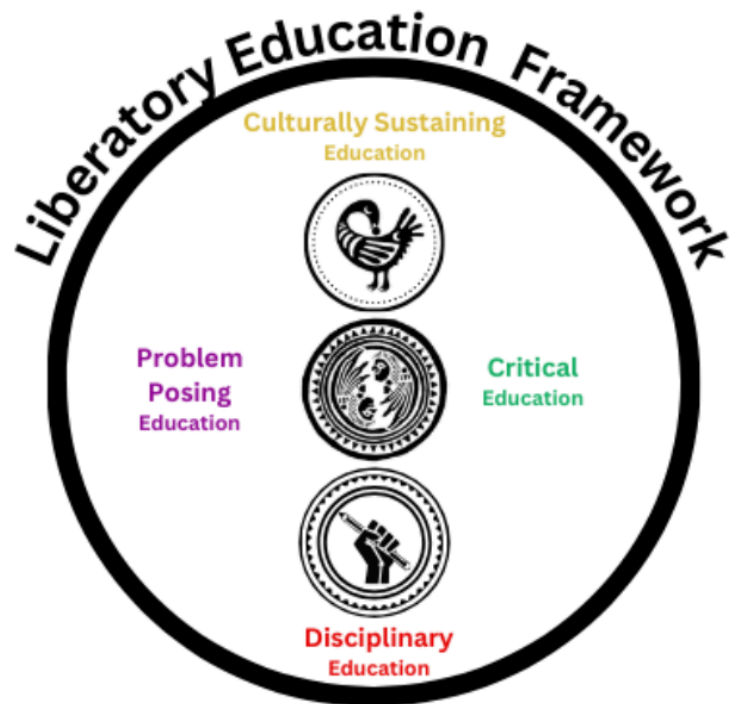
Our curriculum is aligned to the California Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, the History-Social Science Framework, English Language Development Standards, and other applicable state standards. Strong instruction at Aspire East Palo Charter School is grounded in the Aspire Student Learning Framework: we cultivate a culture of learning in which students feel safe, affirmed, and engaged; we provide essential content that is rigorous, relevant, and culturally responsive; we build academic ownership by empowering students to do the thinking, collaborate, and use their voice; and we ensure students demonstrate learning in multiple ways. This approach supports both academic growth and the development of agency, identity, and critical consciousness.

At Aspire East Palo Charter School, joy is an essential part of strong instruction and a thriving school community. In alignment with the Student Learning Framework, we create learning environments where students are affirmed, experience belonging, and engage in meaningful collaboration. Joy is cultivated through classroom rituals and routines, student discourse, community experiences, field trips, and opportunities for students to publicly share and celebrate their learning. By centering joy alongside rigor, identity, and voice, we foster an inclusive and hopeful environment where students and families are valued and scholars are supported to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Aspire East Palo Charter School offers 180 days of instruction on a modified calendar with a shortened summer recess to mitigate learning loss. Each school day provides all students with access to rigorous, culturally responsive, interdisciplinary instruction, with dedicated time for both enrichment and intervention. Instruction is grounded in the Aspire Student Learning Framework, ensuring a strong culture of learning, access to essential content, opportunities for academic ownership, and multiple ways for students to demonstrate their learning. See Appendix III for a sample calendar and Appendix IV for a bell schedule. TK classroom sizes and adult-to-student ratios adhere to Education Code Section 48000(g).

Liberatory Education Framework

During the next charter term, MON and Aspire Public Schools Bay Area will be engaged in specific instructional and school programming foci that align our schools to an Aspire Liberatory Education Framework. Below is a visual representation of the planned professional learning focus that all of our Aspire Bay Area teammates will engage in over the next five years. At its core is liberatory education which is guided by the principles and concepts of Sankofa, In Lak'ech, and Critical Literacy.



Sankofa: The concept of “Sankofa” is derived from King Adinkera of the Akan people of West Africa. “Sankofa” is expressed in the Akan language as “se wo were fi na wosan kofa a yenki.” Literally translated, this means “it is not taboo to go back and fetch what you forgot”.

“Sankofa” teaches us that we must go back to our roots in order to move forward. That is, we should reach back and gather the best of what our past has to teach us, so that we can achieve our full potential as we move forward. Whatever we have lost, forgotten, forgone, or been stripped of can be reclaimed, revived, preserved, and perpetuated.

“In order to understand our present and ensure our future, we must know our past.”

-University of Illinois Springfield Black Student Union

	In Lak'ech: In Mayan tradition, there is a greeting that many people working with Mayan wisdom know of. It is the law of In Lak'ech, which means I am another yourself. It also means I am you, and you are me (A traditional Mayan interpretation). We have come to understand that this Mayan greeting is an honoring for each other. It is a statement of unity and oneness.
	Critical Literacy: At the heart of critical literacy is the development of our critical consciousness, which is our socio-political understanding of power, privilege, and oppression in our world as a tool to take transformative action against systemic inequalities.

Pedagogies, Practices, and Education Outcomes

The above principles and concepts (Sankofa, In Lak'ech, Critical Literacy) inform our focused co-pedagogies that our teammates will develop as practitioners. The pedagogies will inform our instructional and school practices which will then lead to educational outcomes for students.

Pedagogies	Practices	Education Outcomes
Community and Restorative Pedagogy	• Discussion, Debate, and Dialogical Discourse • Restorative and Beloved Community Practice and Accountability • Participatory Action Research	Problem Posing Education
Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy	• Graduate Profile Competency and Community Centric Practice • Next Generation College, Career, and Community Pathway Pipelining	Culturally Sustaining Education
Disciplinary Pedagogy	• Professional Learning Communities and Nested Development Pipelines	Disciplinary Education

	• Authentic Assessment (i.e., Exhibitions, PBL, Standards Based Performance Tasks) • Cycles of Inquiry and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	
Critical Pedagogy	• Pro Black, Anti-Racist, Neurodivergent Inclusive Praxis • Literacy and Liberation Practices • Critical Inquiry and Cross Curricular Evidence-Based Writing	Critical Education

Aspire East Palo Charter School's Liberatory Education Design Elements

Aspire East Palo Charter School integrates evidence-based, innovative, and results-driven program elements designed to prepare and empower scholars to build liberated and fulfilling futures for themselves and their communities. The following key design elements define our approach:

1. *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Practice (Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy)*
2. *Learning Environment Supportive of Student Academic Ownership (Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy)*
3. *Data-driven Decision Making (Disciplinary Pedagogy)*
4. *Social Emotional Learning & Behavioral/Mental Health Programming (Community & Restorative Pedagogy; Critical Pedagogy)*
5. *Small School Community Supports (Community and Restorative Pedagogy)*

1. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Practice:

In the spirit of Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings' seminal work, Aspire East Palo Charter School embraces Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy to ensure equitable education for all students. This approach fosters students' understanding of multiple perspectives and identities by integrating their cultural backgrounds into teaching and learning.

Educators incorporate students' experiences when planning lessons, critically reviewing curriculum through a cultural lens. Aspire East Palo Charter School educators focus on three core elements of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy:

1. Academic Success: Focusing on students' intellectual growth and the development of academic skills.
2. Cultural Competence: Helping students affirm and appreciate their own cultures while developing fluency in other cultures.
3. Critical Consciousness: Encouraging students to recognize and challenge societal inequalities.

Our instructional program incorporates the development of practices that exemplify culturally responsive pedagogy. Lessons are created with the culture of students in mind throughout the cycle of instruction from a social justice and interdisciplinary instructional lens. Based on educational research and best practices for the student population that Aspire serves, Aspire East Palo Charter School builds and maintains a foundation rooted in cooperative learning structures, self-management skills, and consistent classroom routines—implementing strategies that emphasize communal goals and mutual support to enhance student engagement and academic success, while empowering students to take ownership of their academic journey. This ownership is cultivated daily through constructivist pedagogical approaches, such as dialogic learning, demonstrated through end-of-unit performance assessments.

Our instructional program integrates these principles using the **Aspire Student Learning Framework (ASLF)**—which is a coaching tool that outlines student instructional moves. Through coaching and data from the ASLF, teachers receive support to embed culturally responsive methods in their planning and instruction. Instructional goals are regularly set and reviewed using this framework.

CULTURE OF LEARNING Are all students engaged in learning throughout the lesson?

Non-Evidence	Look-fors	Evidence
	• All or almost all students are engaged in independent or cooperative instructional tasks, exploration, discovery, hands-on learning or volunteering responses. • Students feel safe to ask questions and give and receive feedback from peers and teachers. • Students execute transitions, rituals, routines or procedures with limited narration from the teacher in ways that indicate self directed learning. • Students affirm contributions of their teammates AND collectively ignitejoy	

Core Teacher Skills:

Indicator 1: Student engagement

- Arrange the classroom in a manner that allows for materials and resources to be equitably

accessible to all students

Indicator 2: Safety

- Teachers clearly state, post, and maintain high and clear standards for behaviors for all students (academic and non-academic) and is a Warm Demander.
- Use principles of restorative justice to manage conflict and redirect negative behavior
- Normalize mistakes as part of the learning process (by modeling, reinforcing, providing wait time, teaching students to ask each other probing questions, and discouraging one right way)
- Teacher uses positive and reinforcing language to encourage students and reinforce their belief in them as a model for students to affirm each other

Indicator 3: Rituals, routines and procedures

- Teach, model and reinforce different cooperative grouping structures and routines
- Teach, model and reinforce topics aligned to self-management (will be seen verbally and with artifacts in the classroom)
- The rituals and routines are equitable and accessible to all students and reinforce self directed learning and academic identity
- Providing specific, concrete, sequential, and observable directions for behavior and academics

Indicator 4: Affirmation

- Intentionally develop empathy within students so they understand how their behavior impacts each other both positively and negatively
- Teach students protocols with how to give and receive feedback; teacher models receiving feedback
- Plan for strategies to affirm student contributions towards a collectivist culture and ignite joy
- Plan for igniting joy: including music, games, cheers, chants, etc.

ESSENTIAL CONTENT Are all students working with culturally responsive content aligned to the appropriate grade-level standards that promotes rich cognitive development?

Non-Evidence	Look-fors	Evidence
	• Students can talk about what they are working on, why it's important and how it connects to what they already know. • The lesson focuses on grade level standards and the content itself is reflective of and affirming to students' identities, global diversity,	

	and it allows for students to interrogate the presented information. ● All activities students engage in are aligned to the stated or implied learning goal(s) and are well-sequenced, affirm lived experience as knowledge, and move students toward mastery of the grade-level standard(s), language goals and/or IEP goals. ● All instructional materials students use, such as texts, questions, problems, exercises and assessments, are high-quality, accessible and appropriately demanding for the grade/course and time in the school-year, and center issues of equity, power, race and identity	
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Core Teacher Skills:

Rigor (standards)

- Develop and/or use daily lesson activities that are well sequenced, promote inquiry, engagement, collaboration and relevance, moving students toward mastery of grade-level standards
- Develop and provide accommodations and modifications as needed to ensure all students are able to attain rigorous, standards-aligned learning goals
- Teacher anticipates common student misunderstandings due to deeply internalizing content and ensures strategies are in place to overcome those misconceptions
- Pace of the lesson ensures that cognitively demanding, developmentally appropriate, standards-aligned objectives receive appropriate instructional time in order to promote student mastery.

Relevance (reflecting students' world)

- Develop and/or use a long-term, sequential plan that leads to mastery of the most important content for the grade or course and is centering issues of race, equity and power.
- The teacher makes the lesson accessible by including relevant and current media, phenomena, geographic and community reference points that are familiar and known by students.
- Teachers plan lessons that encourage all students to see, question, and interpret concepts from diverse perspectives.

Responsiveness (know students as individuals, make adjustments based on them)

- Teacher considers students' IEP goals, language development and other specific learning needs in developing learning goals and preparing lessons
- Teacher identifies and responds to student misunderstandings that arise during the lesson
- Plan lessons with options for students AND support students with how to choose learning experiences
- The teacher views students' life experiences as assets and builds on students' cultural and

linguistic knowledge

ACADEMIC OWNERSHIP Are all students empowered, responsible and supported to do the thinking in this classroom?

Non-Evidence	Look-fors	Evidence
	• Students persist through appropriately demanding cognitive work and engage in complex problem-solving during the lesson. Student agency is facilitated by options that align to the standard and objective. • Students provide evidence to support their thinking; evidence can be provided in multiple ways. Students use both academic language and authentic expression (i.e. their home language) to present their point of view. • Students respond to and build upon their peers' thinking, ideas or answers while actively constructing knowledge through structured student talk routines and a variety of routines that also include authentic dialogue. • Students collaborate with each other by providing constructive feedback to their classmates' work. Students engage in rigorous dialogue honoring convergent and divergent thinking in order to access multiple perspectives.	

Core Teacher Skills:

Indicator 1: Students persist, complex problem solving

- Notice when students are struggling, reaching of level of frustration and anchor back to SEL tools
- Go back to "chunk and chew" in order to break down difficult tasks into smaller parts
- Give students several options to respond to questions: writing, talking, drawing, using graphic organizers & manipulatives (when appropriate)
- Make problem-solving visuals noticeable and accessible.
- Provide equitable opportunities for support, praise, and participation.

Indicator 2: Fostering Academic Language

- View students' life experiences as assets and build on students' cultural and linguistic knowledge as they get comfortable using academic English conventions.
- Provide encouragement and affirmation to all students while moving them to use academic language
- Utilize translanguaging so that students' full linguistic repertoire is used and honored
- Recognize and affirm all languages and teach about audience for language and dialect

- Plan for the use of academic language in the 4 language domains: reading, writing, speaking and listening

Indicator 3: Helping students expand thinking through dialogue

- Use various student talk structures and routines to support student to student discourse (link resource)
- Provide opportunities for students to cite evidence to support their thinking & learning
- Pose questions that scaffold and support students to develop and complete high order thinking tasks
- Facilitate a discussion that that allows students to defend their responses
- Use probes or provide guiding questions and affirmations so that students defend their responses

Indicator 4: Fostering student collaboration and rigorous dialogue

- Create opportunities for peer collaboration and intentional peer feedback.
- Employ a variety of high ratio moves to push and extend student thinking, deepen their understanding and do more of the cognitive lift
- Provide direct instruction on how students should challenge each other's ideas and provide feedback to one another

DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING Do all students demonstrate that they are learning?

Non-Evidence	Look-fors	Evidence
	● Student responses, work and interactions demonstrate that students are on track to achieve stated or implied grade-level standard(s), language and/or IEP aligned learning goals. ● Students self-evaluate to reinforce self-directed learning because expectations for learning are clear (through rubrics, criteria for success, and students paraphrasing expectations). ● Students have opportunities to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways using academic writing and/or explanations. ● Students challenge the ideas in a text or lesson, explore and share alternative viewpoints & defend arguments with evidence.	

Core Teacher Skills:

**This domain assumes essential content (domain 2) is accurate and teacher understands the*

standards/goals of the lesson

Indicator 1: Demonstrate learning

- Plan a variety of standards and objective-aligned formative assessments.
- Design learning activities and questions that support students progressing to the essential content.
- Monitor student learning and adjust instruction while teaching.
- Plan for key moments in the lesson to monitor for learning:
 - What are the key skills you'll be looking for?
 - When would you monitor for evidence of those skills?
 - What misconceptions would you anticipate
 - How will you take anecdotal notes?
- Utilize student data to anticipate student misconceptions.

Indicator 2: Self-evaluation

- Create/utilize exemplars of student learning that address the standard/essential content.
- Provide transparent and engaging rubrics, checklists, or criteria for success that require demonstration of the essential content.
- Involve students in creating criteria for success on assignments and projects.
- Provide reflective moments for students to self-evaluate and adjust their own thinking/work.
- Indicator 3: Multiple ways of demonstrating
- Provide students with multiple options to express their understanding--and let them suggest some ways of being assessed.
- Students have the opportunity to choose to express their understanding in text, audio, video, multimedia, live presentations, and many other ways.
- Provide more than one way to answer on tasks so that students can express their understandings without barriers
- Indicator 4: Challenge and defend ideas
- Provide feedback that affirms student thinking and elaboration and clarifies or prompts thinking in misunderstood content.
- Encourage yourself to see, question and interpret concepts from a variety of perspectives and intentionally do the same for students.
- Provide access to complex topics so that students may engage in critical conversations that require multiple viewpoints.

2. Learning Environment Supportive of Student Academic Ownership:

Instruction at Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School engages students in the study of complex, real-world themes that promote deep conceptual understanding and align to rigorous academic standards. Learning is grounded in community and cultural inquiry, encouraging students to examine issues of opportunity, justice, and equity across content areas. This approach fosters critical thinking while helping students make meaningful connections between their learning and the world around them.

In partnership with families, students, and staff, Aspire Bay Area developed the Portrait of a Graduate to define the skills and competencies students will develop. These competencies—including critical thinking, self-determination, communication, collaboration, community engagement, and lifelong learning—guide both instructional design and student experiences.

Through these competencies, teachers design inquiry-based learning experiences that center student agency and engagement with meaningful content. Educators utilize cross-disciplinary scope and sequence documents and curricular crosswalks to identify and highlight connections across subject areas. While instruction is delivered within distinct disciplines, these intentional alignments support students in making connections across content areas and applying their knowledge in varied contexts.

Students are empowered to take ownership of their academic journey, grounded in the belief that students are active drivers of their learning. This ownership is cultivated through daily instructional practices aligned with the Aspire Student Learning Framework, including opportunities for students to engage in rigorous, standards-aligned cognitive tasks, use both academic and home languages to express ideas, and participate in structured academic discourse that values multiple perspectives and collaboration.

Portrait of a Graduate

TK-8

- **(Justice Seeking Scholar) Thinking Deeply and Fairly** – Understanding what you read and see, noticing when things are unfair, and coming up with smart and fair ways to solve problems in your school or community.
- **(Knowledge of Self and Self-Determination Seeker) Knowing Yourself and Making Good Choices** – Understanding who you are, where you come from, what you believe in, and what you're good at. It also means having the confidence to set goals and make a plan for your future.
- **(Inclusive Community Caretaker) Caring for Your Community and Culture** – Respecting yourself and others, and working hard to make your school or neighborhood a kind, fair, and welcoming place for everyone.
- **(Courageous Communicator) Speaking Up and Using Your Voice** – Having the courage to say what you think and feel in a clear way, helping others be heard, and using your words to make positive changes.
- **(Compassionate Collaborator) Working Together and Caring for Well-Being** – Being a good teammate by listening, showing kindness, managing emotions, and helping others feel their best. Leading by example and working together to reach shared goals.
- **(Resilient Life-Long Learner) Being Flexible, Strong, and Always Learning** – Being able to handle changes, learn from mistakes, and stay curious and excited about learning new things throughout your life.

<u>Teaching Methods</u>	
<i>Cognitive Depth and Inquiry</i>	Our teachers support all students in cognitively demanding learning experiences through carefully designed open-ended questions aligned to Depth of Knowledge. Educators thoughtfully design and lead rigorous classroom discussions that foster critical thinking and advanced problem-solving skills. Within this academic framework, students are encouraged to engage in meaningful reflection on the relevance and application of their learning to real-world contexts and everyday experiences. These learning experiences culminate in End of Unit aligned performance assessments.
<i>Explicit Instruction</i>	Explicit instruction is an evidence-based form of teaching in which the teacher presents the lesson by stating the standards-aligned learning objective. The teacher then models an explicit skill and application using criteria for success, using thinking steps. Next, the teacher prompts guided practice and frequent checks for understanding. At the conclusion, students take the lead and individually demonstrate their new skills or content knowledge on a formative assessment that is collected and evaluated for mastery using a rubric or success criteria to uncover misconceptions and to inform future lesson targets.
<i>Reading Comprehension Strategies</i>	Literature Circles are structured group discussions of a book or other piece of literature, similar to a book club, but for young people. Literature Circles provide students with the opportunity to engage in critical thinking and reflection to strengthen reading comprehension. Close Reading supports access to complex texts through standards-aligned text-dependent questions that scaffold in difficulty to support students' full understanding of grade-level texts. Students engage in multiple reads of the text to support a deep understanding of complex texts.
<i>Integrated and Designated English Learner Development</i>	Integrated and Designated English Learner Development strategies such as Structured Student Talk, Interactive Reading & Note-Taking, Academic Writing Support, and Explicit Language Instruction provide access for all students to rigorous, standards-aligned instruction.
<i>Academic Discourse</i>	Academic Discourse promotes the idea of dialogue, the language used, and a format that facilitates a high level of communication in the classroom. The discourse can range from peer-to-peer discussion to a whole-class discussion which provides daily opportunities for students to engage in protocols that

Teaching Methods	
	support discussion to solidify their own understanding and to support the development of peer and collective understanding. Instructional protocols include Debates, Fishbowl, Final Word, Jigsaw, Socratic Seminar, Tea Party, Say Something, Think-Pair-Share, and Rank-Talk-Write. What is imperative is that students are able to process and interact with the academic vocabulary.
<i>Building Academic Vocabulary</i>	Building Academic Vocabulary provides regular, ongoing opportunities for scholars to strengthen tier 2 and tier 3 (content-specific) vocabulary. Protocols to support include Frayer Model, Semantic Webbing, Vocabulary Squares, and Contextual Redefinition. Academic vocabulary knowledge prepares students to take on grade-level content and succeed in school and beyond.
<i>Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Flexible Grouping</i>	Aspire East Palo Charter School designs instruction using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to proactively remove barriers and ensure all students can access rigorous, grade-level learning. Teachers provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression while maintaining high expectations for all learners. Flexible grouping is one instructional strategy used to differentiate support within Tier 1 instruction. Based on ongoing formative assessment and student data, teachers group and regroup students to provide targeted instruction, additional practice, enrichment, or language supports as needed. Teachers collaborate with interventionists, multilingual learner specialists, special education staff, and instructional aides to ensure students receive appropriate supports while remaining engaged in core classroom instruction. When additional intervention is needed, supports are coordinated within the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).

To effectively implement our instructional practices, Aspire East Palo Charter School prioritizes ongoing professional development and coaching through the use of the ASLF. After each classroom observation, teachers and coaches collaboratively identify a relevant teacher skill to guide the next coaching cycle. These targeted skills are selected based on formative and observational data and are aligned with strategies to accelerate student learning.

3. Data-driven Decision Making:

Aspire East Palo Charter School uses a systematic, evidence-based approach to data-driven instruction by collecting, analyzing, and responding to diverse student data. This ensures our teaching practices are responsive, equitable, and effective across both early and late elementary classrooms.

A key mechanism in our data-informed culture is the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle, which drives continuous improvement:

- **Plan:** Identify targeted Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards based on scope and sequence and initial diagnostic data.
- **Do:** Implement instructional strategies while actively monitoring student progress.
- **Study:** Analyze data to assess the impact of instruction on student outcomes.
- **Act:** Adjust and refine strategies based on analysis to improve future instruction.

This cycle is reinforced through formative assessments, progress monitoring, and data chats, which provide timely, actionable insights into student learning. Educators use this real-time feedback to adjust instruction, ensuring a high level of responsiveness to student needs.

Data-driven decision-making is further supported by our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Within this system, we employ a range of assessments—including universal screeners, diagnostic tools, and summative measures—to identify students for targeted support, inform instruction, and promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Types of Assessments		
Universal Screeners	Diagnostic Assessments	Summative Assessments
Universal screeners are used to: ● Provide data to measure the effectiveness of core instruction to allow teams to consider adjustments across Tier 1 ● Identify students who may benefit from Tier 2 and Tier 3 support <u>Aspirewide required:</u> ● <i>i-Ready, initial ELPAC, mClass</i> ● <i>Currently, we do not have an Aspire-wide universal screener for CA NGSS</i>	Diagnostics are used to: ● Measure skill strengths and weaknesses, identify skills in need of improvement, and assist in determining why a problem is occurring <u>Aspirewide required:</u> ● <i>Phonological awareness & Phonics diagnostics (as needed)</i> ● <i>i-Ready (domain and instructional reports)</i> ● <i>IABs</i>	Summative assessments will be used to: ● Benchmark student performance relative to what students need to be successful on the content standards assessed ● Provide teachers, schools, and the region with ongoing data to assess whether we are on track to meet goals <u>Aspirewide required:</u> ● <i>SBAC/CAA</i> ● <i>CAST</i> ● <i>Summative ELPAC/ Alt. ELPAC</i> ● <i>PFT</i> ● <i>Unit Summative Assessments</i>

Formative Assessments	Progress Monitoring
Ongoing assessment embedded within effective teaching to guide instructional decisions and provide indicators for scaffolding, accommodation, and/or accessibility solutions. <i>Examples of Formative Assessments: Exit tickets, curriculum embedded assessments, IABs</i>	Progress Monitoring Measures - Ongoing assessment conducted for the purpose of guiding instruction, monitoring student progress, and evaluating instruction/intervention effectiveness. <i>Examples of Progress monitoring: Plan-Design-Study-Assess Cycles, ORF, Phonics Mastery Test</i>

4. Social Emotional Learning and Behavioral & Mental Health Programming:

Social Emotional Learning

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

- Develop self-awareness and a positive sense of identity
- Strengthen self-management through effective regulation of emotions and behaviors
- Demonstrate social awareness, including empathy and compassion for others
- Build and maintain positive, healthy relationships
- Make responsible and ethical decisions
- Set and achieve meaningful personal and academic goals

SEL competencies and themes are integrated throughout the school day and explicitly taught.

Mental Health Programming

Mental wellness is essential to the healthy development of our scholars in academic and social contexts. All stakeholders, inclusive of families and staff, embrace a strengths-based perspective to realize the potential of scholars to learn and improve their overall well-being. With this understanding, the mental health program provides differentiated, trauma-informed, and culturally humble and responsive mental health services such that scholars and families are successful at Aspire East Palo Charter School and beyond. Our program provides scholars with school-based, social-emotional counseling that is available through our school Mental Health Department, staffed with BBS registered and licensed therapists. School based Mental Health Therapists work with scholars focusing on issues that are present during the school day, specifically working to ameliorate presenting problems' impact on a student's educational achievement. Mental health services are available throughout the day.

5. Small School Community Supports:

The Aspire East Palo Charter School community is small, in both overall enrollment and average class size. This allows faculty to foster deep relationships with the student body. Our instructors can implement programming and practices that provide personalized attention to students, built upon awareness of student academic and non-academic needs and interests.

Students are more likely to succeed in small school environments, where teachers, principal and staff have fostered a familiar relationship and one in which all stakeholders feel a part of the community. At Aspire East Palo Charter School, one of our key aims is for each student to be known, seen, and valued by our faculty.

In practice, our teachers greet their scholars during threshold (i.e., a door greeting relationship-building strategy) and create time and space to individually check in as needed, which could be during morning meetings, lunch, recess, or during small group time.

Teachers provide targeted instruction; learning specialists provide tailored support to our students with IEPs. The Education Specialist collaborates with classroom teachers to ensure that the curriculum and lesson delivery are accessible for students with IEPs. Their intentional collaboration is essential to the success of student learning. All instructors help students manage their work and goals independently.

The expanded learning program at Aspire East Palo Charter School offers students an opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities. During school breaks, the program offers students an additional 30 days to participate in programs that support their academics and expose them to various enrichment opportunities such as Space Cookies Robotics, Girls Scouts, LIFT Enrichment, Body Empowerment, Music Club, Yearbook Club, Gardening Club and Art Club.

Our Commitment to a Liberatory Learning Environment

Aspire East Palo Charter School's instructional model is rooted in culturally responsive practices guided by the Aspire Student Learning Framework (ASLF). Our approach ensures that every student, including Multilingual Learners and Standard/Mainstream English Learners, has access to rigorous, relevant academic experiences.

We are committed to creating learning conditions that enable every scholar to reach their full potential. Our classrooms promote safety, structure, and engagement with high expectations for all. Our teachers emphasize restorative justice principles and normalize mistakes as part of the learning process to cultivate a supportive and safe learning atmosphere. Recognizing the inequities that exist in broader society, we actively work to disrupt those systems and create transformative, empowering experiences for our students.

Curriculum

Aspire East Palo Charter School uses standards-aligned, adopted curricula alongside culturally responsive

instructional materials to provide equitable access to foundational academic skills, higher-order thinking, and life skills. Teachers leverage cross-disciplinary curricular crosswalks and scope and sequence documents to highlight connections across content areas, supporting students in making meaningful links between disciplines.

Subject	Curriculum Description
English Language Arts and English Learner Development:	Aspire East Palo Charter School’s instructional program incorporates strategies that engage students in complex, real-world themes and promote deep conceptual understanding through community and cultural inquiry. Instruction is intentionally designed to reflect and affirm students’ cultural identities and experiences, integrating a social justice lens throughout the instructional cycle. Aspire East Palo Charter School’s English Language Arts and English Learner Development curriculum is designed to support the examination and analysis of grade-level, complex texts through demonstration of critical reading, analysis, and listening and speaking skills in order to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and discuss ideas. Throughout the curriculum, students engage in academic writing such as narrative, expository, and argument forms that range from various modes of expression appropriate to the audience and purpose. Students will be exposed to instructional strategies, such as academic discourse discussion protocols, in order to support them in formulating and communicating ideas clearly and effectively. Additionally, Multi-Language Learner (“MLL”) supports, such as vocabulary and sentence frames for writing and academic discourse, are integrated throughout instruction. Aspire East Palo Charter School uses Wit & Wisdom for grades K-5. Wit & Wisdom is an instructional K-8 ELA curriculum that is based on the Science of Reading and allows students to dive deep into topics and authentic core texts to build knowledge of the world around them. Through lively classroom discourse, content-rich texts, and detailed writing prompts, students build a deeper understanding of history, science, and geography while developing the critical thinking skills that will benefit them for a lifetime. Grades 6-12 use CommonLit curriculum. CommonLit curriculum, specifically referred to as "CommonLit 360", is a comprehensive English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum designed for grades 6-12 that offers a full year of reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, discussion, and related media lessons, aiming to provide a supportive and engaging learning experience for students across various reading levels; it is considered evidence-based and standards-aligned, with a focus on diverse texts and accessibility features like text-to-speech and translation tools. EL Achieve is a comprehensive English Language Development Program that is focused on

	student-centered instruction, which supports content-area success by strengthening language abilities and teaching the language that native-English speakers already bring to their schooling. It follows a scope and sequence of language skills, with a focus on the high-leverage, portable vocabulary and sentence structures of the proficiency level.
Social Science:	Aspire East Palo Charter School's history and social studies instructional program is interwoven with the English Language Arts curriculum, lending itself to interdisciplinary instruction. Teachers build upon their history / social studies content in order to support and enhance the learning happening in other subject courses. Students apply historical, political, philosophical, geographical, economic, and sociological knowledge to local and global situations in order to comprehend contexts and events, predict and evaluate the outcomes of human actions, and act responsibly as world citizens. Students learn to apply chronological, thematic, and integrative thinking, develop and test hypotheses about cause and effect, gather evidence to support conclusions, conduct in-depth and relevant research, critically examine sources, and synthesize ideas. Materials at the elementary level include primary sources, historical literature, and a variety of non-fiction texts as recommended by the Common Core State Standards.
Mathematics:	Aspire East Palo Charter School's math curriculum is designed to focus students on the major work of each grade to develop a deep understanding of standards that are connected to key topics and concepts as they are built over time. Delivery of instruction is focused on utilizing a balanced approach that attends to the three aspects of rigor (conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and skills and application) with equal intensity, enabling students to develop a strong conceptual foundation, the appropriate mathematical fluencies, and critical problem-solving skills. Students will learn to apply mathematical concepts and processes. Students' ability to deeply understand concepts through problem-based questions is highly emphasized and assessed through everyday teaching and learning. This includes the students' ability to learn and apply Standards of Mathematical Practices. Students will be exposed to instructional strategies like the Three Reads Protocol and Academic Discourse discussion protocols in order to elicit student thinking. Students demonstrate facility with the language of mathematics and express generalizations discovered through investigation. Students are expected to develop fluency in symbolic reasoning and in constructing logical arguments. Students are exposed to a variety of problems and mathematical situations that require them to use strategies flexibly to reason, both abstractly and quantitatively, identify appropriate tools, develop models, and leverage their conceptual foundation to solve complex tasks and problems. Grades K-8 use Eureka Squared Math. Eureka Math Squared is a comprehensive TK-8 curriculum that sequences math concepts from basic to advanced. It is known for its

	coherence and rigor, structured to help students build a strong foundation in mathematics, and focuses on a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.
Science:	Aspire East Palo Charter School's science curriculum allows students to demonstrate understanding of scientific concepts and ideas through real-world applications. Students utilize scientific research and inquiry methods to conduct investigations and solve problems. They apply conceptual knowledge and processes from the Disciplinary Core Ideas ("DCIs"): Life Science, Physical Science, Earth and Space Science, and Engineering, in order to further the study of science and relate the study of science to other disciplines. This includes the students ability to learn and apply the Science and Engineering Practices ("SEPs") and Cross-Cutting Concepts ("CCCs"). Grades K-5 use Amplify Science. Amplify Science is a Next Generation Science Standards aligned curriculum that utilizes a hands-on investigative approach along with the use of print resources and digital modeling tools and simulations. Amplify Science is organized around units where students encounter compelling phenomena and real world problems, develop and strengthen claims by collecting evidence and testing assumptions, and apply their learning in new contexts. The units provided by the curriculum are the base for interdisciplinary instruction. The units per grade level cover the following topics: • Kinder: Needs of Plants and Animals, Pushes and Pulls, Sunlight and Weather. • First Grade: Animal and Plant Defenses, Light and Sound, Spinning Earth. • Second Grade: Plant and Animal Relationships, Properties of Materials, Changing Landforms. • Third Grade: Balancing Forces, Inheritance and Traits, Environments and Survival, Weather and Climate. • Fourth Grade: Energy Conversions, Vision and Light, Earth's Features, Waves, Energy and Information. • Fifth Grade: Patterns in the Sky, Modeling Matter, The Earth System, and Ecosystem Restoration. Grades 6-8 use OpenSciEd. OpenSciEd is a Next Generation Science Standards aligned curriculum that utilizes a storyline approach- a logical sequence of lessons that are motivated by students' questions that arise from student interactions with phenomena. The units provided by the curriculum are the base for interdisciplinary instruction. The units and topics that are taught throughout grade levels and disciplines are the following: Middle School • Sixth Grade: Light and Matter, Thermal Energy, Weather, Climate, and Water Cycling, Plate Tectonics and Rock Cycling, Natural Hazards, and Cells and Cell Systems.

	• Seventh Grade: Chemical Reactions and Matter, Chemical Reactions and Energy, Metabolic Reactions, Matter Cycling and Photosynthesis, Ecosystem Dynamics, and Earth Resources and Human Impact. • Eighth Grade: Contact Forces, Sound Waves, Forces at a Distance, Earth in Space, Genetics, Natural Selection and Common Ancestry.
Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	Social Emotional Learning competencies are explicitly taught during morning meeting and SEL lesson blocks. RULER is the curriculum that we use to support building students' capacities in the CASEL SEL competencies of self awareness, self management, social awareness, relationship building and responsible decision making. In this curriculum there are a specific set of tools that are designed to build students' emotional intelligence: • The Classroom Charter: Students participate in the development of a written community agreement, known as the Charter, that allows for the inclusive and equitable safety of all members conducive to learning effectively. In the Charter, students collectively share how they want to feel at school, the actions they can take that might produce these feelings, and the actions they commit to taking if someone is not supporting these feelings. • The Mood Meter: The Mood Meter is a two-axis grid used to show students' levels of pleasantness/unpleasantness against high/low energy. Instructors teach students to identify how they feel using the grid and its two conditions. Students also learn and practice expressing vocabulary associated with these feelings, as well as try out regulation strategies to proactive, responsive actions they can take to alter their moods and actions. • The Meta-Moment: This tool is a process for responding to emotional situations that could cause reactive emotions. This practice is used as a self reflection moment, where students visualize being their best self and strive to implement strategies to align who they are with that vision. • The Blueprint: As a conflict management tool, the Blueprint helps students practice engaging in empathy by teaching students to consider others' perspectives and respond to a situation in consideration of how others are feeling. Faculty dedicate the first part of the school year unpacking these tools and familiarizing students with them. Students then use these tools the rest of the year and track their behaviors, feelings, and progress with their Advisor and through journaling.
Physical Education (PE):	Aspire East Palo Charter School's Physical Education program is designed to help students develop cardiovascular fitness and participate in movement activities that contribute to balance, coordination, and agility. The PE program also promotes physical and emotional health through activities and instruction focused on building muscles, nutrition, and

	mental alertness, as well as opportunities for teamwork, cooperation, and creativity through physical activity. Students are introduced to dance, basketball, handball, soccer, running, yoga, cardio-vascular exercises, playground games, and some net games.
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Interventions and Enrichment

Interventions

Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School's academic program acknowledges the diversity in student learning by leveraging comprehensive data to inform instruction. The school aims to provide systematic and proactive support to all students by using the Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework, which allows us to center those who demonstrate academic, social-emotional, or behavioral challenges. Student support and progress is monitored regularly to assess next steps. The MTSS framework is composed of three tiers of support:

- Universal Supports (Tier 1) encompass high-quality classroom instruction, where educators employ differentiated teaching methods to cater to the varied strengths and needs of students. This level involves general classroom adjustments, such as individualized support, small group sessions, and customized learning experiences.
- Targeted Supports (Tier 2) introduces an additional layer of interventions within or outside the regular classroom setting, delivered intentionally to meet specific instructional gaps based on data driven decisions. These interventions are often facilitated by classroom teachers with collaboration by specialized educators, administrators, or instructional aides.
- Intensive Supports (Tier 3) increases comprehensive instructional support for students through more frequent and more individualized intervention programs, often in addition to other layers of support. This intensive level of need is often met through one-on-one or small group support to address diverse student needs.

Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School prioritizes professional development in MTSS strategies, with a focus on meeting the unique needs of English Learners and students from marginalized communities. The process through the tiers is dynamic and responsive, ensuring timely and effective support for every student. Examples of support strategies may include the following:

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
• Additional instructional time • Differentiated instruction • Various options to demonstrate mastery • Flexible groupings	• Group and individual counseling • Parent meetings • One-on-one instruction by teachers, paraprofessionals or a Special Education Resource Teacher (for students with IEPs)	• Daily interventions in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports (push-in and pull-out support with counselors, more time with instructional assistants to help students develop study skills and

• Additional exposure to the information and language being presented in the lesson • Progress reports to parents/guardians • Planner checks • Instructional Aide support • Focus on accelerating student progress and meeting student needs • Opportunities for breaks as needed • Social and emotional learning • Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ("PBIS") • Teacher office hours for tutoring	• One-on-one check ins with a culture team member and/or mentor • Peer tutoring • Additional focused assignments targeting areas of need • Behavior contracts • Clean weeks (opportunities to reduce Reflections) • Alternatives to suspensions	appropriate behaviors, after-school one-on-one tutoring and Saturday sessions) • A higher level of strategic collaboration and coordination among the team (general and specialized) providing services to each student
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Student Support Team

When interventions are not yielding the desired outcomes, the educational team engages in the Student Support Team ("SST") process to evaluate and plan further steps to support, ensuring a comprehensive and student-centered approach. The SST includes the student's teacher(s), advisor, an administrator, additional relevant staff such as a counselor, Multi-Language Learner Coordinator, special education teacher, the parent(s), and the student (if appropriate). Any teacher or parent can request an SST review of a student's needs for additional support and intervention.

The administrator is responsible for scheduling an SST meeting when required participants are available and sends formal notification. The administrator prepares all materials for the SST meeting: sign-in sheet, meeting agenda, meeting minutes, referring documents and evidence. The administrator facilitates the meeting and ensures all participants engage. The SST discusses and documents concerns, as well as develops and executes a plan targeting the student's specific needs. The administrator documents the co-developed plan and schedules the next meeting (6-8 weeks after the first SST meeting). After, all participants assigned roles will collect data and provide input on the plan's interventions.

At the subsequent SST meeting, the team reviews progress and determines next steps. If the team notes progress, they acknowledge the accomplishment with the family and decide which set of supports will

remain in the plan, which components warrant reconsideration, or whether the SST process should continue. If the team notes no progress or decides to revisit the plan, they review the plan to consider continuing and/or modifying interventions.

As needed, the administrator updates student records with SST documentation and schedules another 6-8 week follow-up meeting. Interventions continue until students are meeting their stated goals or referral for assessment is recommended. Referral for special education eligibility may occur after reasonable and consistent interventions have been implemented and determined to be unsuccessful.

Enrichment

This year, we have continued to cultivate a range of meaningful partnerships that support our students' academic growth, creativity, and overall well-being. Our newest partnership with Sylvan Learning has provided targeted academic support in reading and math, using a structured approach that reinforces key skills while building student confidence.

Several of our long-standing partnerships have remained integral to our programming. For over five years, our collaboration with Space Cookies Robotics has offered students hands-on opportunities to design, build, and program robots under the guidance of experienced mentors, culminating in participation in competitions. This partnership has been instrumental in fostering problem-solving skills, teamwork, and sustained interest in STEM. Similarly, our Girl Scouts program, also in place for more than five years, continues to emphasize social-emotional learning and leadership development. Through badge work, collaborative activities, and guided discussions, students build confidence, strengthen communication skills, and develop self-awareness in a supportive environment.

Our partnership with the Stanford Science Bus, another multi-year collaboration, brings graduate students into our classrooms to lead engaging, hands-on science lessons for our 3rd and 4th grade students. These interactive experiences are designed to spark curiosity and deepen enthusiasm for STEM learning.

In addition, LIFT Enrichment has partnered with us for the past three years to provide hands-on cooking classes. These sessions allow students to explore new interests while developing practical life skills in an engaging and interactive setting. Music on Schools, also a three-year partner, enriches our students' artistic development through instruction in instrumental performance, singing, and composition, while also introducing foundational concepts in music history and theory.

Finally, our partnership with the Body Empowerment Project, led by Stanford Medicine and now in its second year, supports our middle school students in developing a healthy relationship with their bodies. Through a focus on self-awareness, confidence, and overall well-being, students build the skills needed to live peacefully and healthfully in their bodies.

Together, these partnerships create a well-rounded ecosystem of support that nurtures our students

academically, socially, and emotionally while expanding their exposure to new opportunities and experiences.

Lastly, as mentioned, we have a series of student groups and clubs including BSU, LLA, AAPI Group, Yearbook Club, and Student Council.

Technology as a Tool

At East Palo Alto Charter School, technology is intentionally integrated as a tool to enhance research, communication, creation, and independent practice of core academic skills. Students in grades TK–8 have access to both tablets and Chromebooks, allowing them to engage with digital content and demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. Classrooms are also equipped with projectors and document cameras to support presentations, modeling, and collaborative learning experiences.

EPACS strategically leverages web-based instructional platforms to complement direct instruction and extend learning beyond the classroom. One key platform is i-Ready, which serves as a blended learning tool to support student achievement. Through its adaptive online program, i-Ready provides personalized learning experiences aligned to grade-level standards, enabling students to engage in lessons tailored to their individual readiness levels. This approach allows for targeted, efficient, and responsive instruction that meets students at their point of need while promoting engagement and academic growth.

Students participate in i-Ready Personalized Instruction based on results from the Diagnostic assessment, administered three times per year. This ensures that learning pathways are continuously adjusted to reflect students' evolving needs. Teachers also utilize the Standards Mastery component to monitor progress toward proficiency on specific standards, informing data-driven instruction and targeted support.

In addition to student learning platforms, teachers use technology to design and deliver instruction and to strengthen communication with families. Many lessons are created using Google Workspace tools, particularly Google Slides, to provide visual supports that enhance student understanding. Teachers, education specialists, and instructional aides also use Canva to develop engaging materials and promote student independence through accessible visual design. YouTube Education is used to share supplemental videos that reinforce and extend learning.

To maintain strong home-school connections, teachers use platforms such as ClassDojo and PowerSchool to communicate regularly with families, share updates, and celebrate student learning. Additionally, Wayfinder supports the school's social-emotional learning curriculum and provides a robust online platform with resources and tools that align with EPACS's commitment to educating the whole child.

Plan for English Learners

EPACS will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners, including long-term English Learners or English Learners at risk of becoming long-term English Learners, as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, progress monitoring English Learners towards reclassification, progress monitoring students who have been reclassified in the previous 4 years, and standardized testing requirements. EPACS will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents. Aspire's EL Master plan can be found in Appendix V.

Home Language Survey

EPACS will administer the home language survey upon a student's initial enrollment in a California public school (on enrollment forms).

English Language Proficiency Assessment

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English on any of the four home language survey questions, will have their records checked against CALPADS, and if no previous record exists, they will be tested with the ELPAC. The Initial ELPAC has four proficiency levels (Level 4: well developed; Level 3: moderately developed; Level 2: somewhat developed; and Level 1: minimally developed) and is aligned with the 2012 California ELD Standards.

The ELPAC consists of two separate assessments:

- Initial Assessment ("IA")

The ELPAC IA is used to identify students as either an English Learner, or as fluent in English. The IA is administered only once during a student's time in the California public school system based upon the results of the home language survey. The locally scored IA will be the official score. The IA is given to students in grades K–12 whose primary language is not English to determine their English proficiency status.

- Summative Assessment ("SA")

ELs will take the SA every year until they are reclassified as fluent English proficient. The ELPAC SA is only given to students who have previously been identified as an EL based upon the IA results, in order to measure how well they are progressing with English development in each of the four domains. The results are used as one of four criteria to determine if the student is ready

to be reclassified as fluent English proficient, to help inform proper educational placement, and to report progress for accountability.

Both the ELPAC SA and IA are assessments administered in seven grade spans—K, 1, 2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–10, and 11–12. In kindergarten and grade 1, all domains are administered individually. In grades 2–12, the test is administered in groups, exclusive of speaking, which is administered individually. The ELPAC IA and SA will be administered via a computer-based platform, while the ELPAC Writing Domain for Kindergarten through 2nd grade will continue to be administered as a paper-pencil test.

Testing times will vary depending upon the grade level, domain, and individual student. Both the ELPAC IA and SA are given in two separate testing windows through the school year.

The IA testing window will be year-round (July 1–June 30). Any student whose primary language is other than English as determined by the home language survey and who has not previously been identified as an English Learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English language proficiency within 30 calendar days after the date of first enrollment in a California public school, or within 60 calendar days before the date of first enrollment, but not before July 1 of that school year.

The SA testing window will be a four-month window after January 1 (February 1–May 31). The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English Learners shall be assessed by administering the test during the annual assessment window.

EPACS will notify all parents of its responsibility for ELPAC testing and of ELPAC results within thirty days of receiving results from publisher. The ELPAC shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the ESEA for annual English proficiency testing.

Reclassification Procedures

Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a pupil as proficient in English including, but not limited to, all of the following:

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

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

Students who have met the criteria to be reclassified from English Learner to Fluent English Proficient will be monitored for four years. Documentation will be completed by classroom teachers and filed in the students' cumulative folders.

Strategies for English Learner Instruction and Intervention

Aspire Public Schools offers two programs by default:

- Structured English Immersion ("SEI")
- English Language Mainstream ("ELM")

The SEI Program is a language acquisition program for EL students in which nearly all classroom instruction is provided in English, but with curriculum and a presentation designed for students who are learning English. At minimum, students are offered designated ELD and provided access to grade level academic subject matter content with integrated ELD. The integration of English Learners with their non-English Learner peers through an SEI model improves access and equity for all our students to grade level curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It also emphasizes for our teachers the importance of utilizing the [ELA/ELD Framework](#).¹³

Integrated ELD is regular class time where teachers with ELs in their classrooms use the 2012 **ELD** Standards in tandem with the focal standards—Common Core State Standards for ELA/Literacy and mathematics, or CA Next Generation Science Standards for Science.

Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day when teachers use the 2012 **ELD** Standards as the focal standards. This allows students to develop critical English language skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for content learning in English.

English Language Mainstream is the program for English Only ("EO"), Initial Fluent English Proficient ("IFEP"), and Reclassified Fluent English Proficient ("RFEP") students. Families of English Learners may request a placement in only ELM using the English Learner Services Waiver.

At minimum, students at all ELD levels are placed into designated ELD courses. These Designated ELD courses correspond to students' EL proficiency levels (Emerging, Bridging, Expanding) and grade level. Curriculum and lessons are based on the ELD standards, and include opportunities to speak informally while also using academic language.

¹³ "ELD Framework (2014), Chapter 2, Figure 2. California Department of Education."

To better access the core curriculum, all ELs receive Integrated ELD, which is taught by credentialed staff with EL authorization. Language objectives, vocabulary supports and formal and informal language practice engages English learners with their non-EL peers through collaboration, interpretation and production of the English Language.

As outlined by the State, key components of Integrated ELD include:

- Effective instructional experiences for ELs throughout the day and across disciplines,
- Are interactive and engaging, meaningful and relevant and intellectually rich and challenging,
- Are appropriately scaffolded in order to provide strategic support that moves learners toward independence,
- Builds both content knowledge and English value and builds on primary language and culture and other forms of prior knowledge.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

EPACS shall evaluate the effectiveness of its education program for ELs by:

- Adhering to EPACS-adopted academic benchmarks by language proficiency level and years in program to determine annual progress towards reclassification.
- Monitoring teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring student identification and placement.
- Monitoring parental program choice options.
- Monitoring availability of adequate resources.
- Keeping documented record of the annual evaluation and next steps

Support for All Students

At Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School (EPACS), we are committed to ensuring that every student receives the academic, social-emotional, and structural supports needed to thrive. Our approach is grounded in a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), ongoing instructional coaching cycles, and alignment with the Aspire Student Learning Framework. Together, these systems create a responsive and reflective model that emphasizes culturally responsive teaching, rigorous instruction, and continuous improvement. Through MTSS, we provide tiered interventions based on student need, ensuring timely and targeted support for all learners.

Youth Supports for Foster and Homeless Students

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, EPACS ensures that foster youth and students experiencing homelessness have equitable access to a free and appropriate public education. The site Administrative Designee serves as the liaison, supporting identification, immediate enrollment,

and coordination of services. The school allocates designated funds to provide essential resources such as transportation, school supplies, clothing, tutoring, and other allowable supports. The Administrative Designee receives annual training and ongoing guidance from Aspire’s Regional Director of Student Services to ensure compliance and effective implementation.

Students Performing Below Grade Level

EPACS maintains high expectations for all students and provides robust support for those not yet meeting grade-level standards. Students identified through universal screeners receive targeted interventions, which may include differentiated instruction within the classroom, small-group guided learning, and additional academic support before or after school.

For students with foundational literacy needs, particularly in decoding, we provide explicit, systematic instruction. In grades K–5, students participate in “Walk to Read,” a dedicated daily block where they receive targeted literacy instruction aligned to their current skill level. Additionally, through our Expanded Learning Program, students have access to individualized tutoring in reading and math multiple times per week through partnerships such as Sylvan Learning and other research-based programs. Instructional materials and strategies are grounded in best practices and tailored to accelerate student growth.

Students Who Are Socio-Economically Disadvantaged

EPACS is deeply committed to serving students from historically underserved communities. Our instructional model, curriculum choices, and support systems are designed to ensure all students are prepared for college and career success. As a small school community, we prioritize strong relationships, allowing staff to deeply understand and respond to each student’s needs.

Students who are socio-economically disadvantaged are often identified through eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals, which is reviewed annually. These students benefit from access to the full range of academic supports, enrichment opportunities, and social-emotional resources embedded throughout the school program.

Students Performing Above Grade Level

EPACS also supports students who exceed grade-level expectations through differentiated and accelerated learning opportunities. Teachers intentionally plan lessons that include scaffolds and extensions to meet a range of learning needs, incorporating higher-order questioning, enriched assignments, and performance tasks that promote critical thinking.

Students demonstrating advanced proficiency may access accelerated content through personalized online programs or, in some cases, grade-level acceleration in collaboration with families and school leadership. High-performing students are provided opportunities to deepen their understanding of

grade-level standards, apply their knowledge in meaningful ways, and pursue areas of interest that further extend their learning. Programs like i-Ready Personalized Instruction are also adaptive and support high-performing students in continuing to progress.

Plan for Students with Disabilities

Special Education

Overview

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504, the ADA and the IDEA.

The Charter School is its own local educational agency (“LEA”) and holds membership in a Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”) in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(a). The Charter School is a member in good standing of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA. Proof of LEA SELPA membership status is attached in Appendix VI.

In the event the Charter School seeks membership in a different state-approved SELPA, the Charter School will provide notice to the District, the SELPA, and the California Department of Education on or before June 30th of the year before services are to commence.

The Charter School shall comply with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services and all SELPA policies and procedures; and shall utilize appropriate SELPA forms.

The Charter School will provide specialized academic instruction and related services by hiring credentialed or licensed providers through Aspire Public Schools or Aspire Bay Area, certified non-public agencies or independent contractors.

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. The facilities to be utilized by the Charter School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

The Charter School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. A student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment, is eligible for protections under Section 504.

In instances where a student may be eligible for 504 protections, a 504 team will be assembled by the Principal and shall include the parent/guardian, the student (where appropriate) and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student's existing records; including academic, social and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team, which will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
- Tests that are selected and administered to ensure that when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills.

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information which may indicate possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for assessment under the IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the Charter School's professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services that may be necessary.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, will receive relevant portions of each student's 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that the student review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

Services for Students under the IDEA

The Charter School shall provide special education instruction and related services in accordance with the IDEA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practices of the SELPA.

The Charter School shall provide services for special education students enrolled in the Charter School. The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize SELPA forms in seeking out and identifying and serving students who may qualify for special education programs and services and for responding to record requests and parent complaints, and maintaining the confidentiality of pupil records.

The Charter School agrees to promptly respond to all District or SELPA inquiries, to comply with reasonable District or SELPA directives, and to allow the District or SELPA access to Charter School students, staff, facilities, equipment and records as required or imposed by law.

In the IEP process, general education teachers, specialists, administrators, students, and parents work together to share information and create the Individualized Education Program that addresses the student's unique learning needs and supports and services related to a student's disability. The IEP may include specialized academic instruction, related services, classroom accommodations or specific supports which will enable a student to progress towards learning or social/emotional/behavioral goals in the least restrictive environment.

The professional development of all EPACS's teachers focuses on differentiating the curriculum, employing varied instructional strategies, and utilizing technologies or other resources to ensure that each and every child in the classroom has access to learning, regardless of disability or need. Multiple measures assess student's progress towards their IEP goals, grade level outcomes based on the State Standards or Aspire College Readiness outcomes.

The Charter School's educational program includes systems of intervention, as well as differentiated instructional strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. All incoming students participate in assessments in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics to assist in identification of student learning needs and provision of appropriate instructional supports for all students, including English Learners, or students with disabilities. Other measures used to assist with differentiating instruction for all students or providing appropriate interventions include:

- Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium assessments
- ELPAC
- Curriculum-based Benchmark Assessments
- Teacher observation and interview

Staffing

All special education services at the Charter School shall be delivered by individuals or agencies qualified to provide special education services as required by the Education Code and the IDEA. Charter School staff shall participate in District or SELPA in-service training relating to special education.

The Charter School shall be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of site staff necessary to provide special education services to its students, including, without limitation, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and resource specialists. The Charter School shall ensure that all special education staff hired or contracted by the Charter School is qualified pursuant to SELPA policies, as well as meet all legal requirements. The Charter School shall be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of itinerant staff necessary to provide special education services to Charter School students, including, without limitation, speech therapists, occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and psychologists.

Notification and Coordination

The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies as they apply to all SELPA schools for responding to implementation of special education services. The Charter School shall adopt and implement policies relating to all special education issues and referrals.

Identification and Referral

The Charter School shall have the responsibility to identify, refer, and work cooperatively in locating Charter School students who have or may have exceptional needs that qualify them to receive special education services. The Charter School shall implement SELPA policies and procedures to ensure timely identification and referral of students who have, or may have, such exceptional needs. A pupil shall be referred for special education only after the resources of the general education program have been considered, and where appropriate, utilized.

The Charter School shall follow SELPA child-find procedures to identify all students who may require assessment to consider special education eligibility and special education and related services in the case that general education interventions do not provide a free appropriate public education to the student in question.

Assessments

The term “assessments” shall have the same meaning as the term “evaluation” in the IDEA, as provided in Section 1414, Title 20 of the United States Code. The Charter School shall determine what assessments, if any, are necessary and arrange for such assessments for referred or eligible students in accordance with applicable law. The Charter School shall obtain parent/guardian consent to assess Charter School students.

IEP Meetings

The Charter School shall arrange and notice the necessary IEP meetings. IEP team membership shall be in compliance with state and federal law. The Charter School shall be responsible for having the following individuals in attendance at the IEP meetings: the Principal and/or the Charter School designated representative with appropriate administrative authority as required by the IDEA; the student’s special education teacher; the student’s general education teacher if the student is or may be in a general education classroom; the student, if appropriate; and other Charter School representatives who are knowledgeable about the general education program at the Charter School and/or about the student. The Charter School shall arrange for the attendance or participation of all other necessary staff that may include, but are not limited to, an appropriate administrator to comply with the requirements of the IDEA, a speech therapist, psychologist, resource specialist, and behavior specialist; and shall document the IEP meeting and provide notice of parental rights.

IEP Development

The Charter School understands that the decisions regarding eligibility, goals/objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education shall be the decision of the IEP team, pursuant to the IEP process. Programs, services and placements shall be provided to all eligible Charter School students in accordance with the policies, procedures and requirements of the SELPA and State and Federal law.

IEP Implementation

The Charter School shall be responsible for all school site implementation of the IEP. As part of this responsibility, the Charter School shall provide parents with timely reports on the student’s progress as provided in the student’s IEP at least as frequently as report cards are provided for the Charter School’s non-special education students. The Charter School shall also provide all home-school coordination and

information exchange. The Charter School shall also be responsible for providing all curriculum, classroom materials, classroom modifications, and assistive technology.

Interim and Initial Placements of New Charter School Students

The Charter School shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into the Charter School within the academic school year. In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), for students who enroll in the Charter School from another school district within the State, but outside of the SELPA with a current IEP within the same academic year, the Charter School shall provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP, in consultation with the parent, for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days, by which time the Charter School shall adopt the previously approved IEP or shall develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(2), in the case of an individual with exceptional needs who has an IEP and transfers into the Charter School from a district operated program under the same special education local plan area of the Charter School within the same academic year, the Charter School shall continue, without delay, to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

For students transferring to the Charter School with an IEP from outside of California during the same academic year, the Charter School shall provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP in consultation with the parents, until the Charter School conducts an assessment pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Section 1414 of Title 20 of the United States Code, if determined to be necessary by the Charter School, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate that is consistent with federal and state law.

Non-Public Schools/Non-Public Agencies

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for selecting, contracting with, and overseeing all non-public schools and non-public agencies used to serve special education students.

Non-discrimination

It is understood and agreed that all children shall have access to the Charter School and no student shall be denied admission nor counseled out of the Charter School due to the nature, extent, or severity of the student's disability or due to the student's request for, or actual need for, special education services.

Parent/Guardian Concerns and Complaints

The Charter School shall adopt policies for responding to parental concerns or complaints related to special education services. The Charter School shall receive any concerns raised by parents/guardians regarding related services and rights.

The Charter School's designated representative shall investigate as necessary, respond to, and address the parent/guardian concern or complaint.

Due Process Hearings

The Charter School may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in the Charter School if it determines such action is legally necessary or advisable. In the event that the parents/guardians file for a due process hearing, or request mediation, the Charter School shall defend the case.

SELPA Representation

The Charter School understands that it shall represent itself at all SELPA meetings.

Funding

The Charter School understands that it shall be subject to the allocation plan of the SELPA.

The Aspire Regional Director of Special Education will involve the Charter School team in the development of the budget, hiring necessary staff, contracting for appropriate services and documenting the qualifications and competency of school leadership to meet the special education compliance and quality requirements. The Aspire Regional Director of Special Education will assign a Regional Special Education Teammate (i.e. Program Specialist or Senior Regional Manager) to support the Charter School and to provide coaching support to the site special education team to ensure that all requirements of IDEA are met, and each child is well served.

A comprehensive Aspire Special Education Professional Development plan shall be developed with site team input to provide ongoing learning opportunities and support to special education staff, and build the capacity of the site team in meeting compliance with state and federal statutes and reporting requirements. Professional development will be provided on best practices that support the specialized learning needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. Differentiated opportunities to address individual professional development needs will be available, including the opportunity to participate in the Aspire Induction Program for the Education Specialist Credential. Professional development opportunities will include those offered in collaboration with other Aspire schools, the SELPA, and other organizations with researched based practices that support students with disabilities.

Grading

Grading Vision

Our Aspire core value, agency and self-determination, states that each person has unique dreams. At Aspire, we set a foundation for our scholars to gain knowledge, skills, and power to access and make choices for themselves and their families. Our grading policy and practices strive to embody these tenets in alignment with our values, mission, and vision. Aspire has set forth the guiding principles for grading below, adapted from Grading for Equity (Feldman, 2019):

- Grades should be accurate: Grade calculations should be mathematically accurate and sound, easy to understand, and made based on clear descriptions of a student's level of academic performance.
- Grades should be bias-resistant: There are multiple opportunities to provide feedback to students, and grades are but one of them. Grades should be representations of an individual student's progress towards mastery or how effectively they have met the standards for academic performance. Grades should not be punitive or incorporate potentially biased, situational, and/or culturally-influenced perceptions of behaviors (such as timeliness of assignment submission, how quickly students master a topic, effort, personality, participation, etc.).
- Grades should be motivational: Grading should allow multiple attempts at mastery and, therefore, represent where the student is at the time of grading, using the most recent data as an indicator. Teachers will consider how to balance providing time for mastery with the time constraints of the course.

Criteria for Grades			
4	3	2	1
Exceeding the grade-level standards	Meeting the grade-level standards	Approaching the grade level standards (Students has key gaps in their understanding)	Not met the standards (Student is unable to demonstrate B or C levels without assistance)

East Palo Alto Charter School Goals and Actions to Achieve the State Priorities

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii), a reasonably comprehensive description of the Charter School's goals and annual actions, schoolwide and for all numerically significant student subgroups, in the State Priorities, can be found in the East Palo Alto Charter School Local Control and

Accountability Plan (“LCAP”). Additional information regarding East Palo Alto Charter School goals and actions related to the State Priorities can be found in Elements 2 and 3.

In addition to the goals listed therein, East Palo Alto Charter School has the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.

A Typical Day

At 8:00 am, Ana arrives at EPACS and joins her second-grade class in line for the Morning Cheer Assembly, “We are smart and full of heart...” The cafeteria buzzes with familiar chants, songs, and excited conversations as classes gather together to begin the day. Ana stands between Lianna and Leilani while Ms. Kim reminds students when it is their turn to sing. When the second graders are called, Ana joins her classmates in their class song, smiling as the students clap together before following Ms. Kim back to the classroom.

Back in class, students begin unpacking while Ms. Kim takes attendance. Ana hangs her backpack, places her folder in the turn-in bin, and settles into her seat beside Alexa. Around the room, students chat quietly about recess plans and weekend activities while morning bins are distributed. Ana pulls out her AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) device and places it beside her notebook before turning to Romina to show her a drawing she finished the night before. Mr. Greg moves around the classroom checking in with students as they get organized for the day.

Once attendance is complete, the class gathers together on the carpet for morning meeting. Students greet one another and take turns sharing about their mornings. When it is Ana’s turn, she first responds quietly with her voice before using her AAC device to add more detail about making pancakes with her grandmother before school. Several classmates ask follow-up questions, and Ana eagerly answers, navigating between verbal responses and her device as the conversation continues. The class then transitions into their social-emotional learning lesson, where students discuss ways classmates can support one another during challenging moments. Ana listens closely, occasionally nodding or adding a thought to the discussion alongside her peers.

At 9:00, the class heads to PE. Ana and Christopher first meet with their Adaptive PE teacher for racket sport practice. The two students move through a series of activities focused on tracking, striking, and returning the ball. Ana adjusts her grip carefully before tapping the ball back across the net several times in a row. After finishing their session, they join the rest of the class for PE, where students organize into teams for tag games across the blacktop. Ana darts between classmates, laughing as Anyelin nearly tags her before the whistle blows to line up.

By 10:00, students return to class for phonics. Ms. Kim leads the lesson while students track the text together and practice decoding patterns aloud. Ana reads with the group, occasionally raising her hand to answer questions about word sounds and spelling rules. During independent practice, Ms. Liz kneels beside Ana’s desk while Ana works through several sentences independently before checking her final

answers together with her. Mr. Greg pauses at Ana's table to listen as she reads one of the passages aloud before giving her a thumbs up and moving on to another group.

At 10:40, the class heads to the cafeteria for lunch. Ana sits with Lianna, Anyelin, and Leilani while students trade stories and compare snacks. Romina dramatically retells the PE tag game, causing the entire table to laugh. When Ana wants to explain her favorite part of the game, she taps out a longer response on her AAC device before holding it up for her friends to hear.

At 11:00, students head outside for recess. Ana starts on the swings with Alexa before joining a chalk drawing game near the playground. Soon, several classmates gather around to help expand the drawing into an entire pretend neighborhood complete with roads, houses, and pets. Ana carefully sketches details while directing where Lianna should add a basketball court.

At 11:20, students return inside for math. Ms. Kim introduces a whole-group lesson while students solve problems on individual whiteboards. Ana quickly writes her answer and holds up her board alongside the rest of the class. During the partner discussion, she explains her strategy to Leilani, pointing to the number model she created to solve the problem. Students then return to their desks for independent practice while Ms. Kim and Mr. Greg circulate around the room, checking work and asking students to explain their thinking.

At 12:00, students begin blended learning rotations. Ana logs into her assignments before joining a small group lesson at Ms. Kim's table. The group works through reading comprehension questions together, discussing character motivations and key details from the story. Ana contributes verbally to shorter questions and uses her AAC device to explain a longer prediction about what might happen next in the text.

Partway through blended learning, Ana walks to Room 11 for speech therapy. Inside, Ana and Lianna gather around the table with Ms. Becky for a conversation activity connected to classroom learning. The students practice asking follow-up questions, expanding responses, and describing events in sequence. When it is Ana's turn, she uses her AAC device to retell the steps of the morning PE activity, adding details about the racket game she played earlier in the day. Lianna listens closely and asks Ana what game they played afterward, leading Ana to continue the conversation by describing the class tag game using both her AAC device and short verbal responses.

After speech, Ana heads to Ms. Chloe's classroom for Specialized Academic Instruction. During the lesson, Ana works through reading and writing activities, using both verbal responses and her device throughout the session. Ms. Chloe and Ana review sentence-expansion strategies before practicing organizing ideas for writing assignments back in class.

At 12:45, the second-grade classes gather on the stage for a community-building activity. Students participate in a teamwork challenge that requires small groups to solve problems together while cheering one another on. Ana stands beside Romina and Lianna as the students work through the activity, celebrating loudly each time another group completes a challenge.

Back in class, students transition into a writing workshop. Today, students are writing personal narratives about memorable experiences. Ana begins by sketching her ideas across several pages before turning the drawings into sentences. She types portions of longer ideas into her AAC device while copying key words and phrases into her writing notebook. Ms. Kim pauses beside Ana's desk to ask questions about her story, and Ana excitedly shares details about a trip to the beach with her cousins.

At 2:05, the class heads back outside for afternoon recess. Ana joins a group game near the playground before sitting with Alexa and Anyelin under the shade structure to talk and draw together for the final few minutes outside.

At 2:15, students return to the carpet for a read-aloud. Ms. Kim pauses throughout the story to ask prediction and comprehension questions. Ana listens closely, tracking the illustrations while classmates share their ideas. When Ms. Kim asks why a character made a difficult choice, Ana uses her AAC device to explain that the character "wanted to help even though she was nervous," prompting several classmates to agree and build on her response.

By 2:30, students begin choice time. Around the classroom, students build with blocks, draw, play games, and work on puzzles together. Ana chooses drawing materials and sits beside Leilani while the two students design matching pictures and exchange ideas about what to add next. Ms. Bea checks in with a small group nearby while Ana and her classmates continue working together.

As the afternoon comes to a close, students begin cleaning up and packing their belongings. Chairs slide across the floor as folders are stacked into backpacks and students finish final conversations about the day. Ana carefully organizes her materials, zips her backpack, and joins the dismissal line with her classmates.

At 3:00, Ana waves goodbye to her friends and joins her sisters and cousins to leave EPACS after a full day of learning, collaboration, conversation, movement, and creativity. Throughout the day, Ana moves confidently between classrooms, friendships, academic discussions, and group activities, contributing her ideas and personality to every part of the school community.

Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes and Element 3: Methods of Assessment

“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the charter school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the charter school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 52052. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(B)

“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(C)

EPACS is committed to continuing to provide all of its students with an excellent, high-quality education. In order to achieve this goal, high student achievement as measured by state, local, and school specific measures must be achieved. Goals for student and school outcomes are continually refined and developed to reflect the changing needs of the Charter School and are reset each year as articulated in the EPACS LCAP.

Charter School Goals, Actions, and Outcomes to Achieve the Eight State Priorities: Local Control and Accountability Plan

Pursuant to Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii) and 47605(c)(5)(B), a reasonably comprehensive description of the Charter School’s annual goals, actions, and measurable outcomes, both schoolwide and for each subgroup of pupils, which address and align with the Eight State Priorities, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), that apply for the grade levels served, can be found in the Charter School’s LCAP.

Each of these goals addresses the unique needs of all students attending the Charter School, including EPACS’s numerically significant student subgroups. The metrics associated with these goals help the Charter School ensure these specific subgroups are making satisfactory progress, and are provided with necessary additional support made possible by additional funds from the Local Control Funding Formula.

The current LCAP is on file with the District and is also available on the Charter School’s website and included in Appendix VII. The Charter School shall annually update and develop the LCAP in accordance with Education Code Section 47606.5 and shall use the LCAP template adopted by the State Board of Education. The Charter School reserves the right to establish additional and/or amend school-specific

goals and corresponding assessments throughout the duration of the charter term through the annual LCAP update. The Charter School shall submit the LCAP to the District and County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1, as required by Education Code Section 47604.33(a)(2). EPACS shall also present a report on the annual update to the LCAP and the local control funding formula budget overview for parents on or before February 28 of each year as part of a nonconsent item at a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Methods of Measurement of Student Outcomes

Assessment

At EPACS, assessments are integral tools for evaluating student learning and informing instruction. Our comprehensive assessment system includes Aspire-wide, state-mandated assessments, as well as formative assessments, curriculum-based measures, end-of-unit assessments, and student work. Together, these diverse assessments support our mission of equity and academic excellence.

Aspire-wide assessments (e.g., mClass, i-Ready) are selected from a list of verified tools approved by the California Department of Education and meet the compliance requirements outlined in Assembly Bill 1505. Beyond compliance, these assessments serve as critical instructional resources, helping us evaluate student growth, identify instructional needs, and monitor the effectiveness of our programs. An organizationally unified assessment system streamlines our technology platforms to maintain consistency across campuses.

While academic data is vital, we recognize that student success extends far beyond test scores. At Aspire, we strive to cultivate classrooms that value the whole child, balancing academic rigor with the development of life skills, resilience, and emotional intelligence. Our culturally responsive practices affirm students' identities and empower them to see assessments not as endpoints, but as one component of their broader learning journey. By aligning our assessment practices with our values, we ensure that data informs—not defines—the student experience.

Internal Assessments				
Assessment	Required Grades	Purpose	Required Frequency	Description
<u>mClass</u>	K-2	Universal Screener & Diagnostic	3x per year	mCLASS is an online data system that provides DIBELS 8th Edition measures to assess the acquisition of early literacy skills and knowledge. Its 3 principle uses are: to identify students who may be at risk of reading difficulties by screening up to three times per year; to document students'

				progress of reading skills as a consequence of special intervention programs through progress monitoring; and to provide minimum levels of performance for all students to reach to be considered on track for becoming a reader through benchmark goals and timelines
<u>i-Ready ELA</u>	3-5	Universal Screener & Diagnostic	3x per year	i-Ready Diagnostic provides teachers info on student performance relating to their grade level equivalence and national norms (percentile). It also includes Lexile information and domain placements for insights into reading performance.
<u>iReady Math</u>	3-5	Universal Screener & Diagnostic	3x per year	i-Ready Diagnostic provides teachers info on student performance relating to their grade level equivalence and national norms (percentile). It also includes Quantile info equivalence and domain placements for insights into math performance.
Panorama SEL Screener	6-12	Universal screener	2x per year	The Panorama SEL is a universal screener used twice a year to determine school-wide needs, subgroup trends, and identify opportunities for targeted and intensive support.
Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments ("IAB")	3-5	Universal Screener	2x per year	Interim Assessment Blocks are assessments teachers can use throughout the school year to assess smaller bundles of content than Interim Comprehensive Assessments ("ICAs"). They are intended to provide educators and students the ability to check student performance at any given moment in time, and educators can use results to determine next steps for instruction. IABs assess between three and eight assessment targets. Since the IABs are more granular than the ICAs, educators can use IABs during the school year more consistently and frequently within the sequence of their curricula. There are typically 10 to 18 items on IABs.

State Required Assessments				
Assessment	Required Grades	Purpose	Required Frequency	Description
<u>SBAC</u> <u>CAA</u>	3-5	Summative (state required)	1x per year	SBAC is the state assessment system that is administered to all students in grades 3-8 and 11 in both ELA and Math. The purpose of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments is to assess student knowledge and skills in English language arts/literacy and mathematics, as well as how much students have improved since the previous year (student growth). On the CA School Dashboard, schools receive Academic Indicators for ELA and for math. The purpose of the CAAs is to provide an annual measure of what students know and can do using the alternate achievement standards. On the CA School Dashboard, schools receive an Academic Indicator for ELA and one for math, and CAAs are used to determine the results for these indicators
<u>California Science Test</u> <u>CAA Science</u>	5	Summative (state required)	1x per year	CAST is the state science assessment intended to assess the Next Generation Science Standards. Students will take the CAST in the 8th grade and once in high school (see regional calendars for required HS grade level). The purpose of the CAST is to assess student knowledge and skills in science and to foster science education at every grade level. CAST will also be used for the Science Academic Indicator on the CA School Dashboard in future years The purpose of the Science CAAs is to provide three opportunities during K-12 to measure what students know and can do using the alternate achievement standards for NGSS. The CAA Science consists of 4 performance tasks designed to be administered throughout the year after related content is taught.

<u>Initial ELPAC</u> <u>Alt ELPAC</u>	K-5 (new students)	Universal Screener (state required)	1x only	Initial ELPAC is the state assessment for identifying ELL students who are new to CA public schools. The Initial ELPAC is given once to newly enrolled students with an English Language Acquisition Status of TBD. The purpose is to identify students who need help learning in English and the Initial is used to support with placement in an English language instructional support program
<u>Summative ELPAC</u> <u>Alt ELPAC</u>	K-5	Summative (state required)	1x per year	Summative ELPAC is the state assessment for all MLL students and is aligned to the 2021 CA English Language Development Standards. The Summative ELPAC assesses yearly student growth in learning English and is used as one criteria for reclassification. Summative ELPAC data is used to calculate the ELPI for the CA School Dashboard and for federal accountability.
<u>PFT</u>	5	Summative (state required)	1x per year	The PFT is a comprehensive battery of health-related physical fitness tests for students in California. The test has five parts that show a level of fitness that offers a degree of defense against diseases that are caused by inactivity. PFT participation data for all 5 components is reported each year on the School Accountability Report Card ("SARC").

Collecting, Analyzing, and Reporting Data

As aforementioned, EPACS is committed to data-based decision making, and commits to utilizing a variety of data beyond the assessment portfolio. Data is intentionally shared with students, families, staff, and the Region:

- Students and families will receive data on student achievement and well-being when they meet with their child's teacher to develop, modify, or review during the quarterly and/or semesterly family conferences
- Staff will interrogate student achievement and well-being data during team collaboration time and during staff meetings
- The School site administration interrogates school-wide data (i.e., student achievement, attendance, and discipline) during region-wide Communities of Practice; and
- The Region will interrogate data on student achievement and well-being to inform region-wide initiatives and strategic planning.

Aspire uses the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress to assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses at a student, classroom, grade level, school, and organization. Additionally, the Physical Fitness test will be administered and used to inform the Charter School program. Every summer, each school will have a staff retreat where the data will be analyzed. School-wide plans for professional development will be based on these plans.

If any student is not making sufficient progress to meet the benchmarks created by Aspire, teachers, parents, or administrators begin a Student Success Team. From this meeting, an action plan is created to support the student.

Annually, the status of the Charter School will be reported using multiple data metrics to assess the health of each school. This allows Aspire's Senior Leadership Team to evaluate a school on more than one facet. At the beginning of the year, the Senior Leadership Team identifies schools that require more focused attention and support. On an ongoing basis, these data metrics will be used to monitor the progress of schools monthly. Specifically, the dashboard reports on:

- Student achievement: CAASPP, course grades, behavior, and internal benchmark scores;
- Affiliation: results on the staff, parent, and student surveys, teacher retention; and
- Financial: actual versus budget and forecast; average daily attendance.

School Accountability Report Card

EPACS annually complies with state mandated requirements applicable to charter schools regarding the SARC. The annual SARC is a public document and is made available to parents and the community. This report is approved by the EPACS governing board on an annual basis and posted on the Charter School's website.

The Charter School shall use the information compiled in its performance reports and its annual SARC to evaluate and improve upon its educational programming as necessary.

Element 4: Governance Structure

“The governance structure of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(D)

Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

The Charter School is a directly funded independent charter school operated by Aspire Public Schools, a California non-profit public benefit corporation, incorporated pursuant to California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation law.

The Charter School will operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as may be negotiated between the District and the Charter School. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School, as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

Attached, as Appendix VIII, please find Aspire Public Schools’s Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws in Appendix IX, and Conflict of Interest Code found in Appendix X. Proof of Aspire’s tax exempt status is attached in Appendix XI. Aspire Public Schools has adopted a Conflict of Interest Code that complies with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 1090 *et seq.* as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1, and Corporations Code conflict of interest rules and which shall be updated with any charter school-specific conflict of interest laws or regulations.

Board of Directors

The Charter School will be governed by the Aspire Public Schools Board of Directors in accordance with its adopted bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. Biographies of the current Aspire Board of Directors are attached in Appendix XII.

The number of directors on the Board shall be not less than three (3) or more than eleven (11). Directors shall be elected by a majority vote of the directors at a Board meeting. Directors shall serve for a term not to exceed four (4) years. The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Aspire Board pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c). If the District chooses to do so, Aspire may appoint an additional member to ensure that the Board is maintained with an odd number of directors. The Board shall participate in AB 2158 ethics training, and AB 640 school finance training, as required by law.

Aspire takes a conscientious approach to recruiting and selecting new Board members. Aspire’s Board and regional Executive Director conduct extensive due diligence to ensure that new Board members are

a strong cultural fit with the organization, will add value in specific areas and, most importantly, contribute to Aspire's growth and success.

The recruitment, evaluation and selection of new Board members typically are conducted through the following process.

- Nominations are open and may be submitted by anyone.
- Candidate names and bios shared with Aspire Board Chair or regional Executive Director.
- The Board Chair and regional Executive Director considers alignment with Board composition goals established by the Board and selects prospects for initial conversations.
- Regional Executive Director and/or Board Chair will have an initial vetting conversation with potential candidate to assess candidate alignment with Aspire values using Board Candidate Questionnaire. Candidates with mutual interest will be sent a packet by Aspire staff that includes:
 - Board member job description
 - Annual board meeting schedule
 - Overview of public transparency and disclosure requirements (Brown Act, Statement of Economic Interests, etc.)
 - Aspire overview
 - Organization chart
- Additional conversations with other members of the Board and Aspire staff as needed using Board Candidate Questionnaire.
- Regional Executive Director and/or Board Chair makes recommendation to full Board.
- Board votes on recommendations.
- Preferably, newly appointed Board member's term begins at the full Board meeting after the candidate accepts membership.

All Board meetings are noticed and held in compliance with the provisions of the Brown Act and Education Code Section 47604.1(c). A majority of the directors then in office constitutes a quorum. All acts or decisions of the Board are by majority vote based upon the presence of the quorum. Participation through teleconference and videoconference are permitted and utilized in accordance with the Brown Act, as it may change from time to time.

At a high level, there are three broad categories that define what characteristics Aspire looks for in prospective Board members:

Skill Set – All Board members must have expertise in an area that is valuable to Aspire's operations, especially where there are gaps in the board skill set.

Fundraising Capacity – All Board members are required to support the fundraising goals and program of the organization.

Diversity – Geographic, racial, ethnic and gender diversity are very important factors.

Board Meetings and Duties

The Board of Directors will meet regularly and in accordance with the Brown Act and Education Code Section 47604.1(c)(4). The Charter School shall post all governing board meeting agendas on the Charter School's public website.

The Board of Directors is responsible for establishing broad policies that affect all Aspire-operated charter schools, including the Charter School. For example, the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee may set policies related to staff hiring, benefits and compensation, policy for student suspension or expulsion, potentially controversial issues that affect more than one school site and teacher, and principal and staff compensation criteria. Members of the Board may also participate in raising funds and increasing public awareness of Aspire's work.

The Board is also responsible for monitoring the programmatic, operational and financial health of all Aspire-operated charter schools and the organization collectively, in order to identify and highlight risks and guide efforts to mitigate those risks.

Aspire retains its own legal counsel when necessary. It purchases and maintains as necessary general liability, property, workers' compensation and unemployment insurance policies.

For Aspire Board meetings, there is a two-way teleconference location or video broadcast at each school site. The Board shall meet within the physical boundaries of the county in which the greatest number of pupils enrolled in those charter schools managed by Aspire reside. The exact location for each meeting is posted on the Board agendas. An Aspire staff member is present in the conference room or a similar location at the location posted on the agenda to assist any members of the public who would like to participate via two-way teleconference or video broadcast. The Brown Act is followed with regard to Board members' teleconference or videoconference attendance at Board meetings. Early in each school year, the Board of Directors sets and approves its annual calendar of meetings. A majority of the Directors then in office constitutes a quorum. All acts or decisions of the Board are by majority vote based upon the presence of the quorum.

All meetings of the Board are meetings in which the public may attend and participate. The Board agendas, meeting times, and locations are posted in advance on the Aspire website and at each Aspire school, including the Charter School, in accordance with the Brown Act. Local stakeholders can directly participate in meetings by attending them in person, via videoconference or via teleconference. The procedures are designed to comply with the Brown Act because they create open, public meetings that comply with the teleconference requirements identified in Government Code Section 54953.

Given current student enrollment across the Aspire network, Board meetings are physically held at the Regional Office of Aspire Central Valley, currently located at: 4202 Coronado Ave Stockton, CA 95204 and are subject to change pursuant to the terms above. Regular Board meetings are typically held 5 times per year. Executive Committee meetings are typically held approximately monthly, in between Board meetings. Frequency and location of Regular Board and Executive Committee meetings are subject to change and noticed in accordance with Brown Act, as applicable. Special and Emergency Board meetings, as needed, shall be called according to the Brown Act. The Annual meeting shall be held at a time, date and place as may be specified and noticed by the Board of Directors, in compliance with Brown Act. Article 6, Section 6.6 of Aspire's Bylaws details when and how a Board member may participate in a meeting telephonically and such provisions are compliant with Brown Act. Aspire Public Schools will develop conflict policies that have mechanisms in place for Board member abstentions, which are consistent with Brown Act, the Political Reform Act, and Government Code 1090, *et seq.*, as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1. Board members may abstain from a vote.

Aspire Public Schools Leadership

Executive Director, Home Office and Aspire Foundation – This role oversees Aspire's Home Office, which provides supports and services to all Aspire schools and regional offices. This role also oversees the Aspire Foundation, which leads Development, Communication, and Advocacy for the Organization.

Chief Financial Officer ("CFO") – The CFO is responsible for general accounting and financial planning and analysis, as well as major real estate planning. The CFO is responsible for monitoring cash flows, budgets and mitigating financial risks to the organization.

General Counsel ("GC") - The General Counsel leads the organization's legal and risk management efforts in support of Aspire's scholars and teammates, with special consideration to the areas of nonprofit governance, employment law, special education, compliance, and risk mitigation.

VP of Data and Technology - This role oversees data management and reporting, Information Technology, and Systems for Aspire. The VP focuses on leveraging data analytics to drive instructional improvements, and systems and technology solutions to enhance operational efficiency.

Regional Executive Director – This role is responsible for the strategic direction and success of the schools in their region.

Principal – The Principal is the instructional leader of the Charter School and is responsible for shaping the instructional program and helping students achieve.

The Board has delegated limited approval authority to an Executive Committee, which handles all Charter School-related matters, such as student discipline, contracts and MOUs for schools, and charter

petitions and renewals. The Executive Committee meets approximately every other month and is subject to Brown Act. The Executive meetings are broadcasted in the same way as the full Board meetings.

The Executive and Compensation Committee's responsibilities are as follows:

- Routine compliance reports to chartering authorities, including, but not limited to, regional or school-based finance and audit reports;
- Routine submissions to chartering authorities related to charter renewal or charter oversight, including, but not limited to, charter renewal documentation and changes to individual school admission preferences or policies;
- Student discipline matters requiring Board review;
- Federal, state, local, and private grant program documentation, including, but not limited to, documentation for Local Educational Agency Plan and Title I compliance;
- Board of Directors and Executive Committee meeting minutes;
- Quarterly financial statements;
- CEO evaluation recommendation;
- CEO and CFO compensation recommendation;
- Changes to and new salary schedules and bands that fall within the Board approved organizational budget;
- Organizational and routine compliance policies;
- Review and approval of Local Control and Accountability Plans for each individual Aspire Public Schools charter school;
- Construction project budgets for any project less than \$2M; and
- Urgent matters that arise unexpectedly between Board meetings

Aspire's Additional Board Committees

- *Finance Committee*- To provide financial oversight for the organization. Responsibilities include:

- Review and approve quarterly financial statements
- Discuss long-term financial targets
- Review assumptions in the annual budgeting process
- Review financial results in relation to our organization's bond covenants

- *Audit Committee* - assists the Board in the Board's oversight of the quality and integrity of Aspire Public Schools' accounting, reporting, and auditing practices. Responsibilities include:

- Select and retain auditor
- Review and approve audit
- Review audit findings
- Review and approve Forms 990

Parental Involvement in Governance

Parent Advisory Committee

Aspire Public Schools encourages all educational partners (families, students and staff) to participate in, and share responsibility for, the educational process and educational results of the Charter School. In order to achieve this important end, the Charter School shares local control with a Parent Advisory Committee (“PAC”).

The PAC can bring diverse ideas to the table and help the Charter School craft a shared plan for improvement. The most effective committees are able to focus on the big picture, make a concerted effort to achieve authentic participation of staff and families, diagnose problems, develop innovative and effective solutions, and work collaboratively to monitor progress. The PAC is an important part of our charter school’s accountability to the students, families and community. The PAC is responsible for assessing the needs of the students, analyzing student data to make programmatic recommendations, collaborating on the development of The Charter School’s Local Control and Accountability Plan, reviewing and allocating available supplemental categorical funds, including Title I.

The PAC is composed of the principal, staff representatives, students (for sites that serve grades 7 through 12) and parents of students attending the Charter School. As the leader of the Charter School, the Principal plays a vital role in the success of the PAC and all educational partner involvement. The Principal is responsible for ensuring clear communication, fair processes, timely budgeting, careful agenda creation, essential resources and training, collaboration on educational partner priorities and concerns, and guidance for the overall implementation and success of the group.

Educational partner involvement is critical to the success of the PAC. Any parent or guardian of an enrolled student is welcomed to participate on the Parent Advisory Committee. Public participation is valued. Meetings are advertised and promoted, and parents are encouraged to attend. The PAC members provide regular updates during parent meetings, while also promoting the purpose of the PAC. Annually, the PAC members also complete a survey assessing their perceptions of the committee, their ability to participate, and feelings of effectiveness. Additionally, in order to encourage and support educational partner involvement, the Charter School’s website contains the following information in both Spanish and English:

- Timely notices of school committee meetings that involve parents.
- Meetings held/interpreted in Spanish and English.
- Opportunities to share thoughts and opinions through email and Powerschool messenger, the interactive parent communication platform used by the school.
- Short summaries of issues, ideas, and decisions of school committees
- At least two opportunities for parents to give detailed input on the Local Control and Accountability Plan

The PAC is an integral part of the success of the students and the Charter School as a whole; however, there are certain areas that are *NOT* the scope of the PAC:

- Management of the Charter School
- Policy-making
- Political organizing
- Fundraising
- Socializing
- Personnel recommendations and decisions

English Learner Advisory Committee

The role of the English Learner Advisory Committee (“ELAC”) is to advise the principal and Parent Advisory Committee on programs and services for English learners. The ELAC acts in an advisory capacity. It is not a decision making body, but it is the voice of the English Learner community. Specifically, the ELAC:

1. Advises on the development of services for English Learners
2. Assists in the development of the Charter School’s needs assessment and efforts to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance.

If the Charter School has an enrollment of 21 or more English learners, then the principal will ensure that the ELAC meets all applicable requirements. Participation on the ELAC is vital to the success of the Charter School. Meetings are held in public, and are publicized via ParentSquare and paper flyers. Attendance is encouraged during Coffee with the Principal and other community meetings.

The ELAC membership is designed to include parents of English Learners, but may also include other duly elected family & community members. The percentage of parents of ELs who are elected is at least equal to the percentage of English learners at the school site. For example, if 50% of the students at a given site are English learners, at least 50% of the membership of the ELAC will be parents of ELs. The remaining 50% of the committee members may be the principal, community members, teachers of participating students, instructional aides, parent liaisons, other parents and staff.

Only parents of English Learners may vote for members of the ELAC. All parents of ELs must receive ballots.

ELAC elections take place every year in the Fall. The term of office is two years. If there are vacancies, the Charter School may conduct elections at any time, or refer to the ELAC by-laws as to how to fill the vacancies.

Parent volunteering is not a condition of admission and/or continued enrollment at the Charter School, however the Charter School welcomes parents to participate in morning meetings, assemblies, open houses, parent education nights, volunteer opportunities, field trips, Coffees with the Principal, School Site Council, and ELAC meetings.

In order to ensure that parents understand that there is no volunteer requirement, information will be sent home via PowerSchool Messenger in any language that 15% or more families indicate is the home language. Additionally, the printout of the message will be printed in those same languages and sent home with each student. Further, at each meeting that parents attend, this announcement will be reiterated.

Additional Opportunities for Family Involvement

- Exhibition panels – Families may sit on panels to judge student work.
- School and staff evaluations – Families complete a survey each year evaluating the strengths and weaknesses they identify with the program at the Charter School.
- Student-led conferences – Students will lead conferences on their work during the year to keep their families informed.
- Volunteer Opportunities – Various opportunities will arise for families to volunteer, such as helping in classrooms, leading extra-curricular activities, assisting in event planning, attending study trips, and serving on family committees. Parent volunteering is not a condition of their child's admission/enrollment and/or continued enrollment within the Charter School.
- Fundraising – Families and community members may work with the Charter School to raise additional resources to support students and the Charter School program.
- Advocacy – Families and community members communicate the Charter School design and outcomes to the public, educators and policy makers and advocate for necessary policies and resources.
- APS Board of Directors meetings (including Executive and Compensation Committee meetings) – Families and community members are welcome to the Board meeting. In compliance with the Brown Act as applicable, Aspire Public Schools posts the agenda for Aspire Public Schools Board of Directors meetings at least 72 hours prior to all regular meetings.
- In addition to beginning and mid-year surveys, the Charter School holds two teacher Town Halls and two family information nights to obtain input on the education program and LCAP goals.

Addressing Family Concerns and Complaints

Aspire Public Schools has established a formal complaint process to address any family complaints about the employees or employment practices of the organization. Aspire Public Schools maintains a Uniform Complaint Procedure Policy, Title IX Complaint Policy, and a Community Complaint Form (for general complaints), which can be found in Appendix XIII. Finally, Aspire Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, discrimination-free and harassment-free education to its students. To help achieve this important end, Aspire Public Schools has established a formal Discrimination/Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure, attached in Appendix XIV.

Element 5: Employee Qualifications

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(E)

Overview

Aspire will recruit professional, effective, and qualified personnel to serve in administrative, instructional, instructional support, and non-instructional support capacities at the Charter School. Aspire is and shall continue to be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. The Charter School shall not discriminate against any individual (employee or pupil) on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Aspire believes that all of its employees play a key role in creating a successful learning environment and will recruit qualified employees throughout the organization. Aspire recognizes that employment is voluntary, and the Aspire Board of Directors shall not require any individual to be employed at an Aspire school. The Charter School will conduct fingerprint background clearance and TB risk assessment or clearance checks on employee candidates to provide for the health and safety of the Charter School’s faculty, staff, and pupils and the academic success of the pupils. Aspire’s Human Capital Department, along with the Director of Employee Services, shall monitor compliance with this policy. Employees will meet specific qualifications for employment as outlined in their job descriptions. Teachers at the Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including credential requirements outlined in Education Code Section 47605(l)(1). The educational and skill level qualifications and job descriptions of teachers to be employed in the Charter School shall meet the educational goals as outlined in this charter.

As required under Education Code Section 48000(g)(4), and subject to any future amendments, all teachers who are first assigned to a transitional kindergarten classroom must possess at least one of the following:

- At least 24 units in early childhood education, or childhood development, or both.
- As determined by the Charter School, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children that is comparable to 24 units of early childhood education, or childhood development.
- A child development teacher permit, or an early childhood education specialist credential, issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Job Descriptions

Executive Director, Aspire Home Office and Foundation

The Executive Director (ED) of the Aspire Public Schools Home Office and Foundation provides leadership and development for Aspire's Home Office, and develops and leads the administration, programs, and strategy for the Aspire Public Schools Foundation (Foundation), including overseeing the Foundation's strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation in three key areas: fundraising, communications, and advocacy, all in support of the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of Aspire Public Schools.

The ED serves as a key member of the Aspire Public Schools Leadership Team, and oversees a team that reflects the Foundation's three key areas of work. The ED recruits and manages a Foundation Board in support of the organization's fundraising efforts, and identifies and supervises additional external partnerships in furtherance of the organization's fundraising, communications, and advocacy work.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- **Leadership & Management:**

- Build and manage a high-performing Home Office leadership team that delivers effective and critical support services for each of the Aspire regions.
- Cultivate and support a cohesive and robust Home Office culture that reflects Aspire's core values and promotes a unified identity.
- Oversee key functions, including Data and Technology, HR, communications, legal, financial, advocacy, and philanthropy.
- Ensure that the Home Office has a viable long-term financial plan and a diversified and sustainable funding base.
- Keep the Aspire Board of Directors informed and engaged in partnership with fellow Executive Directors.
- Build coalitions, relationships, and partnerships with stakeholders, including school districts, donors, community members, and leaders of community and political organizations.
- Implement consistent accountability systems to ensure progress toward shared goals.
- Ensure the fiscal health and sustainability of the Foundation through managing the overall Foundation budget, ensuring proper use of philanthropic funds in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, and mitigating legal risk and liability.
- Ensure consistent quality of fundraising, communications, and advocacy efforts and systems in support of both the Foundation and Aspire Public Schools.
- Identify and manage timelines, resources, partnerships, and outreach needed to achieve strategic goals for Aspire Public Schools.
- Develop, maintain, and support a robust Foundation Board to serve as ambassadors and advocates for the Foundation and for Aspire Public Schools.
- Lead, coach, develop, and retain a high-performing Foundation Team that includes key roles in fundraising, communications, and advocacy.
- Serve as a key member of the Aspire Public Schools Leadership Team.

- **Fundraising:**

- Responsible for identifying, developing, and securing philanthropic resources sufficient to ensure the financial health of the Foundation and in support of the mission, vision, and key strategic priorities of Aspire Public Schools.
- Oversee the Foundation's individual, corporate, and institutional fundraising strategies and execution to increase philanthropic support for key initiatives and priorities at every level of the organization
- Develop and implement policies and practices that ensure equitable allocation of philanthropic resources across Aspire Public Schools.
- Serve as primary liaison with regional Executive Directors and other key organizational and regional leaders to determine regional priorities and associated philanthropic needs, and develop and implement strategies to support those priorities.
- Manage and steward portfolio of highest level donors to ensure ongoing support for Aspire Public Schools.
- Develop and successfully implement a strategic approach to identifying, initiating, and developing relationships with new philanthropic donors.
- Lead the development of compelling stories and messages to be shared externally and with funders.

- **Communications:**

- Support alignment in key organization-wide communications and branding across Aspire Public Schools.
- Identify and oversee all external partnerships related to communications, including PR and pro-active media support, managing crisis communications to mitigate legal risk and potential liability, photography and videography, website development and updates, graphic design, and additional partnerships as necessary.
- Lead strategic planning to develop and train brand ambassador/brand training materials to ensure key stakeholders know how to uphold and effectively promote the Aspire brand.
- Develop, support, and maintain consistent channels of communications across the organization, including ongoing assessment of effectiveness of communications to all stakeholders.
- Oversee the development and distribution of key donor-facing communications, including annual Gratitude Report and regular cadence of donor-facing messaging across multiple platforms.
- Ensure the maintenance and effectiveness of annual marketing and communications activities across multiple channels.
- Lead the strategic planning and execution of major events led and/or hosted by the Foundation team throughout the year.

- **Advocacy:**

- In partnership with the General Counsel and/or Director of Family Advocacy and

Community Engagement as relevant from Aspire Public Schools, develop and implement a strategic plan to address advocacy priorities for Aspire Public Schools on a state-wide, and national level.

- Support external media outreach to highlight key advocacy priorities, initiatives, opportunities, and celebrations through proactive and earned media on a local, state-wide, and national level.
- Serve as the primary liaison with key state-wide advocacy partners, including contract lobbyists, state-wide advocacy organizations, and communications partners who amplify the organization's advocacy efforts.

Additional:

- Demonstrate knowledge of, and support for the Aspire Public Schools mission, vision, value statements including antiracism, policies and procedures, operating instructions, confidentiality standards, and the code of ethical behavior
- Perform other related duties as required and assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum educational level:

- Bachelor's degree
- Advanced degree preferred

Experience required:

- 5+ year experience in fundraising, marketing/communications, or advocacy work
- Exceptional communication skills, both written and verbal.
- Experience developing strategic plans, metrics, and progress monitoring.
- Knowledge of fundraising techniques and strategies.
- Excellent computer skills with all Microsoft Office programs; Salesforce experience preferred.
- Understanding of budgeting process, with the ability to create compelling narratives based on the organization's financial data.
- Strong interpersonal and process management skills, with a strong interest in and talent for working on teams.

Chief Financial Officer

The Chief Financial Officer maximizes the return on financial assets by developing and managing sound financial policies, procedures, controls, and reporting systems. S/he ensures Aspire Public Schools' legal and regulatory compliance for all accounting and financial reporting functions. The CFO also oversees finance and accounting, including cash management, accounts receivables, and accounts payable.

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Skill in developing a long-term organizational and financial strategy with an ability to think critically
- Expertise in financial planning & analysis and modeling, leveraging fluency with Excel, Access, PowerPoint, and financial accounting systems
- Negotiating a wide range of relationships and contracts, including financing terms, benefits, insurance, vendors
- Capital markets knowledge and expertise
- Demonstrated ability to build relationship and influence others by interacting with a broad range of stakeholders
- Equity-centered leadership skills grounded in empathy, inquiry, and fair process; interest in and ability to identify and interrupt racist practices in their own work and in areas of influence
- Proven ability to successfully manage, evaluate and coach others
- Exceptional reasoning, problem solving and strategic thinking skills and ability to think ahead
- Deep understanding of effective change management practices
- Proven program and project management skills with a track record of working cross-functionally and achieving successful project outcomes
- Ability to utilize numerous data sets, quantitative and qualitative, to inform decision making
- Strong communication skills, both written and verbal; comfortable speaking in front of large groups
- Comfortable having difficult conversations with empathy, an inquiry mindset, and the ability to move toward learning and resolution
- Can attract, develop and inspire great teams

Required educational level:

- Bachelor's Degree/ CPA and/or MBA preferred

Required experience:

- 7+ years' experience as a Director of Finance, VP of Finance or Chief Financial Officer in a fast paced, high growth environment
- Experience in finance for a multi-site organization
- Knowledge of not-for-profit accounting and public sector finance

General Counsel

Grounding in Aspire's mission and vision, the General Counsel leads the legal efforts and risk management in support of Aspire's scholars and teammates, with special consideration to the areas of nonprofit governance, employment law, special education, and risk mitigation. The General Counsel will coordinate Aspire's use of outside counsel. This position also oversees the organization's governance, supports its Board of Directors, and joins forces with internal and external partners to advance advocacy efforts and influence systemic change for the TK-12 public education sector. The General Counsel applies a student-centered approach to legal and compliance matters.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Legal Matters

- Represent Aspire in all open and pending legal and legal-adjacent matters, mediations, depositions, etc. Develop legal strategies and lead implementation in partnership with associated departments and schools. Manage associated insurance claims as relevant.
- Determine when and how to leverage outside counsel for specific expertise as needed. Identify and partner with outside legal counsel on legal strategies.
- Provide legal advice and guidance to Aspire leaders on special education, employment law matters, charter authorization, compensation, vendor management, and emergency response, including direct partnership with HR leaders across all regions and Home Office who manage Employee Relations cases and associated investigations.
- Supervise responses to requests for information (e.g. public records requests pursuant to the Public Records Act) and subpoenas.
- Manage legal budget to optimize use of internal staff, external counsel, and pro-bono legal services.

Board Governance

- Ensure and support with compliance with all public transparency and conflict of interest laws
- Ensure compliance with all related laws including Brown Act, Form 700, Political Reform Act
- Stay current on all applicable laws and policies, with an emphasis on charter law
- Maintain internal and external policies and procedures as needed
- Research and advise on optimal governance structures for Aspire to ensure values alignment and legal compliance and proper standing as it relates to tax exemptions, charitable purpose, conflict of interest, etc. Support any governance changes in terms of documentation, policies, coordination with outside counsel.
- Work with Aspire leadership to plan, support and attend all Board meetings, serve as a legal resource for Board and C-Suite, and ensure Board's execution of its fiduciary duties.

Minimum educational level:

- J. D. (Juris Doctor) required with 8+ years of relevant experience obtained at a law firm, government agency or an educational institution.
- Licensed to practice in CA.

Experience required:

- Significant experience working on legal matters with public sector practice or in legal positions at charter schools.
- Experience in TK-12 education. Understanding of education law, CA laws related to governance and public agencies.
- Experience with all or some combination of employment law, contracts, special education law.

- Experience crafting and reviewing legal strategy in response to litigation.
- Evidence of ability to work well with colleagues, outside counsel, opposing counsel , and department and school leaders.
- Demonstrated passion for public education and equitable systems.

Vice President, Data and Technology

The Vice President of Data and Technology leads the development and execution of a comprehensive data, systems and technology strategy across our Central Office and Regions. This role focuses on leveraging data analytics to drive instructional improvements and systems and technology to enhance operational efficiency. This leadership role requires a visionary thinker with a deep understanding of data analytics, technology trends, and business processes for a network's lifecycle. The leader is passionate about driving organizational change through data-driven decision-making and leveraging technology as an enabler for individuals and teams to do great work.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Strategic Leadership:**
 - An innovative thinker who leverages data, systems and technology to enhance student outcomes, streamline operations, and foster a culture of continuous improvement.
 - Develop and implement data, systems and technology strategies that align with the educational goals and mission of each region.
 - Collaborate with senior leadership to identify opportunities and integrate data and technology initiatives to drive innovation and improvement plans.
 - Play a key role in shaping the scope of shared services to be provided to Aspire regional entities as we work towards Transformation into separate entities.
 - Make strategic recommendations and work closely with Executive Directors and Aspire Executive Team to consider efficiency, costs, etc. Provide strategic thought partnership around data integrity and approaches for the Transformation Stage.
 - This leadership role is a member of the Home Office Leadership Team.
- **Data Management - analytics and insights:**
 - Oversee data governance, data quality, and data architecture.
 - Ensure the organization leverages data analytics for decision-making and operational improvements.
 - Oversee the collection, management, and analysis of data across the network.
 - Establish data governance frameworks to ensure data quality, security, and compliance with relevant regulations.

- Lead the design and implementation of data analytics initiatives that provide actionable insights for educators, administrators, and stakeholders.
- **Systems and Technology Oversight:**
 - Oversee the strategic direction and management of all IT and systems initiatives across the organization.
 - Ensure the organization's IT and systems infrastructure is secure, scalable, and efficient for optimal performance.
 - Oversee the management of the procurement, implementation, and maintenance of technology systems and solutions.
 - Evaluate and implement educational technology tools that enhance teaching and learning experiences.
- **Team Development:**
 - Build, mentor, and lead high-performing data and technology teams.
 - Foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- **Budgeting and Resource Allocation:**
 - Develop and manage the overall budget for data, systems, and technology; ensure the effective allocation of resources to meet strategic priorities.
 - Monitor expenditures and ensure cost-effectiveness of data, systems and technology investments.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
 - Communicate data strategy and technology initiatives effectively to all levels - leaders, educators, staff, and the broader community.
 - Act as a liaison between technical teams and central/regional office leaders to ensure alignment and understanding.
- **Compliance and Risk Management:**
 - Establish and enforce policies and procedures to ensure data security, privacy, and compliance with relevant regulations and standards.
 - Conduct risk assessments and implement security measures to protect organizational data and IT assets.
- **Continuous Improvement:**
 - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of data initiatives and technology implementations, making adjustments as needed.
 - Stay current with emerging trends in education technology and data analytics to inform strategic decisions.
 - Collaborate with regional leaders and Home Office Leadership to further the AI strategy in the Aspire context.

***Additional:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of, and support, the Aspire Public Schools mission, vision, value statements including antiracism, policies and procedures, operating instructions, confidentiality standards, and the code of ethical behavior
- Perform other related duties as required and assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Strong understanding of K-12 education data systems, assessment tools, and educational technology.
- Systems-level thinking with the ability to solve problems and build scalable solutions.
- Proven track record of developing and executing data and technology strategies in a fast-paced environment.
- Proven ability to translate data insights into actionable strategies for improvement.
- Exceptional leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively across regions, departments and influence stakeholders.
- Commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment.

Minimum educational level:

- Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, Information Technology, Data Science, or a related field.
- MBA or advanced degree preferred.

Experience required:

- 8+ years of experience in data and systems management, technology leadership, or a related field, with at least 5 years in a senior leadership role.

Executive Director

The Executive Director has overall responsibility for the performance of their region's schools in the areas of strategic leadership; academic and programmatic excellence; diversity, equity, and inclusion; chartering authority and community partnerships; talent development, and operational and fiscal health. Job duties include:

- Directly supervising and coaching principal supervisors and other regional leaders to achieve key goals and metrics aligned to our strategic plan;
- Building strategic relationships with local advocacy partners, local and statewide representatives, and local funders, to enlist support for and partnership with our schools and families, and strengthen our position in the community;
- Ensuring collaborative and efficacious partnerships, with the Home Office/Aspire Public Schools, and across the organization at large;

- Cultivating a cohesive, values-aligned team (inclusive of principals) that demonstrates strong team culture, communication, and role clarity;
- Establishing systems and protocols to ensure the operational and financial health of the region and its schools;
- Maintaining strong chartering authority and county office of education relationships and charters in good standing, and lead renewal cycles in collaboration with Home Office counterparts.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Ability to attract, cultivate, develop, and inspire a diverse team, build trust through authentic interaction, and cultivate a positive work environment across multiple axes of difference.
- Demonstrated success as an instructional leader, including professional development of teachers and principals, in public charter or district schools serving primarily Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (“BIPOC”) scholars.
- Demonstrated command of the intricacies of school operations and planning.
- Ability to use complex data to inform your leadership and practice, and to successfully train and coach others to do the same.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of the complexities of race and culture in education; sensitivity to issues and concerns of communities of color and other diverse groups including students with disabilities and multi-language learners; passion and extensive experience in leading for equity; ability to lead with an anti-racist lens.
- Commitment to your own ongoing learning, growth, and development.
- Demonstrated success managing strategic planning and vision setting, operations, budgets, and developing and implementing systems.
- Exceptional management skills including planning, directing, reporting, budgeting, and administrative responsibilities.
- Knowledge of characteristics of successful urban schools in high need communities and how to implement them.
- Knowledge of California charter school law, finance, and regulations.
- Strong problem analysis and problem resolution at both a strategic and functional level.

Education & Certifications

- BA required, Master’s degree and above preferred
- CA Teaching or Admin Credential preferred

Experience

- Led large scale, complex organizations or departments
- Done work to address your own lens of racial and social oppression, and also done work to disrupt oppression on a systemic level
- 5+ years of successful teaching, as demonstrated in student results and other relevant data highly preferred

- 5+ years successful experience as a principal, as demonstrated in student results and other relevant data highly preferred
- 2+ years as a school administrator at the regional, network, or district level supervising schools/principals with a proven track record of student success highly preferred

Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for administering, directing and coordinating the overall school's support program in all areas as assigned. This support includes a culturally responsive leadership program and development, talent development, school budgets, assistance for program implementation, professional development and systematic program monitoring/evaluation.

The Superintendent of Schools supervises the Managing Director(s) of schools, providing coaching, development, resource allocation, and support for school supervision.

The Superintendent of Schools participates in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Aspire initiatives and other system-wide policies and procedures as a member of the Regional Leadership Team. The work requires an understanding of the overall mission, goals, and objectives of Aspire, anti-racist stance, and the primary focus is to provide meaningful support for the principals to attain and exceed the Student Achievement Targets.

School Supervision and Leadership Development

- Responsible for ensuring all scholars in the region have access to effective, culturally responsive school leaders, who are charged to ensure rigorous, culturally responsive instruction that prepares scholars for success in college, career, and life.
- Work with Executive Directors and engage the regional community to define the leadership pathway vision for the region that aligns with Aspire's mission, vision, core values, and equity commitments, anti-racist stance, and strategic plan and metrics.
- Collaborates with the Executive Director on policies and procedures affecting the instructional program and management of schools.
- Directly supervises school leaders including supporting the budgeting, scheduling and implementation of both school operations and instructional programs.
- Supervises Managing Director(s) of schools and provides coaching and support for school supervision.
- Hosts the School Supervisor Community of Practice providing norming, frameworks and feedback to ensure alignment among principal supervisor practices.
- Organizes and/or facilitates principal and supporting administrator regional community of practice.
- Supports hosting Instructional Rounds and Learning Walks across schools with school leaders and other members of the regional team

- Observes classroom instruction to determine overall degree of implementation of the instructional program, student/school needs, usefulness of materials, and level of instruction.
- Builds equity leadership, problems of practice and equity focused learning for teammates.
- Reviews and analyzes data regarding student performance in order to more effectively support principals and direct their activities, especially as it relates to subgroups and disproportionality.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Partner with counterparts in other regions to shape and refine Aspie's principal supervision and school support system to ensure consistent and high-quality school support and principal development.
- Ability to problem solve, project manage, talent manage and articulate a clear vision for the region.
- Broad knowledge of the methodology, procedures, policies, and practices of the specialties required to deliver quality, equity informed, instructional support, especially re Common Core State Standards.
- Comprehensive knowledge of curriculum development, effective instructional practices and instructional evaluation methods and procedures.
- Comprehensive knowledge of Aspire Public Schools organization and operations.
- Ability to design, develop, and direct the implementation of plans and programs.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with parents, principals, teachers, supervisors, other responsible school, local, and state officials from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Ability to engage in conversations that might push people out of their comfort zones, especially in regards to discussions about race and educational equity.
- Has engaged in work to address individual lens of racial and social oppression, and also led work to disrupt oppression on a systemic level
- Ability to communicate skillfully, both orally and in writing, including preparing complex reports, making formal oral presentations, and participating effectively in a variety of meetings.
- Excellent human relations skills.

EDUCATIONAL & LICENSURES:

- Bachelor's required
- Master's degree from an accredited college or university, preferred
- Possession of an administrative credential in school administration preferred.

EXPERIENCE

- 7+ years of field experience in education, including experience as a teacher and in an administrative or supervisory position.
- At least two years as a leader at the regional, network, or district level supervising region-wide instructional program and teammates with a proven track record of student success

Managing Director of Schools

The Managing Director of Schools is primarily and directly responsible for supervising, coaching, and managing school leaders in various settings (TK-5, middle school and or high school). The Managing Directors work to build the capacity of leaders and teammates as Equity leaders in service of disrupting the inequitable racial, social and gender outcomes that our communities persist through. The Managing Director may provide support to the Executive Director and Superintendent in the areas of culturally responsive leadership, culturally responsive teaching, school development, curriculum planning and instruction, and assistance for program implementation, professional development and systematic program monitoring/evaluation.

In collaboration with the Superintendent, the Managing Director will support the development, implementation, and evaluation of regional initiatives and other system-wide policies and is an integral part of the Regional Instructional Leadership and/or Equity Leadership teams. The work requires an understanding of anti-racist practices, Culturally Responsive Leadership, overall mission, goals, and objectives of Aspire and the region; however, the primary focus is to provide meaningful support for the principals and supporting administrators to disrupt racialized outcomes for scholars.

Supervision, Curriculum and Staff Development

- Directly supervises school leaders including supporting the budgeting, scheduling and implementation of both school operations and school instruction.
- Supports the Superintendent to organize and participate in principal and supporting administrator regional meetings.
- Provides culturally responsive leadership to classroom programs by working with and coaching school principals and site leadership staff on adaptive and technical challenges
- Reviews and analyzes data regarding student performance in order to more effectively support principals and direct their activities, especially as it relates to racialized outcomes and identify culturally responsive practices to disrupt these outcomes
- If needed, participates in region-wide equity based programming with a focus on leadership development on either the Regional Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Council, or Pro-Black Programming Leadership Team.
- Support in the planning, budgeting, scheduling, implementation, and evaluation of professional development for principals.
- Develop and host regional communities of practice (e.g. secondary programming, elementary programming, etc)
- Supports the recruitment, hiring, and retention of qualified supporting administrators and teachers
- Collaborates on a regular basis with other members of the regional team
- Ensures explicit connections between coaching and professional development with leveraging the Transformational Leadership Framework and Aspire Student Learning Framework .
- Frequent or daily travel to school sites to be onsite at schools and will require periodic travel to all Aspire regions and/or other locations for conferences/professional development

- Performs related duties as required or assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Demonstrate knowledge of, and support, the Aspire Public Schools mission, vision, value statements including antiracism, policies and procedures, operating instructions, confidentiality standards, and the code of ethical behavior.
- Ability to problem solve and articulate a clear vision for the region.
- Broad knowledge of the methodology, procedures, policies, and practices of the specialties required to deliver quality instructional support, especially regarding CCSS and culturally responsive teaching and leadership.
- Comprehensive knowledge of curriculum and effective culturally responsive instructional practices.
- Comprehensive knowledge of curriculum and instructional evaluation methods and procedures.
- Comprehensive knowledge of Aspire Public Schools organization and operations.
- Ability to manage fiscal and physical resources and to direct the operations of a broad range of activities through other school and regional managers to successfully carry out instructional support activities.
- Ability to design, develop, and direct the implementation of plans and programs.
- Ability to establish and maintain successful working relationships with staff, students, and parents.
- Ability to communicate skillfully, both orally and in writing, including preparing complex reports, making formal oral presentations, and participating effectively in a variety of meetings.
- Comfort with engaging in conversations that might push people out of their comfort zones, especially in regards to discussions about race and educational equity.
- Excellent human relations skills.

EDUCATION & LICENTURES:

- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree from an accredited college or university preferred
- Possession of an administrative credential in school administration preferred

EXPERIENCE

- 7+ years of field experience in education with at least two years of site leadership experience.
- Extensive and progressively experience in teaching and school administration.

- Experience supervising principals is preferred.

Regional Director Special Education

Under the general direction of the Superintendent, the Regional Director of Special Education coordinates the special ed program and delivery within the region, provides leadership to the special education regional team, principals and school sites. The Regional Director of Special Education coordinates special education participation in organizational initiatives.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Skills to effectively provide leadership and manage the multiple requirements; understand, interpret and apply laws, policies, and guidelines that govern special education or Aspire programs; communicate effectively in writing and orally.
- Knowledge of Aspire's SELPA procedures and program guidelines; special education instructional practices, procedures and methods; various testing materials, resources or equipment; behavioral and social-emotional interventions.
- Working knowledge of IDEA, California special education law, charter law; IEP preparation and implementation strategies and procedures; current trends and best practices in serving special education students and appropriate referral agencies.
- Abilities to supervise and motivate staff; collaborate with principals on employee management of assigned staff, conduct effective meetings and professional development activities; work effectively with students, parents and staff.
- Analyze situations accurately and adopt an effective course of action and work independently.
- Ability to use technology to enhance Aspire schools; knowledge of assistive technology to enhance student learning.
- Experience in training, planning and executing appropriate transition services for special education students.

1) Minimum educational level:

- CA Education Specialist Credential and CLAD certification required OR CA Related Service Provider Credential/License (School Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, etc)
- California Administrative Services Credential recommended
- Master degree in Special Education or related field (preferred)

2) Experience required:

- 3-5 years' experience with special education program leadership and charter experience

Regional Director of Student Services ("RDSS")

Regional Directors of Student Services provide direct consultation to Aspire schools and manage a team in order to integrate support for non-academic student supports and to manage student services compliance within their region. This role includes coaching schools directly in student services matters such as truancy and discipline policies, navigating and tracking discipline patterns and crisis response. They also handle the due process and administrative hearing proceedings for regions within Aspire including, but not limited to, the School Attendance Review Board ("SARB"), expulsion hearing officer duties and Uniform Complaint Procedures. Regional Directors of Student Services provide professional development to Principals, APs and Deans of Students, social-emotional counselors and other school site admin staff directly engaging in student services actions.

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Demonstrated commitment to students and learning
- Experience with students grades K-12
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to write clearly and persuasively and interact effectively with different audiences
- Excellent organization, time management and follow-up skills; high sense of urgency; demonstrated ability to successfully handle multiple cases concurrently
- Ability to work as a part of a team
- Demonstrates ability to adjust to and use new approaches in the performance of their duties
- Deals with obstacles and constraints positively

Educational Level:

- Master's Degree in Education, Counseling, Social Work or related discipline

Required experience:

- 8+ years' experience working in student services related field in a public education setting
- 5+ years' experience at a school administrator or district level position

Senior Director of Operations

The Senior Director of Operations drives the vision and strategy for improving the operational function at all levels of the organization – school site, region, and Aspire-wide – and oversees the Operations Team. Works cross-functionally and collaboratively to share, create buy-in and implement their vision and strategy. Has excellent people management skills, a passion for leading and implementing large, complex projects and initiatives to improve the organization, a proven track record of sound, data-driven decision-making, and strong relationship-building skills.

The Senior Director of Operations is responsible for administering, directing and coordinating school and regional operations as it relates to federal, state, county, and district compliance and oversight. This support includes leadership of specific program development such as report planning and development, operational budgets, and annual oversight presentations, professional development and systematic program monitoring/evaluation, and serving as a key liaison with relevant Home Office teammates as needed.

The Senior Director of Operations performs related duties as required or assigned under the general direction of Regional Leadership.

Leadership and Strategic Vision

- Lead in developing, executing, and achieving Aspire's vision, mission, strategies, and goals, ensuring alignment across school sites, regional teams, and Home Office functions.
- Serve as part of the Bay Area Leadership Team to problem-solve regional issues and support continuous improvement of Aspire-wide policies and procedures.
- Oversee and contribute to operational goals that prioritize student achievement, long-term financial sustainability, and risk mitigation.

Operational Excellence

- Develop and implement strategic plans to transform school, regional, and organization-wide operations, collaborating with key stakeholders to identify and drive process improvements.
- Direct operational best practices and communicate them through professional development, documents, and presentations.
- Review and analyze student attendance and enrollment data to guide principals
- Support principals and non-instructional staff in operational deliverables to ensure daily operational excellence.
- Manage and provide leadership for charter application, renewal, and compliance processes, fostering positive relationships with authorizers.
- Direct teams responsible for maintenance, custodial services, energy management, and capital projects.
- Manage regional capital projects, coordinating with project managers to ensure compliance with building codes, and overseeing timely delivery of facilities projects like portable classrooms.

Supervision and Team Development

- Support the supervision and coaching of school Business Managers and regional teammates, enhancing their capacity in operations leadership, feedback, and system management.
- Visit schools to monitor progress, develop principal capacity, and support the growth of Business Managers in achieving operational goals.

- Oversee and participate in principal and regional meetings to align operational practices and support leadership development.

Partnerships and Vendor Management

- Act as liaison between the region and Home Office Operations, managing regional and national vendor relationships and contracts.
- Collaborate with IT and Data teams to implement strategies that enhance student learning and operational efficiency.

Professional Development and Support

- Work with the Home Office and Regional Office employees to design and deliver professional development for principals and Business Managers.
- Plan, budget, schedule, and evaluate professional development for non-instructional staff.
- Co-plan and lead retreats for Office Managers/Business Managers to align professional growth with organizational goals.

Data and Decision-Making

- Oversee Data Analysis and Data Visualization teams to provide user-friendly tools for data-driven decision-making.
- Lead cross-functional initiatives for better coordination and communication across schools, regions, and the Home Office, fostering an environment of continuous feedback and growth.

Talent Management

- Hire, develop, and retain key talent to ensure the success of operations.
- Set clear goals, provide constructive feedback, and offer growth opportunities for team members.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Demonstrate knowledge of, and support, the Aspire Public Schools mission, vision, value statements including antiracism, policies and procedures, operating instructions, confidentiality standards, and the code of ethical behavior
- Ability to problem solve and articulate a clear vision for the region.
- Broad knowledge of the methodology, procedures, policies, and practices of the specialties required to deliver quality instructional support, with regard to Common Core State Standards and culturally responsive teaching and leadership.
- Comprehensive knowledge of Aspire Public Schools organization and operations.
- Ability to manage fiscal and physical resources and to direct the operations of a broad range of

activities through other school and regional managers to successfully carry out instructional support activities.

- Ability to design, develop, and direct the implementation of plans and programs.
- Ability to establish and maintain successful working relationships with staff, students, and parents.
- Ability to communicate skillfully, both orally and in writing, including preparing complex reports, making formal oral presentations, and participating effectively in a variety of meetings.
- Comfort with engaging in conversations that might push people out of their comfort zones, especially in regards to discussions about race and educational equity
- This role will require travel up to 80% time to schools across the region and will require some periodic travel to all Aspire regions and/or other locations for conferences/professional development
- Excellent human relations skills.

EDUCATION and LICENSURES

- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree from an accredited college or university preferred
- Possession of an administrative credential in school administration preferred

EXPERIENCE

- 7+ years of field experience in education
- 3+ years of school or district operational system leadership experience

Principal Qualifications

The Charter School's Principal leads, manages, and oversees all functions of an individual school site. This includes the education program to ensure student academic performance, budget to ensure fiscal health of the site, school office operations, community relations, people management and facilities. The Principal will have the following qualifications:

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Demonstrated commitment to students and learning
- Demonstrated knowledge of curriculum development and program design
- In-depth experience developing teachers
- Strong experience in performance assessment
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to write clearly and persuasively

- Excellent organization, time management and follow-up skills; high sense of urgency; demonstrated ability to successfully handle multiple projects concurrently; ability to work as a team
- Strong community-building skills
- Entrepreneurial passion
- Demonstrated P&L responsibility
- Computer and Internet search skills

Educational Level:

- Bachelor's degree
- Masters or Ph.D. in Education preferred
- Administrative Credential preferred
- NCLB Highly Qualified preferred

Required experience:

- 7+ years teaching and administrative experience
- 3+ years working in historically marginalized communities as a full-time teacher preferred

Assistant Principal

Assist Site Principal in managing all the functions of an individual school site, including education program, office operations, budget, community relations, personnel and facilities in accordance with Aspire standards.

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Demonstrated commitment to students and learning
- Experience with instructional leadership, including demonstrated knowledge of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and developing teachers
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to write clearly and persuasively and interact effectively with different audiences
- Excellent organization, time management and follow-up skills; high sense of urgency; demonstrated ability to successfully handle multiple projects concurrently; ability to work as a team
- Entrepreneurial passion

Required educational level:

- Bachelor's degree
- Masters or Ph.D. in Education preferred

Required experience:

- 3+ years working with urban students as a full-time teacher preferred

- 7+ years teaching and administrative experience

Business Manager Qualifications

The Business Manager is responsible for overall non-academic/instructional business operations of the school site including School Operations and Administration, Accounting, Finance and Budget Management, Data Management, School Leadership, and Serving as a Partner to the Principal. The Business Manager reports to the Principal, supervises supporting staff, and collaborates and partners with all school staff and home office teammates as well as with students, parents, and outside consultants/vendors.

- Strong organizational, time management and multitasking skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Experience in office management
- Ability to work with constant interruptions and remain focused; understand and carry out oral and written instructions; learn new procedures and upgrade skills in order to meet changing job conditions
- Ability to create inclusive environments that honors and supports a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives
- Ability to work independently as well as with a team
- Professional appearance and manner
- Knowledge of Ed Code preferable (or interest in learning)
- Fluency in Spanish - highly desirable

Minimum educational level:

- B.A. Degree preferred or equivalent work experience

Experience required:

- 6 plus years in fast-paced, ever changing administrative position; experience in a school environment preferable
- Supervisory experience strongly preferred
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office, network printing, copiers and fax machines

Teacher Qualifications

Criteria for the selection of teachers are adapted from the five standards used for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. During the hiring process, candidates are evaluated using these standards:

- Committed to students and learning
- Knowledgeable about their subject matter
- Skilled in management of learning

- Reflective in their practice
- Community-oriented
- Knowledge of child cognitive development and various learning styles
- Knowledge of subject matter, including California State Standards and subject-specific frameworks
- Knowledge of assessments
- Ability and willingness to implement Aspire Instructional Guidelines and Best Practices
- Ability to analyze qualitative and quantitative student data
- Ability and willingness to reflect and improve instructional practices
- Ability to collaborate with colleagues, parents and community
- Computer and Internet search skills

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(l)(1), teachers shall hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment. These documents shall be maintained on file at the Charter School and are subject to periodic inspection by the charting authority. The Charter School may use local assignment options authorized in statute and regulations for the purpose of legally assigning certificated teachers, in the same manner as a governing board of a school district. The Charter School shall have authority to request an emergency permit or a waiver from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing in the same manner as a school district.

Teacher Hiring

As a public charter school organization with a clearly defined focus, Aspire tends to attract educators interested in working in more accountable, innovative, collaborative environments—teachers and principals who are themselves educational entrepreneurs. A rigorous and sound process for selecting from the pool of teacher candidates is essential. Aspire's multiple-stage approach includes: a resume screen; telephone interview/screen, school site interview with a site hiring committee (discussed below); demonstration lesson with students; authorization check and reference checks.

The Principal has authority to make Charter School hiring decisions and may have the opportunity to work with other staff and community members in making these decisions. The Charter School may utilize a hiring team that includes some or all of the following individuals:

- *Principal:* Chairs the hiring committee and makes all final decisions on hiring for the Charter School.
- *Business/Office Manager:* Helps organize the process and paper trail, including: scheduling candidates for interviews and demonstration lessons; collecting score sheets; coordinating with current staff or participating students for demonstration lessons; and sending declined candidates' paperwork to Aspire's Home Office.
- *Teachers:* Actively participate in evaluating candidates through interview and demonstration lesson observation.
- *Parents:* Actively participate in evaluating candidates through the interview process, observe demonstration lessons and provide input.

Other Jobs at the Charter School

Below are other positions that contribute to the daily functioning of the Charter School. The selection process for all school site positions is first a screening from a regional recruiter, followed by an interview by the direct supervisor for the role and an optional team interview.

Building Manager

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Knowledge of safe and efficient use of cleaning materials, chemicals, tools and equipment
- Ability to guide and support facility staff
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to communicate effectively in verbal and written form, with both students and adults
- Ability to maintain simple records
- Ability and willingness to meet the physical requirements necessary to perform the required duties, including ability to lift, carry, push, pull and move heavy objects on a regular basis
- Ability to interact appropriately with children of different ages

Required Experience

- 1-3 years of janitorial experience preferred but not required

Expanded Learning Site Director

The Expanded Learning Site Director oversees the ongoing planning and operations of a high-quality education program for students and upholds the mission and values of Aspire. This includes training and managing a team of Expanded Learning Educators to meet the academic, social-emotional, behavioral, and physical needs of all students.

- Proven ability to provide timely and meaningful financial analysis in a dynamic, high-growth work environment
- Strong organizational and administrative skills, including ability to work in a fast-paced environment and handle multiple responsibilities and deadlines
- Proficiency in use of computer technology and the internet, including MS Word and Excel
- Demonstrated ability to work well as part of a team and to facilitate teamwork to complete complex projects
- Strong written and verbal communication skills and ability to collaborate with a variety of colleagues and stakeholders including parents, teachers and community partners
- Ability and willingness to implement Aspire Instructional Guidelines and Best Practices
- Ability and willingness to reflect and improve own performance
- Knowledge of child and/or youth development concepts and different learning styles; demonstrated enthusiasm for working with young people
- Knowledge of adult learning theory and experience training adults highly desired

Minimum educational level:

- Associate's degree or successful completion of 48 units of college credit required
- Bachelors' and/or Masters' preferred

Experience required:

- A minimum of 1 year as a teacher, teacher intern, or teaching assistant preferred
- Management experience in a nonprofit, school, or service business preferred

Mental Health Therapist (Special Education)

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Demonstrated commitment to students and learning.
- Experience with students grades TK-12.
- Excellent communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills, with demonstrated ability to write clearly and interact effectively with different stakeholders.
- Excellent organization, time management and follow-up skills; ability to rank and carry out a variety of urgent priorities; demonstrated ability to successfully handle multiple cases concurrently.
- Ability to work as a part of a team.
- Possess knowledge of a variety of forms of intervention and prevention models for both individuals and group therapeutic settings (ex: CBT, Play therapy, etc.)
- Demonstrate ability to adjust to and use new approaches in the performance of their duties.
- Deal with obstacles and constraints positively and with a solutions-oriented mindset.

Minimum educational level & licensure:

- Bachelor's Degree required
- Master's Degree in counseling/social work or related discipline required
- Registered Associate with BBS (AMFT, ASW, and/or APCC) OR PPS credential

Mental Health Therapist 1 (Gen Education)

Required knowledge, skills & abilities:

- Demonstrated commitment to students and learning.
- Experience with students grades TK-12.
- Excellent communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills, with demonstrated ability to write clearly and interact effectively with different stakeholders.
- Excellent organization, time management and follow-up skills; ability to rank and carry out a variety of urgent priorities; demonstrated ability to successfully handle multiple cases concurrently.
- Ability to work as a part of a team.
- Possess knowledge of a variety of forms of intervention and prevention models for both individuals and group therapeutic settings (ex: CBT, Play therapy, etc.)
- Demonstrate ability to adjust to and use new approaches in the performance of their duties.
- Deal with obstacles and constraints positively and with a solutions-oriented mindset.

Minimum educational level & licensure:

- Bachelor's Degree required
- Master's Degree in counseling/social work or related discipline required
- Registered Associate with BBS (AMFT, ASW, and/or APCC) OR PPS credential

Education Specialist Mild to Moderate Support Needs or Extensive Support Needs

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Demonstrate knowledge of, and support, the Aspire mission, vision, value statements including antiracism, policies and procedures, operating instructions, confidentiality standards, and the code of ethical behavior.
- Knowledge of special education principles, concepts, methodologies, and documentation requirements
- Knowledge of special education assessment, planning, instruction, and evaluation
- Knowledge of child cognitive development and different learning styles
- Ability and willingness to implement students' IEPs
- Belief in inclusion and Aspire's Equity Belief Statements and demonstrates high expectations for students with diverse learning needs
- Ability and willingness to reflect and improve
- Ability to follow and meet mandated deadlines and due dates
- Flexibility and ability to adapt to changing conditions; ability and good judgment to take initiative to modify activities
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; ability to collaborate with general education and special education colleagues, parents and community
- Ability to excel as a member of a team and implement new learnings from professional development
- Ability to work with an ethnically and economically diverse student body
- Expertise in applicable grade-level Common Core State Standards and Academic IEP goal development
- Knowledge around the models of co-teaching and serving students with disabilities in an inclusive model
- Ability to learn quickly and to be effective in a fast-paced, dynamic, entrepreneurial environment: able to work autonomously and thoroughly with independent self-reflection, as well as take direction as needed
- Alignment to and urgency around Aspire's mission, vision and values

Educational level and licensures:

- CA Special Education Teaching Credential (Mild/Moderate Education Specialist, Mild-Moderate Support Needs) required
- Bridge Authorizations for Mild-Moderate Credentials received prior to June of 2022
- Bachelor's Degree required; Master's Degree preferred

Experience

- 2+ years working with students which special needs in an educational setting required

School Psychologist

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Demonstrated commitment to students and learning
- Experience with students grades K-12
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to write clearly and persuasively and interact effectively with different audiences
- Excellent organization, time management and follow-up skills; high sense of urgency; demonstrated ability to successfully handle multiple cases concurrently
- Ability to work as a part of a team
- Demonstrates ability to adjust to and use new approaches in the performance of their duties
- Deals with obstacles and constraints positively
- Spanish bilingual preferred, but not required

Educational level and licensures:

- Bachelor's degree
- Master's Degree in School Psychology i
- Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Psychology

Experience required:

- Completion of School Psychologist Internship
- 2 years of experience as a school psychologist preferred

Instructional Aide, SPED Qualifications

Required knowledge, skills & abilities:

- Knowledge of child cognitive development and different learning styles
- Familiarity with students with students that demonstrate moderate-severe needs.
- Ability and willingness to implement students' individualized education programs
- Ability and willingness to reflect and improve on practice
- Flexibility and ability to adapt to changing conditions; ability and good judgment to take initiative to modify activities

Educational level

- Associate's degree or successful completion of 48 units of college credit or passing of Paraprofessional Test
- Bachelor's degree in Education, Teaching, or related field preferred

Experience required

- 1+ year working with students in special education with moderate / severe needs or students from urban communities in an educational setting

Instructional Assistant Qualifications

Required knowledge, skills & abilities

- Knowledge of child cognitive development and different learning styles
- Ability and willingness to implement Aspire Instructional Guidelines and Best Practices
- Ability and willingness to reflect and improve
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; ability to collaborate with colleagues, parents and community

Minimum educational level:

- Associate's degree or successful completion of 48 units of college credit or passing of Paraprofessional Test
- Bachelor's degree in Education, Teaching, or related field preferred

Experience required:

- 1+ year working with students as a teacher, teacher intern, or teaching assistant preferred

Professional Development

Once teachers are hired, Aspire invests in their continued professional development. Teachers new to Aspire participate in regional training to become fluent in the Aspire education program; Aspire culture, instructional practices, curricula, and programs, student and family engagement practices.

Aspire also offers an induction program to all qualified teachers. The Aspire Teacher Induction Program is a two-year mentoring program that supports the development of new teachers based on their individual needs. Teachers are matched with mentors that meet with them weekly to support their development and growth as a new teacher. Induction is designed to recognize the individual strengths and professional development needs of participating teachers, thus building upon the knowledge, skills, and abilities that each participating teacher brings to the classroom.

In addition, Aspire conducts formal and informal observations of instructional practice. Teachers receive regular observations throughout the year grounded in Aspire's instructional rubric, the ASLF. Originally based on The New Teacher Project's ("TNTP") Core Teaching Rubric, the ASLF includes five domains that describe student academic behaviors and outcomes in effective Aspire classrooms. Each domain includes a separate list of instructional strategies, known as Core Teacher Skills, that teachers may utilize to improve student performance in the given area of focus. The Aspire Student Learning Framework is attached in Appendix XV.

Element 6: Health and Safety Procedures

“The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require all of the following:

- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.*
- (ii) The development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (J), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282.*
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(F)*

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, the Board of Directors has adopted and implemented full health and safety procedures and risk management policies at the Charter School site. These procedures will be incorporated into EPACS's student and employee handbooks as needed and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Principal and regional team. EPACS shall ensure that staff are trained annually on the health and safety policies.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies and procedures of EPACS.

Procedures for Background Checks

Employees and contractors of the Charter School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. Applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Charter School shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by law, pursuant to Education Code Sections 44830.1 and 45122.1. The Principal of the Charter School shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Charter School Board of Directors on a regular basis. The Board Chair shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Principal. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

All employees will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District. The Charter School shall provide mandated reporter training to all employees annually in accordance with Education Code Section 44691.

Tuberculosis Risk Assessment and Examination

Employees, and volunteers who have frequent or prolonged contact with students, will be assessed and examined (if necessary) for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students,

and for employees at least once each four years thereafter, as required by Education Code Section 49406.

Immunizations

All enrolled students who receive classroom-based instruction will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075. All rising 7th grade students must be immunized with a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine booster.

Upon a student's admission or advancement to 6th grade, the Charter School shall submit to the student and their parent or guardian a notification that advises students to adhere to current immunization guidelines regarding human papillomavirus ("HPV") before admission or advancement to 8th grade, consistent with the requirements of Education Code Section 48980.4 and Health and Safety Code Section 120336.

Medication in School

EPACS will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school. The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49414 regarding epinephrine auto-injectors and training for staff members; per AB 1651 (2023), the Charter School shall store emergency epinephrine auto-injectors in an accessible location upon need for emergency use and include that location in annual notices required by law. To the extent the Charter School maintains a stock of albuterol inhalers to respond to respiratory distress in students, the Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 49414.7, including with respect to training, notices, and the stocking of albuterol inhalers.

Vision, Hearing, and Scoliosis

Students will be screened for vision, hearing and scoliosis. The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49450 et seq. as applicable to the grade levels served by the Charter School.

Diabetes

EPACS shall make type 1 diabetes informational materials accessible to the parent or guardian of a pupil when the pupil is first enrolled in elementary school. The Charter School will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

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

3. A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
4. A description of treatments and prevention methods of type 2 diabetes.
5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

Suicide Prevention Policy

The Charter School shall maintain a policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215. The Charter School shall review, at minimum every fifth year, its policy on pupil suicide prevention and, if necessary, update its policy. Pursuant to AB 58 (2021-22), the Charter School will also review and update its suicide prevention policy to incorporate best practices identified by the California Department of Education's model policy, as revised.

Prevention of Human Trafficking

The Charter School shall identify and implement the most appropriate methods of informing parents and guardians of students in grades 6 through 8 of human trafficking prevention resources.

Menstrual Products

The Charter School shall stock the school's restrooms at all times with an adequate supply of menstrual products, available and accessible, free of cost, in all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom. The Charter School shall post a notice regarding the requirements of Education Code Section 35292.6 in a prominent and conspicuous location in every restroom required to stock menstrual products, available and accessible, free of cost, as specified. This notice shall include the text of Education Code Section 35292.6 and contact information, including an email address and telephone number, for a designated individual responsible for maintaining the requisite supply of menstrual products.

All Gender Restrooms

On or before July 1, 2026, the Charter School shall provide and maintain at least one all-gender restroom for voluntary student use at each of its schoolsites that has more than one female restroom and more than one male restroom designated exclusively for student use. The restroom shall have signage identifying the bathroom as being open to all genders, it shall remain unlocked, unobstructed, and easily accessible by any student, and be available during school hours and school functions when students are present. The Charter School shall designate a staff member to serve as a point of contact and to post a notice regarding these requirements.

School Meals

The Charter School shall provide breakfast and lunch free of charge during each school day to any pupil who requests a meal without consideration of the pupil's eligibility for a federally funded free or

reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one free meal for each meal service period. The meals provided under this paragraph shall be nutritionally adequate meals that qualify for federal reimbursement.

The Charter School shall provide each student adequate time to eat as determined by the Charter School in consideration of available guidance.

Recess

Except where a field trip or other educational program is taking place, if the Charter School provides recess, to the extent required by Education Code Section 49056, the Charter School shall provide supervised and unstructured recess, distinct from physical education courses and mealtimes, of at least 30 minutes on regular instructional days and at least 15 minutes on early release days. The Charter School shall not restrict a student's recess unless there is an immediate threat to the physical safety of the student or one or more of their peers.

California Healthy Youth Act

The Charter School shall teach sexual health education and human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") prevention education to students in grades 7-8, at least once in middle school, pursuant to the California Healthy Youth Act (Education Code Section 51930, *et seq.*).

Mental Health Education

If the Charter School offers one or more courses in health education to students in middle or high school, the Charter School shall include in those courses instruction in mental health that meets the requirements of Education Code Section 51925, *et seq.*

Mental Health Information

The Charter School shall create and post a poster at the school site identifying approaches and resources addressing student mental health in compliance with Education Code Section 49428.5. The poster shall be displayed in English and the primary language(s) spoken by 15 percent or more of students enrolled at the schoolsite. The poster shall be prominently and conspicuously displayed in appropriate public areas that are accessible to, and commonly frequented by, students at the schoolsite. The poster shall also be digitized and distributed online to students through social media, internet websites, portals, and learning platforms at the beginning of each school year.

School Safety Plan

The Charter School shall adopt a School Safety Plan, to be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year, which shall include identification of appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address the Charter School's procedures for complying with

applicable laws related to school safety, including the development of all of the following pursuant to Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(O):

- A. child abuse reporting procedures
- B. routine and emergency disaster procedures
- C. policies for students who committed an act under Education Code Section 48915 and other Charter School-designated serious acts leading to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations
- D. procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students pursuant to Education Code Section 49079
- E. a discrimination and harassment policy consistent with Education Code Section 200
- F. provisions of any schoolwide dress code that prohibits students from wearing “gang-related apparel,” if applicable
- G. procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and employees to and from the Charter School
- H. a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning
- I. the rules and procedures on school discipline adopted pursuant to Education Code Sections 35291, 35291.5, and 47605
- J. procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents
- K. procedures to prepare for active shooters or other armed assailants by conducting a drill, if this topic is covered in the School Safety Plan
- L. procedures to assess and respond to reports of any dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity that is being conducted or threatened to be conducted at the school, at an activity sponsored by the school, or on a schoolbus serving the school
- M. procedures to respond to incidents involving an individual experiencing a sudden cardiac arrest or a similar life-threatening medical emergency while on school grounds
- N. procedures specifically designed to notify parents and guardians of pupils, teachers, administrators, and school personnel when the school confirms the presence of immigration enforcement on the schoolsite
- O. a protocol in the event a pupil is suffering or is reasonably believed to be suffering from an opioid overdose

The School Safety Plan shall be drafted specifically to the needs of the facility in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshal. Staff shall receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.

Disaster procedures included in the School Safety Plan shall address and include adaptations for students with disabilities. To the extent an employee, parent/guardian, educational rights holder, or student brings concerns regarding the procedures to the Principal and, if there is merit to the concern, the Principal shall direct the School Safety Plan to be modified accordingly.

The Charter School shall develop an instructional continuity plan, consistent with Education Code Section 32282(a)(3), to establish communication with students and their families and provide instruction to students when in-person instruction is disrupted due to an emergency pursuant to Education Code Sections 41422 or 46392(a).

Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

The Charter School shall establish, implement, and maintain, at all times in all work areas, an effective workplace violence prevention plan consistent with the requirements of Labor Code Section 6401.9.

Bloodborne Pathogens

EPACS shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. EPACS shall establish a written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood-borne viruses, including HIV and hepatitis B virus (“HBV”) and provide mandatory annual training to staff to protect employees and children from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses. Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

Drug Free, Alcohol Free, Smoke Free Environment

Aspire and the Charter School is committed to providing a drug and alcohol free workplace and to promoting safety in the workplace, employee health and well-being, stakeholder confidence and a work environment that is conducive to attaining high work standards. The use of drugs and alcohol by employees, whether on or off the job, jeopardizes these goals, since it adversely affects health and safety, security, productivity, and public confidence and trust. Drug or alcohol use in the workplace or during the performance of job duties is extremely harmful to employees and to other Aspire stakeholders.

The bringing to the workplace, possession or use of intoxicating beverages or drugs on Charter School or Aspire premises or during the performance of work duties is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Facility Safety

EPACS shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. EPACS agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. EPACS shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.

Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies and Procedures

EPACS is committed to providing a school that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon the actual or perceived characteristics of race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, ethnic group identification, genetic information, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, sex and pregnancy, physical or mental disability, childbirth or related medical conditions, military and veteran status, denial of family and medical care leave, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. EPACS shall develop a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about discrimination or harassment at EPACS (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with EPACS's anti-discrimination and harassment policies.

A copy of the policy shall be provided as part of any orientation program conducted for new and continuing pupils at the beginning of each quarter, semester, or summer session, as applicable, and to each faculty member, all members of the administrative staff, and all members of the support staff at the beginning of the first quarter or semester of the school year, or at the time that there is a new employee hired.

Bullying Prevention

The Charter School shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. The Charter School shall annually make available the online training module developed by the CDE pursuant to Education Code Section 32283.5(a) to certificated schoolsite employees and all other schoolsite employees who have regular interaction with children.

Supporting LGBTQ Students

Through the completion of the 2029-30 school year, the Charter School shall use an online training delivery platform and curriculum to provide at least one hour of required LGBTQ cultural competency training annually to teachers and other certificated employees and maintain records of such training as required by Education Code Section 218.

SAFETY Act

Pursuant to AB 1955 (2024), employees of the Charter School shall not be required to disclose any information related to a pupil's LGBTQ+ identity to any other person without the pupil's consent unless otherwise required by state or federal law. This provision shall not limit a parent's ability to request school records on behalf of their child.

Homicide Threats

The Charter School shall comply with all requirements under Education Code Sections 49390-49395 regarding mandatory reporting in response to homicidal threats. All employees and Board members who are alerted to or who observe any threat or perceived threat in writing or through an action of a student that creates a reasonable suspicion that the student is preparing to commit a homicidal act related to school or a school activity shall make a report to law enforcement.

Gun Safety Notice

At the beginning of the first semester, the Charter School shall distribute a notice to the parents/guardians of each student addressing California's child gun access prevention laws and laws related to firearm safety utilizing the most updated model language published by the California Department of Education.

Athletic Programs

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws related to health and safety policies and procedures surrounding athletic programs at charter schools, including but not limited to providing information to athletes regarding sudden cardiac arrest and annually providing each athlete an Opioid Factsheet for Patients. In the event the Charter School participates in any interscholastic athletic programs, it shall comply with all applicable requirements, including, but not limited to, adopting a written emergency action plan for sudden cardiac arrest or other medical emergencies related to athletic programs, and acquiring at least one automated external defibrillator.

Further, Charter School's emergency action plan shall describe the location of emergency medical equipment and include a description of the manner and frequency at which the procedures to be followed in the event of sudden cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies, including concussion and heat illness will be rehearsed. By July 1, 2024, coach training shall include recognition of the signs and symptoms of and responding to concussions, heat illness, and cardiac arrest.

Transportation Services

The Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 39875(c), if applicable, relating to background checks and testing for individuals providing transportation services for students.

Extreme Weather Policy

The Charter School will develop, adopt, and implement a weather policy that includes protocols for extreme weather conditions, and incorporate the standardized guidelines developed by the CDE.

Element 7: Student Population Balance

“The means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, as defined by the evaluation rubrics in Section 52064.5, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(G)

The Charter School will strive to ensure that its student population is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District. The Charter School will monitor the racial, ethnic, special education, and English learner balance among its students on an annual basis and will engage in a variety of means and strategies, including monitoring and revising its student outreach plan to achieve a diverse student population. These strategies will include:

- Developing an enrollment timeline and process that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process,
- Engaging in outreach efforts and making presentations via neighborhood groups, community organizations, churches, other leadership organizations, and local preschools.
- Advertising openings through marketing brochures, posting flyers in neighborhoods, distributing flyers at local grocery stores, and/or TV/radio public service announcements targeted towards diverse populations, and when needed, in various languages.
- All outreach and recruiting efforts are done in English and Spanish.
- Hosting open houses to provide information on the school’s curriculum and program.
- Recruiting for all student populations, including academically low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students.

The Charter School is committed to ensuring that all students and families involved with our outreach and process are made to feel welcome and respected, and the Charter School’s outreach and recruitment efforts described above will support this. The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Plan to Achieve a Reflective Student Population Balance

The goal of our plan is to bring the applicant pool to be more reflective of the District, in attempt to bring more balance to the Charter School’s population, in terms of its racial, ethnic, special education, and English learner makeup.

The Charter School believes in a diverse student body, and will work to ensure students from diverse backgrounds have access to our academic program. The Charter School will conduct an annual diversity

needs assessment. Various types of data will be collected to identify the Charter School's student population, including students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and English learners. Key stakeholders will be identified to participate as part of the data collection team including school-site personnel, regional leaders, and community members. Data will be collected through community meetings, surveys, focus groups, and community-wide dialogue. The team will analyze the data collected and identify needs, gaps in diversity and strengths of the current student population. Once the data is analyzed, the team will create diversity goals. Based on the established diversity goals the school will create a strategy such as, but not limit to, social media marketing, printed ads in targeted areas, and distribution of other promotional material. The team will also create a monitoring system to measure success and make changes as necessary to achieve the goals of increasing student diversity. The results from the initial needs assessment will be communicated to the Aspire Board of Directors, including the steps the school will take based on the needs assessment, and a description of the monitoring system the school has established. The Aspire Board of Directors will receive a yearly student diversity update thereafter based on the established monitoring system.

Benchmarks

The Charter School will create Benchmarks for measuring the applicant pool.

Objective	Metric	Completion Date
Determine the diversity of the Charter School for each school year.	Collect data and organize for review	By the first of the month for the first five months of the school year
Address all efforts with particular attention and priority to academically low-achieving and socioeconomically disadvantaged students.	Collect data and organize for review	By December 1 of the school year
Research the latest available data on diversity for the District.	Collection of this data and create a comparison table	By November 1 of the school year
Aspire Board reviews the data in order to approve the forthcoming outreach strategy	Inclusion in a board meeting agenda and discussion topic	By December 1 of the school year

Outreach

The Charter School will follow the plan for outreach/recruitment during Open Enrollment.

Objective	Metric	Completion Date
• Ensure that all marketing, outreach, written communications, and meetings are held in both Spanish and English.	Identify a competent translator for all materials and activities	By December 1 of the new calendar school year
• Market and distribute brochures targeted toward diverse populations.	Create brochures and vet them with key parents, staff, and home office personnel.	By January 15 of each calendar year
• Enlist the help of local businesses in the distribution of flyers and posters that advertise and recruit students.	Identify 25 well known businesses to display and/or distribute information; contact each of them personally and arrange for posting.	By February 15 of the new calendar year.
• Hold an Open House Informational meeting on campus	Schedule and plan a meeting at the school, hosted by the principal, as well as key parents and teachers	By February 1 of the new calendar year
• Expand the outreach of information and important deadlines to local newspapers and media, as well as fairs and community events	Advertise in at least two media sources and provide a presence at 2-3 community events	By February 1 of the new calendar
• Provide opportunity to expand or modify efforts based upon response to Open Enrollment registration	Analyze the registration forms including available ethnic information halfway through the Open Enrollment period	By February 2 of the new calendar year

Element 8: Admission Policies and Procedures

***“Admission policies and procedures, consistent with subdivision (e) [of Education Code section 47605].”
– Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(H)***

The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate against any student based upon any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

The Charter School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Charter School. The Charter School will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or their parent or legal guardian within the state. In accordance with Education Code Sections 49011 and 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(A), the Charter School shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Similarly, in accordance with Section 47605(e)(4)(C), the Charter School shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the Charter School to disenroll from the Charter School or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to the academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii), as listed above.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(D), the Charter School shall post a notice developed by the CDE on the Charter School website, outlining the requirements of Section 47605(e)(4), and make this notice available to parents.

Public Random Drawing

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Charter School will hold a public random drawing (or “lottery”) to

determine admission for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed admission in the following school year.

Admission preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be given to the following students in the following order:

1. Children of Aspire Regular, Full-time employees
2. Siblings of students admitted to the Charter School
3. Children residing within the District
4. All other students who reside in the state of California

The Charter School and the District agree to adhere to the requirements related to admission preferences as set forth in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv).

The Charter School's application process is comprised of the following steps:

- Currently enrolled Charter School students are exempt from the lottery and are guaranteed enrollment in the next academic year at the same school.
- Completion of an application for each child who is interested in attending the Charter School.
- Student applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Open enrollment and lottery information is communicated through letters sent home, parent communication platform messages, and information on the enrollment system.
- Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Charter School will hold a lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level(s). The lottery will be public and will take place at the Charter School, during the published lottery dates on the organization's website at <https://aspirepublicschools.org/enroll/>. Families do not need to attend the lottery in order to secure a spot.
- The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. The enrollment system software is programmed with the admission preferences. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category, and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. The enrollment system first fills available spots with students eligible for preference #1. The remaining spots are then filled with students eligible for preference #2. Once all these students have been offered admission, each subsequent preference is filled in the same manner, before moving to fill seats with the next preference. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the

lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above.

- An Aspire designee will be in attendance at the lottery, which is open to the public.
- At the conclusion of the lottery, students who were admitted will be notified by the Charter School Office Manager by phone, email, and/or mail and asked to register within the designated timeline for the upcoming school year, online, in person, by email, fax and any other means that would work for the family and school. All students who were not granted admission due to capacity will be able to see their place on the waitlist via their enrollment system account or by inquiring with the school office. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. As openings become available, the Business Manager will offer enrollment to students in the order as listed on the waitlist through the online enrollment system. In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year.
- Upon confirmation that a student has secured a spot at the Charter School, parents must submit a completed Registration Form by the specified timeframe. Every effort will be made to contact the parents and ensure that the forms are submitted in a timely fashion. The Charter School's office staff will also help any parents who need assistance in completing the lottery and/or registration forms, and the Charter School will keep written records of the lottery forms, procedures, accepted lists, and wait lists for a period of one year.

Planned Application, Public Random Drawing, and Admission Schedule

Aspire Public Schools typically utilizes the following application, public random drawing, and admission schedule. The schedule below may be abbreviated to ensure all steps are followed within a shorter time frame.

October - January	Open Enrollment: October- January Student recruitment (via referrals, networking, community canvassing, community events and holding enrollment and option fairs and marketing). Interested families can submit applications for the following school year. Applications received during the open enrollment period will be included in the lottery.
December	Re-enrollment Forms for Current Students: January Send re-enrollment forms to existing students to identify the number of open seats available for the following school year.
January	Admission Lottery: January

	Public random drawing conducted (if necessary). The lottery date, time and location will be shared with all families who have applied. Acceptance letters and registration packets distributed to students who have been drawn in the public random drawing and their parents/guardians. Waitlist letters distributed to applicants not selected in the public random drawing.
February- June	Student Registration: March- June Students admitted to the school complete their registration forms. New student orientation events are held to support families with their transition and additional support with the registration process.

Element 9: Annual Independent Financial Audits

“The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(l)

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(c)(5)(l) and 47605(m). The books and records of the Charter School will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law, the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s K-12 Audit Guide.

The Audit Committee will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Principal, along with the audit committee, if any, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (“EAAP”) in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

Element 10: Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that are consistent with all of the following:

(i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil’s side of the story.

(ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:

(I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil’s basic rights.

(II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.

(iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil’s parent or guardian or, if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child’s educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall be provided to the foster child’s attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is an Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child’s tribal social worker, and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the pupil’s parent or guardian, the homeless child’s educational rights holder, the foster child’s educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child’s tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil’s parent, guardian, the homeless child’s educational rights holder, the foster child’s educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian child’s tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, “involuntarily removed” includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii).

(iv) A foster child’s educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child’s tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The Suspension and Expulsion Procedures have been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and wellbeing of all students at the Charter School. Although charter schools are exempt from school district procedures and process for suspensions and expulsions, in creating these procedures, the Charter School has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* which describe the offenses for which students at non-charter schools may be suspended or expelled and the procedures governing those suspensions and expulsions in order to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions, expulsions, and involuntary removal. The language that follows is largely consistent with the language of the Education Code with regard to suspension/expulsion triggering conduct. The Charter School is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions, expulsions, and involuntary removals, and may modify of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension, expulsion or involuntary removal, and the procedures thereto so long as not materially different from this charter petition.

Consistent with this Policy, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension, expulsion, and involuntary removal, and it may be amended from time to time without the need to seek a material revision of the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary policies and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed annually as part of the Student Handbook which will clearly describe discipline expectations.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of this Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

The Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline and involuntary removal policies and procedures.¹⁴

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the IDEA or who is qualified for services under Section 504 is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law requires

¹⁴ The Charter School shall ensure that a homeless child or youth's educational rights holder; a foster child or youth's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker; and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker have the same rights as a parent or guardian to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, involuntary removal notice, and other documents and related information. For purposes of this Policy and its Procedures, the term "parent/guardian" shall include these parties.

additional or different procedures. The Charter School will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the applicable provisions of the Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities, for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability, or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent/guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent/guardian and shall inform the student, and the student's parent/guardian of the basis for which the student is being involuntarily removed, and the student's parent/guardian's right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal. If a student's parent/guardian requests a hearing, the Charter School shall utilize the same hearing procedures specified below for expulsions, before the effective date of the action to involuntarily remove the student. If the student's parent/guardian requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include removals for misconduct which may be grounds for suspension or expulsion as enumerated below. Students may be involuntarily removed for reasons including, but not limited to, failure to comply with the terms of the student's independent study written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g).

Definitions

Suspension means removal of a student from ongoing instruction for adjustment purposes. However, suspension does not mean any of the following:

1. Reassignment to another education program or class at the same school where the student will receive continuing instruction for the length of day prescribed by the Board of Directors for students of the same grade level
2. Referral to a certificated employee designated by the principal to advise students
3. Removal from the class, but without reassignment to another class or program, for the remainder of the class period without sending the student to the principal or designee

Expulsion means removal of a student from the immediate supervision and control or the general supervision of school personnel.

Notice of School Rules

At the beginning of each school year, the principal of each school shall ensure that all students and parents/guardians are notified in writing of all school rules related to discipline, including suspension and expulsion.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion: Grades TK-12

1. Discretionary Suspension or Expulsion Offenses. Students may be suspended or expelled when the Principal or designee determines the student:
 - a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
 - b) Willfully used force or violence upon another person, except in self-defense
 - c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Students who voluntarily disclose their use of a controlled substance, alcohol, or an intoxicant of any kind in order to seek help through services or supports shall not be suspended for that disclosure.
 - d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 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 such controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant
 - e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
 - f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases
 - g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases
 - h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel, except that this restriction shall not prohibit the use of a student's own prescription products by a student. Students who voluntarily disclose their use of a tobacco product in order to seek help through services or supports shall not be suspended solely for that disclosure.
 - i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity
 - j) Unlawfully possessed, or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5
 - k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases
 - l) 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.
 - m) 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.
 - n) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
 - o) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this policy, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or

disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective student. Hazing does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

- p) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this policy, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for their own safety or for their immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, or the personal property of the person threatened or their immediate family.
- q) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this policy, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This provision shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 8 , inclusive.
- r) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in Education Code Section 233(e). This provision shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 8 , inclusive.
- s) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or 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 the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This provision shall apply to students in any of grades 4 to 8, inclusive.
- t) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - 1) Bullying means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of their age, or for a

person of their age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.

- ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on their physical or mental health.
- iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their academic performance
- iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.

2) "Electronic act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- i. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
- ii. A post on a social network Internet web site including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above
 - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual student for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a student for the purpose of bullying the student and such that another student would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the student was or is the student who was impersonated.
 - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious student or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual student other than the student who created the false profile.
- iii. An act of cyber sexual bullying
 - (a) For purposes of this policy, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a student to another student or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual

recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.

(b) For purposes of this policy, “cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

3) Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

2. Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion when it is determined the student:

- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other destructive device unless, in the case of possession of any device of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the with the Principal or designee’s concurrence.
- b) Brandished a knife at another person.
- c) Unlawfully sold a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, *et seq.*
- d) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 287, 288, or 289 or former Section 288a of the Penal Code, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.

If it is determined by the Hearing Officer, Administrative Panel, or the Board that a student has brought a firearm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or destructive device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994. In such instances, the student shall be provided due process rights of notice and a hearing as required in this policy.

The Charter School will use the following definitions:

- The term “knife” means (A) any dirk, dagger, or other weapon with a fixed, sharpened blade fitted primarily for stabbing; (B) a weapon with a blade fitted primarily for stabbing; (C) a weapon with a blade longer than 3½ inches; (D) a folding knife with a blade that locks into place; or (E) a razor with an unguarded blade.

- The term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.
- The term “destructive device” means any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (A) bomb; (B) grenade; (C) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces; (D) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce; (E) mine; or (F) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

Suspension from Class by a Teacher

When suspending a student from class, the teacher shall immediately report this action to the principal or designee and send the student to the principal or designee for appropriate action. If that action requires the continuing presence of the student at school, the student shall be appropriately supervised during the class periods from which the student has been suspended.

As soon as possible after the teacher decides to suspend the student, the teacher shall ask the student's parent/guardian to attend a parent-teacher conference regarding the suspension. A counselor or psychologist may attend the conference if it is practicable, and a school administrator shall attend if either the parent/guardian or teacher so requests.

At the time of the suspension, an administrator or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian in person, by email, or by telephone. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense(s) committed by the student as well as the date the student may return to school following the suspension. If Charter 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.

A student suspended from class shall not be returned to class during the period of the suspension without the approval of the teacher of the class and the principal or designee.

A student suspended from class shall not be placed in another regular class during the period of suspension. However, a student assigned to more than one class per day may continue to attend other regular classes except those held at the same time as the class from which the student was suspended.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2(a), upon the request of a parent, a legal guardian or other person holding the right to make education decisions for the student, or the affected student, a teacher shall provide to a student in any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, who has been suspended from school for two (2) or more school days, the homework that the student would otherwise have been assigned.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2(b), if a homework assignment that is requested pursuant to Section 47606.2(a) and turned into the teacher by the student either upon the student's return to school from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, is not graded before the end of the academic term, that assignment shall not be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in the class.

Suspension by Executive Director, Principal or Principal's Designee

To implement disciplinary procedures at a school site, the principal may, in writing, designate as the principal's designee another administrator or, if the principal is the only administrator at the school site, a certificated employee. As necessary, the principal may, in writing, also designate another administrator or certificated employee as the secondary designee to assist with disciplinary procedures when the principal and the principal's primary designee are absent from the school site.

The Executive Director, principal, or designee shall immediately suspend any student found at school or at a school activity to have committed any of the acts listed in the Board policy under "Authority to Expel" and for which they are required to recommend expulsion.

The Executive Director, principal, or designee may impose a suspension for a first offense if they determine that the student violated any of the offenses listed under "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion: Grades K-12" above or if the student's presence causes a danger to persons.

For all other offenses, a student may be suspended only when the Executive Director or principal has determined that other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct in the student. Other means of correction include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) A conference between school personnel, the pupil's parent or guardian, and the pupil.
- (2) Referrals to the school counselor, psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, mental health therapist or other school support service personnel for case management and counseling.
- (3) Study teams, guidance teams, resource panel teams, or other intervention-related teams that assess the behavior, and develop and implement individualized plans to address the behavior in partnership with the pupil and his or her parents.
- (4) Referral for a comprehensive psychosocial or psychoeducational assessment, including for purposes of creating an individualized education program, adopted pursuant to Section 504.
- (5) Enrollment in a program for teaching prosocial behavior or anger management.
- (6) Participation in a restorative justice program.
- (7) A positive behavior support approach with tiered interventions that occur during the school day on campus.
- (8) After-school programs that address specific behavioral issues or expose pupils to positive activities and behaviors, including, but not limited to, those operated in collaboration with local parent and community groups.
- (9) Any of the alternatives described in Section 48900.6.

When other means of correction are implemented prior to imposing suspension or supervised suspension upon a student, the Executive Director, principal, or designee shall document the other means of correction used and retain them in the student's record. (Education Code 48900.5)

Length of Suspension

The Executive Director, principal, or designee may suspend a student from school for not more than five (5) consecutive school days. (Education Code 48911)

A student may be suspended from school for not more than 20 school days in any school year. However, if a student enrolls in or is transferred to another regular school, an opportunity school, or continuation school or class for the purpose of adjustment, the student may be suspended for not more than 30 school days in a school year. Aspire may count suspensions that occur while a student is enrolled in another school district toward the maximum number of days for which the student may be suspended in any school year.

These restrictions on the number of days of suspension shall not apply when the suspension is extended pending an expulsion.

Due Process Procedures for Suspension

Suspensions shall be imposed in accordance with the following procedures:

Informal Conference: Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the Executive Director, principal, or designee with the student and, whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor, or school employee who referred the student to the principal. At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action, presented with the available evidence against the student, and given the opportunity to present their version and evidence in support of their defense. This conference shall be held within two (2) 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. Penalties shall not be imposed on a student for failure of the student's parent or guardian to attend a conference with Charter School officials. Reinstatement of the suspended student shall not be contingent upon attendance by the student's parent/guardian, at the conference.

1. This conference may be omitted if the Executive Director, principal, or designee determines that an emergency situation exists involving 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 the conference. Administrative Actions: All requests for student suspension are to be processed by the principal or designee. A school employee shall report the suspension, including the name of the student and the cause for the suspension, to the Executive Director or designee. This is accomplished by entering this information into Aspire's electronic student information system.
2. Notice to Parents/Guardians: At the time of the suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by email, telephone, or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall also be notified in writing of the suspension.

This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice should state the date when the student may return to school following the suspension.

3. **Parent/Guardian Conference:** Whenever a student is suspended, school officials may request a meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the cause(s) and duration of the suspension, the school policy involved, and any other pertinent matter. If school officials request to meet with the parent/guardian, the notice may state that the law requires the parent/guardian to respond to such requests without delay. However, no penalties may be imposed on the student for the failure of the parent/guardian to attend such a conference. The student may not be denied reinstatement solely because the parent/guardian failed to attend the conference.
4. **Extension of Suspension:** If the Board is considering the expulsion of a suspended student from any school the Executive Director or designee may, in writing, extend the suspension until such time as the Board has made a decision, provided the following requirements are followed:
 - a. The extension of the original period of suspension is preceded by notice of such extension with an offer to hold a conference concerning the extension, giving the student an opportunity to be heard. In such instances, when the school has determined a suspension period will be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the student and the student's parent/guardian, unless the student and the student's parent/guardian fail to attend the conference.
 - b. The Executive Director or designee determines, following a meeting in which the student and the student's parent/guardian were invited to participate, that the student's presence at the school or at an alternative school would endanger persons or property or threaten to disrupt the instructional process.
 - c. If the student involved is a foster youth, the Executive Director or designee shall notify Aspire's liaison for foster youth of the need to invite the student's attorney and a representative of the appropriate county child welfare agency to attend the meeting.
 - d. If the student involved is a homeless child or youth, the Executive Director or designee shall notify Aspire's liaison for homeless students.

In lieu of or in addition to suspending a student, the Executive Director, principal, or designee may provide services or require the student to participate in an alternative disciplinary program designed to correct their behavior and keep them in school.

Suspension Appeals Process

A student or the student's parents or guardians may appeal suspension, other than expulsion, imposed upon a student for his or her school-related offenses. The family may appeal first in writing at the school level as directed to the principal. The principal or principal's designee will attempt to resolve the appeal and provide a written response within ten (10) school days.

If further appeal is desired, the appeal should be made to the Aspire Regional Office and should be directed to the Executive Director designee (Regional Director of Student Services) for resolution with a

written response within fifteen (15) school days. Based on the information submitted or requested, the RDSS may make one of the following decisions regarding the suspension:

- A. Uphold the suspension
- B. Determine that the suspension was not within school guidelines, overturn the suspension, and order that all records and documents regarding the disciplinary proceeding be destroyed. No information regarding the suspension will be placed in the student's permanent record, or shared with anyone not directly involved in the proceedings.

After appeal at this administrative level, if further review is desired, the appeal may be forwarded to the Aspire Executive and Compensation Committee for resolution with a written response within twenty (20) school days.

For any appeal that is denied, the parent/guardian may place a written rebuttal to the action in the student file.

Executive Director or Principal's Authority to Recommend Expulsion

Unless the Executive Director or principal determines that expulsion should not be recommended under the circumstances or that an alternative means of correction would address the conduct, they shall recommend a student's expulsion for any of the nondiscretionary expellable offense listed above

In determining whether or not to recommend the expulsion of a student, the Executive Director, principal, or designee shall act as quickly as possible to ensure that the student does not lose instructional time.

Student's Right to Expulsion Hearing

Any student recommended for expulsion shall be entitled to a hearing, as described herein, to determine whether the student should be expelled.

The hearing shall be held within 30 school days after the Executive Director, principal, or designee determines that the student has committed the act(s) that form the basis for the expulsion recommendation.

The student is entitled to at least one postponement of an expulsion hearing for a period of not more than 30 calendar days. The request for postponement shall be in writing. Any subsequent postponement may be granted at the Board's discretion.

If the Board finds it impractical during the regular school year to comply with these time requirements for conducting an expulsion hearing, the Executive Director or designee may, for good cause, extend the time period by an additional five school days. Reasons for the extension shall be included as a part of the record when the expulsion hearing is held.

If the Board finds it impractical to comply with the time requirements of the expulsion hearing due to a summer recess of Board meetings of more than two weeks, the days during the recess shall not be

counted as school days. The days not counted during the recess may not exceed 20 school days. Unless the student requests in writing that the expulsion hearing be postponed, the hearing shall be held not later than 20 calendar days prior to the first day of the next school year.

Once the hearing starts, all matters shall be pursued with reasonable diligence and concluded without unnecessary delay.

Stipulated Expulsion

After a determination that a student has committed an expellable offense, the Executive Director or Regional Director of Student Services may offer the student and the student's parent/guardian the option to waive a hearing and stipulate to the expulsion or to a suspension of the expulsion under certain conditions. The offer shall be made only after the student or the student's parent/guardian has been given written notice of the expulsion hearing.

The stipulation agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by the student and their parent/guardian. The stipulation agreement shall include notice of all the rights that the student is waiving, including the waiving of their right to have a full hearing and to consult legal counsel.

A stipulated expulsion agreed to by the student and their parent/guardian shall be effective upon approval by the Board. The Board reserves the right to accept, reject or alter a stipulated expulsion agreement.

Rights of Complaining Witness

An expulsion hearing involving allegations of sexual assault or sexual battery may be postponed for one school day in order to accommodate the special physical, mental, or emotional needs of a student who is the complaining witness.

Whenever the Executive Director or designee recommends an expulsion hearing that addresses allegations of sexual assault or sexual battery, they shall give the complaining witness a copy of Aspire's suspension and expulsion policy and regulation and shall advise the witness of their right to:

1. Receive five days' notice of their scheduled testimony at the hearing
2. Have up to two adult support persons of their choosing present at the hearing at the time they testify
3. Have a closed hearing during the time they testify

In cases where providing testimony in person would expose the witness to emotional and/or physical harm, the witness may submit a request to provide testimony in a written format to the hearing officer. Requests may be accompanied by any written documentation to support the claim of emotional and/or physical harm. The request to provide written documentation must be made at least 5 calendar days prior to the hearing date. The hearing officer shall have final authority to determine if testimony will be allowed to be made in written format.

Whenever any allegation of sexual assault or sexual battery is made, the Executive Director or designee shall immediately advise complaining witnesses and accused students to refrain from personal or telephone contact with each other during the time when an expulsion process is pending.

Written Notice of the Expulsion Hearing

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

- The date and place of the hearing
- A statement of the specific facts, charges, and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based
- A copy of Aspire'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 in Aspire to any other district or school in which the student seeks enrollment
 - This obligation applies when a student is expelled for acts other than those described in Education Code Section 48915 (a) or (c).
- An explanation of the opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or be represented by legal counsel or by a non-attorney adviser
 - Legal counsel means an attorney or lawyer who is admitted to the practice of law in California and is an active member of the State Bar of California.
 - Non-attorney adviser means an individual who is not an attorney or lawyer, but who is familiar with the facts of the case and has been selected by the student or student's parent/guardian to provide assistance at the hearing.
- An explanation of the right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
- An explanation of the opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing
- An explanation of the opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf, including witnesses

Additional Notice of Expulsion Hearing for Foster Youth and Homeless Students

If the student facing expulsion is a foster student, the Executive Director or designee shall also send notice of the hearing as required by Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J).

If the student facing expulsion is a homeless student, the Executive Director or designee shall also send notice of the hearing to Aspire's liaison for homeless students, and as required by Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J), at least 10 days prior to the hearing.

Any notice for these purposes may be provided by the most cost-effective method possible, including by email or a telephone call.

In an effort to expedite a hearing, the 10 day notice of hearing may be waived if the student and parent/guardian as well as the Hearing Officer mutually agree to such a waiver.

Alternative Expulsion Hearing: Hearing Officer or Administrative Panel

Instead of conducting an expulsion hearing itself, the Board may utilize an internal and impartial hearing officer, or may contract with the county hearing officer or with the Office of Administrative Hearings of the State of California for a hearing officer. The Board may also appoint an impartial administrative panel composed of three or more certificated personnel, none of whom shall be members of the Board or on the staff of the school in which the student is enrolled.

A hearing conducted by the hearing officer or administrative panel shall conform to the same procedures applicable to a hearing conducted by the Board as specified above in "Conduct of Expulsion Hearing," including the requirement to issue a decision within 40 school days of the student's removal from school, unless the student requests that the decision be postponed. The hearing shall be held in a confidential setting (complying with all student confidentiality rules under FERPA).

The hearing officer or administrative panel shall, within three (3) school days after the hearing, determine whether to recommend expulsion of the student to the Board. If expulsion is not recommended, the expulsion proceeding shall be terminated and the student shall be immediately reinstated and permitted to return to the classroom instructional program from which the referral was made, unless another placement is requested in writing by the student's parent/guardian. Before the student's placement decision is made by their parent/guardian, the Executive Director or designee shall consult with the parent/guardian and Aspire staff, including the student's teachers, regarding other placement options for the student in addition to the option to return to the classroom instructional program from which the student's expulsion referral was made. The decision to not recommend expulsion shall be final.

If expulsion is recommended, findings of fact in support of the recommendation shall be prepared and submitted to the Board. All findings of fact and recommendations shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. The Board may accept the recommendation based either upon a review of the findings of fact and recommendations submitted or upon the results of any supplementary hearing the Board may order.

In accordance with Board policy, the hearing officer or administrative panel may recommend that the Board suspend the enforcement of the expulsion. If the hearing officer or administrative panel recommends that the Board expel a student but suspend the enforcement of the expulsion, the student shall not be reinstated and permitted to return to the classroom instructional program from which the referral was made until the Board has ruled on the recommendation.

Conduct of Expulsion Hearing

1. Closed Session: The Board, Hearing Officer, or Administrative Panel shall conduct a hearing to consider the expulsion of the student in a session closed to the public unless the student requests in writing at least five days prior to the hearing that the hearing be a public meeting. If such a request is made, the meeting shall be public to the extent that privacy rights of other students are not violated.

Whether the expulsion hearing is held in closed or public session, the Board may meet in closed session to deliberate and determine whether or not the student should be expelled. If the Board admits any other person to this closed session, the parent/guardian, the student, and the counsel of the student also shall be allowed to attend the closed session.

If a hearing that involves a charge of sexual assault or sexual battery is to be conducted in public, a complaining witness shall have the right to have their testimony heard in closed session when testifying in public would threaten serious psychological harm to the witness and when there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm, including, but not limited to, videotaped deposition or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by closed-circuit television.

2. 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.
3. Subpoenas: Before commencing a student expulsion hearing, the Board may issue subpoenas, at the request of either the student or the Executive Director or designee, for the personal appearance at the hearing of any person who actually witnessed the action that gave rise to the recommendation for expulsion. After the hearing has commenced, the Board or the hearing officer or administrative panel may issue such subpoenas at the request of the student or the County CEO of Schools or designee. All subpoenas shall be issued in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure Sections 1985-1985.2 and enforced in accordance with Government Code Section 11455.20.

Any objection raised by the student or the Executive Director or designee to the issuance of subpoenas may be considered by the Board in closed session, or in open session if so requested by the student, before the meeting. The Board's decision in response to such an objection shall be final and binding.

If the Board determines, or if the hearing officer or administrative panel finds and submits to the Board, that a witness would be subject to unreasonable risk of harm by testifying at the hearing, a subpoena shall not be issued to compel the personal attendance of that witness at the hearing. However, that witness may be compelled to testify by means of a sworn declaration as described in item #4 below.

4. Presentation of Evidence: Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to the expulsion hearing, but relevant 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. The decision of the Board to expel shall 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. Although no finding shall be based solely on hearsay, sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses whose disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

In cases where a search of a student's person or property has occurred, evidence describing the reasonableness of the search shall be included in the hearing record.

5. Testimony by Complaining Witnesses: The following procedures shall be observed when a hearing involves allegations of sexual assault or sexual battery by a student:

The Board, Hearing Officer or Administrative Panel may, upon a finding of 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 that shall be examined only by the Board, Hearing Officer or Administrative Panel. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the student.

Any complaining witness shall be given a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of their right to (a) receive five (5) days' notice before being called to testify; (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons, including, but not limited to, a parent/guardian or legal counsel, present during their testimony; and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.

Before a complaining witness testifies, support persons shall be admonished that the hearing is confidential.

The person presiding over the hearing may remove a support person whom they find is disrupting the hearing.

If one or both support persons are also witnesses, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The entity 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 Hearing Officer or Administrative Panel from exercising their discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom they believe is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

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 hearing room during that testimony

Evidence of specific instances of prior sexual conduct of a complaining witness shall be presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard unless the person conducting the hearing determines that extraordinary circumstances require the evidence to be heard. Before such a determination is made, the complaining witness shall be given notice and an opportunity to oppose the introduction of this evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of this 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 a complaining witness shall not be admissible for any purpose.

In order to facilitate a free and accurate statement of the experiences of the complaining witness and to prevent discouragement of complaints, Aspire shall provide a non threatening environment.

- (1) Aspire shall provide a room separate from the hearing room for the use of the complaining witness before and during breaks in testimony.
- (2) At the discretion of the person conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed reasonable periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which the complaining witness may leave the hearing room.
- (3) The person conducting the hearing may:
 - (a) Arrange the seating within the hearing room so as to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness
 - (b) Limit the time for taking the testimony of a complaining witness to the hours they are normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours
 - (c) Permit one of the support persons to accompany the complaining witness to the witness stand
6. Decision: The Board's decision as to whether to expel a student shall be made within 40 school days after the student is removed from their school of attendance, unless the student requests in writing that the decision be postponed. The Board's decision shall be final.

Final Action by the Board

Whether the expulsion hearing is conducted in closed or public session by the Board, a hearing officer, or an administrative panel or is waived through the signing of a stipulated expulsion agreement, the final action to expel shall be taken by the Board in public.

The Board's decision is the final act within the jurisdiction of Aspire East Palo Alto Charter School. If the decision is to not expel, the student shall be reinstated immediately. If the decision is to suspend the enforcement of the expulsion, the student shall be reinstated under the conditions of the suspended expulsion.

Upon ordering an expulsion, the Board shall set a date when the student may apply for readmission to a school within Aspire. For a student expelled for any "mandatory recommendation and mandatory expulsion" act listed in the section "Authority to Expel" in the accompanying Board policy, this date shall be one year from the date the expulsion occurred, except that the Board may set an earlier date on a case-by-case basis. For a student expelled for other acts, this date shall be no later than the last day of the semester following the semester in which the expulsion occurred. If an expulsion is ordered during summer session or the intersession period of a year-round program, the Board shall set a date when the student shall be reviewed for readmission not later than the last day of the semester following the summer session or intersession period in which the expulsion occurred.

At the time of the expulsion order, the Board shall recommend a plan for the student's rehabilitation, which may include:

1. Periodic review, as well as assessment at the time of review, for readmission
2. Recommendations for improved academic performance, tutoring, special education assessments, job training, counseling, employment, community service, or other rehabilitative programs

With parent/guardian consent, students who have been expelled for reasons relating to controlled substances or alcohol may be required to enroll in a county-sponsored drug rehabilitation program before returning to school.

Written Notice to Expel

The Executive Director or designee shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including findings of fact, to the student and the student's parent/guardian. This notice shall include the following:

1. The specific offense committed by the student;
2. The fact that a description of readmission procedures will be made available to the student and their parent/guardian
3. Notice of the alternative educational placement to be provided to the student during the time of expulsion
4. 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 expelled status with Aspire
5. Notice that the student has the right to appeal Aspire's expulsion decision to the County Board of Education.

The Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the student's district of residence, upon finality of the expulsion. This notice shall include the following: (a) The student's name; and (b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

Decision to Suspend Expulsion Order

In accordance with Board policy, when deciding whether to suspend the enforcement of an expulsion order, the Board shall take into account the following criteria:

1. The student's pattern of behavior
2. The seriousness of the misconduct
3. The student's attitude toward the misconduct and their willingness to follow a rehabilitation program

The suspension of the enforcement of an expulsion shall be governed by the following:

1. The Board may, as a condition of the suspension of enforcement, assign the student to a school, class, or program appropriate for the student's rehabilitation. This rehabilitation program may provide for the involvement of the student's parent/guardian in the student's education. However, a parent/guardian's refusal to participate in the rehabilitation program shall not be considered in the Board's determination as to whether the student has satisfactorily completed the rehabilitation program.
2. During the period when enforcement of the expulsion order is suspended, the student shall be on probationary status.
3. The suspension of the enforcement of an expulsion order may be revoked by the Board, the Executive Director or a designee if the student commits any of the acts listed under "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion: Grades K-12" above or violates any of Aspire's rules and regulations governing student conduct.
4. When the suspension of enforcement of an expulsion order is revoked, a student may be expelled under the terms of the original expulsion order immediately.
5. Upon satisfactory completion of the rehabilitation assignment, the Board shall reinstate the student. Upon reinstatement, the Board may order the expunging of any or all records of the expulsion proceedings.
6. The Executive Director or designee shall send written notice of any decision to suspend the enforcement of an expulsion order during a period of probation to the student or parent/guardian. The notice shall inform the student and parent/guardian of their obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of their expelled status with Aspire.

Notification to Law Enforcement Authorities

Prior to the suspension or expulsion of any student, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts of assault which may have violated Penal Code Section 245.

The principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts which may involve the sale of narcotics or of a controlled substance, or of any student acts involving the possession, sale, or furnishing of firearms, explosives, or other dangerous weapons in violation of Education Code Section 48915(c)(1) or (5) or Penal Code Sections 626.9 and 626.10.

Placement During Term of Expulsion

The Board shall refer expelled students to a program of study that is:

1. Appropriately prepared to accommodate students who exhibit discipline problems
2. Not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior, or senior high school or at any elementary school, unless the program is offered at a community day school established at any of these
3. Not housed at the school site attended by the student at the time of suspension

The program for a student expelled from any of grades K-6 shall not be combined or merged with programs offered to students in any of grades 7-12.

Readmission After Expulsion

Prior to the date set by the Board for the student's readmission:

The student or parent/guardian is responsible for contacting the Executive Director or designee to request a readmission hearing. Upon receiving such a request, the Executive Director or designee shall hold a conference with the parent/guardian and the student. At the conference, the student's rehabilitation plan shall be reviewed and the Executive Director or designee shall verify that the provisions of this plan have been met. School regulations shall be reviewed and the student and parent/guardian shall be asked to indicate in writing their willingness to comply with these regulations.

The Executive Director or designee shall transmit to the Board their recommendation regarding readmission. The Board shall consider this recommendation in closed session. If a written request for an open session is received from the parent/guardian or adult student, it shall be honored to the extent that privacy rights of other students are not violated.

If the readmission is granted, the Executive Director or designee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the Board's decision regarding readmission.

Readmission and placement shall be at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee. Students are not guaranteed readmission into the educational program that the student had prior to expulsion.

The Board may deny readmission only if it finds that the student has not satisfied the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or that the student continues to pose a danger to campus safety or to other Aspire students or employees.

The Board shall provide written notice to the expelled student and parent/guardian describing the reasons for denying readmittance into the regular program. This notice shall indicate the Board's determination of the educational program which the Board has chosen. The student shall enroll in that program unless the parent/guardian chooses to enroll the student in another school district.

Students requesting admission following an expulsion from a non-Aspire school shall be required to submit all documentation to the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee shall have ten (10) school days to consider the readmission, schedule a meeting if necessary and respond with a decision regarding admission. The Executive Director or designee shall have final authority to admit or deny the student's request for admission.

No student shall be denied readmission into an Aspire school based solely on the student's arrest, adjudication by a juvenile court, formal or informal supervision by a probation officer, detention in a juvenile facility, enrollment in a juvenile court school, or other such contact with the juvenile justice system.

Maintenance of Records

Aspire shall maintain a record of each suspension and expulsion, including its specific cause(s). Expulsion records of any student shall be maintained in the student's mandatory interim record and sent to any school in which the student subsequently enrolls upon written request by that school.

The Executive Director or designee shall, within five working days, honor any other district's request for information about an expulsion from Aspire.

Notice to Teachers

The Charter School shall notify teachers of each student who has engaged in or is reasonably suspected to have engaged in any of the acts listed in Education Code Section 49079 and the corresponding enumerated offenses set forth above.

Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion or Involuntary Removal of Students with Disabilities

1. Notification of SELPA

The Charter School shall immediately notify the SELPA and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA of the discipline of any student with a disability or student that the Charter School or the SELPA would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability.

2. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in

another setting (which could constitute a change of placement and the student's IEP would reflect this change), and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504 Plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent/guardian to determine:

- a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan.

If the Charter School, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the Charter School, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

- a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b. If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- c. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent/guardian and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a direct result of the failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

3. Special Circumstances

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- a. Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C. Section 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- b. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

4. Due Process Appeals

The parent/guardian of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent/guardian or the Charter School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer in accordance with state and federal law, including 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k), until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, unless the parent/guardian and the Charter School agree otherwise.

In accordance with 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(3), if a parent/guardian disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or if the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the parent/guardian or Charter School may request a hearing.

In such an appeal, a hearing officer may: (1) return a child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed; or (2) order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

5. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 Team.

6. Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEA and who has violated the Charter School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.

The parent/guardian has requested an evaluation of the child.

The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

If the Charter School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If the Charter School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The Charter School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however, the student shall remain in the education placement determined by the Charter School pending the results of the evaluation.

The Charter School shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if the parent/guardian has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

Element 11: Employee Retirement Systems

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(K)

All employees of Aspire Public Schools who qualify for membership in the State Teachers’ Retirement System (“STRS”) or the Public Employees’ Retirement System (“PERS”) and Social Security shall be covered under the appropriate system. Employees will contribute at the rate established by STRS or PERS. In the event that PERS is unavailable to the Charter School's noncertificated employees, the Charter School will offer an alternative retirement plan (e.g. an employer-sponsored 403(b) account). Non-certificated employees will also participate in social security.

The Payroll and Human Resources Departments at Aspire will ensure that appropriate arrangements for the coverage have been made. Aspire will make all employer contributions as required. Aspire will also make contributions for workers’ compensation insurance, unemployment insurance and any other payroll obligations of an employer.

Element 12: Attendance Alternatives

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(L)

Pupils who choose not to attend the Charter School may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue inter-district transfers in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District. Parents or guardians of each pupil enrolled in the Charter School shall be informed that the pupil has no right to admission in a particular school of any local educational agency (LEA) (or program of any LEA) as a consequence of enrollment in the Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District. No student may be required to attend the Charter School.

Element 13: Post-employment Rights of Employees

“The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(M)

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School unless specifically and explicitly granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School, if any, will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.

No individual may be required to work for the Charter School. Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the District or any other school district will not be transferred to the Charter School. Employment by the Charter School provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

Element 14: Dispute Resolution Procedures

“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the chartering authority to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(N)

Procedures for Complaints against Charter School

The Charter School shall have an internal dispute resolution process to be used for all internal disputes related to the Charter School’s operations. The Charter School shall also maintain a Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures and Title IX Complaint Procedures as required by state and federal law, respectively. Parents, students, Board members, volunteers, and staff at the Charter School shall be provided with a copy of the Charter School’s policies and internal dispute resolution process. The District shall promptly refer all disputes not related to a possible violation of the charter or law to the Charter School.

Title IX

The Charter School will designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Section 504 including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School will notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

The Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 221.61 with respect to posting information regarding the filing complaints under Title IX, including but not limited to the following: 1) the name and contact information of the Title IX coordinator; 2) the rights of the pupil and the public and the responsibilities of the Charter School under Title IX; 3) a description of how to file a complaint under Title IX, including an explanation of the statute of limitations, how the complaint will be investigated and how the complainant may further pursue the complaint; and a link to the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights complaint form.

The Charter School will implement specific and continuing steps to notify applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipient, that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate in such a manner.

Complaints by Students and Employees

The Charter School will adopt and publish complaint procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action, which would be prohibited by Title IX, the Uniform Complaint Procedures, or Aspire's general complaint policy.

Disputes between the District and the Charter School

The Charter School recognizes that it cannot bind the District to a dispute resolution procedure to which the District does not agree. The following policy is intended as a starting point for a discussion of dispute resolution procedures. The Charter School is willing to consider changes to the process outlined below as suggested by the District.

The Charter School and the District will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures.

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the District, Charter School staff, employees and Board members of the Charter School and the District agree to first frame the issue in written format ("dispute statement") and to refer the issue to the District Superintendent and Principal of the Charter School, or their respective designees. In the event that the District Board of Education believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with Education Code Section 47607, the Charter School requests that this shall be noted in the written dispute statement, although it recognizes it cannot legally bind the District to do so. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or act as a pre-requisite to the District's ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations.

The Superintendent and Principal, or their respective designees, shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than five (5) business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two Board members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent and Principal, or their respective designees, and attempt to resolve the dispute within fifteen (15) business days from receipt of the dispute statement.

If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and Principal, or their respective designees, shall meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the parties in a mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and Principal, or their respective designees. Mediation shall be held within sixty (60) business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split equally between the District and the Charter School. If mediation does not resolve the dispute either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the District and the Charter School.

Element 15: Closure Procedures

“The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” – Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(O)

Closure of the Charter School will be documented by official action of the Board of Directors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Charter School will promptly notify parents and students of the Charter School, the District, the County Office of Education, the Charter School’s SELPA, the retirement systems in which the Charter School’s employees participate (e.g., Public Employees’ Retirement System, State Teachers’ Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils’ school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Charter School will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of the Charter School of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close the Charter School.

The Charter School will also develop a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils’ districts of residence, which it will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

As applicable, the Charter School will provide parents, students and the District with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the FERPA. The Charter School will ask the District to store original records of Charter School students. All student records of the Charter School shall be transferred to the District upon Charter School closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, the Charter School shall work with the County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as reasonably practical, the Charter School will prepare final financial records. The Charter School will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. The Charter

School will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the Charter School and will be provided to the District promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the Charter School.

The Charter School will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.

On closure of the Charter School, all assets of the Charter School, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the Charter School, remain the sole property of the nonprofit public benefit corporation. Upon the dissolution of the nonprofit public benefit corporation, all net assets shall be distributed to another public school that satisfies the requirements of paragraphs (a) through (e) of section III.A of Notice 2015-07 issued by the Internal Revenue Service and the Treasury Department entitled “Relief for Certain Participants in § 414(d) Plans” or any final regulations implementing 26 U.S.C. § 414(d) or to a State, political subdivision of a State, or agency or instrumentality thereof. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon Charter School closure to the District. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, the Charter School shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the Charter School.

As the Charter School is operated by a non-profit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the Charter School, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a non-profit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

As specified by the Budget in Appendix XVI, the Charter School will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

Required Supplemental Criteria

Budgets and Financial Reporting

***Governing Law:** The petitioner or petitioners also shall be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first year operational budget, including startup costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation. Education Code Section 47605(h).*

Attached, as Appendix XVI, please find the following documents:

- Budget narrative
- A projected budget
- Financial projections and cash flow for three years of operation

These documents are based upon the best data available to the petitioners at this time.

The Charter School shall provide reports to the District and County Superintendent of Schools as follows in accordance with Education Code Section 47604.33, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
2. By July 1, a local control and accountability plan and an annual update to the local control and accountability plan required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
3. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, California Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
4. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
5. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

The Charter School shall provide reporting to the District as required by law and as requested by the District including, but not limited to, the following: California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS), actual Average Daily Attendance reports, all financial reports required by Education Code Sections 47604.33 and 47605(m), the School Accountability Report Card (SARC), and the LCAP.

The Charter School agrees to and submits to the right of the District to make random visits and inspections in order to carry out its statutorily required oversight in accordance with Education Code Sections 47604.32 and 47607.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.3, the Charter School shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries including, but not limited to, inquiries regarding its financial records from the District.

Insurance

The Charter School shall acquire and finance general liability, workers' compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. Coverage amounts will be based on recommendations provided by the District and the Charter School's insurer. The District Board of Education shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School. A copy of Aspire's Evidence of Insurance is attached in Appendix XVII.

Administrative Services

Governing Law: The manner in which administrative services of the charter school are to be provided. Education Code Section 47605(h).

The Charter School will provide or procure its own administrative services including, but not limited to, financial management, accounts payable/receivable, payroll, human resources, and instructional program development either through its own staff or through an appropriately qualified third-party contractor.

Facilities

Governing Law: The facilities to be used by the charter school. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the charter school intends to locate. Education Code Section 47605(h).

EPACS currently operates within the geographic boundaries of the District. The Charter School is located at 1286 Runnymede Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94603. This facility has a sufficient number of classrooms, office space, and other shared spaces to effectively serve all students at the Charter School.

Transportation

The Charter School will not provide transportation to and from school, except as required by law.

Attendance Accounting

The Charter School will implement an attendance recording and accounting system, to ensure contemporaneous record keeping, which complies with state law.

Oversight

Pursuant to California law, the District will be required to provide oversight and performance monitoring services, including monitoring school and student performance data, reviewing the school's audit reports, performing annual site visits, engaging in any necessary dispute resolution processes, and considering charter amendment and renewal requests. In accordance with Education Code Section 47613(a), the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed one (1) percent of the revenue of the Charter School. The District may charge up to three (3) percent of the revenue of the Charter School if the Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47613(f), "revenue of the charter school" is defined as the amount received in the current fiscal year from the local control funding formula calculated pursuant to Education Code Section 42238.02, as implemented by Education Code Section 42238.03.

Potential Civil Liability Effects

Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and upon the school district. Education Code Section 47605(h).

The Charter School shall be operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d).

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), an authority that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the charter school if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. The Charter School shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other District-requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

Further, the Charter School intends to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the District, wherein the Charter School shall indemnify the District for the actions of the Charter School under this charter.

The corporate bylaws of Aspire shall provide for indemnification of the Charter School's Board, officers, agents, and employees, and the Charter School will purchase general liability insurance, Board Members and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

As stated above, insurance amounts shall be determined by recommendation of the Charter School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population. The District shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of the Charter School.

The Charter School Board shall institute appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.

Material Revisions and Amendments

This petition may be materially revised only by mutual agreement of the Charter School and the District. Material revisions will be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Sections 47605 and 47607.

Appendix

- I. Board Resolution Approving Submission of Charter Renewal Petition
- II. School Improvement Plan
- III. Sample School Calendar
- IV. Sample Bell Schedule
- V. Aspire's EL Master Plan
- VI. SELPA Membership
- VII. LCAP
- VIII. APS Articles of Incorporation
- IX. APS Bylaws
- X. APS Conflict of Interest
- XI. APS Proof of Tax Exempt Status
- XII. Aspire Board of Directors Biographies
- XIII. Uniform Complaint Procedure
- XIV. Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- XV. Aspire Student Learning Framework
- XVI. Financials
- XVII. Evidence of Insurance
- XVIII. Fiscal Control Policy
- XIX. APS Student Family Handbook
- XX. Verified Data