



SUNSHINE CHARTER SCHOOL



2026-2027

PARENT HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| School Daily Schedule | 01 |
| School Contact Details | 02 |
| Welcome Message from the Founder & CEO | 03 |
| Principal's Welcome Message | 04 |
| Our Mission | 05 |
| Our Vision..... | 06 |
| School Culture | 06 |
| Educational Philosophy..... | 07 |
| Our Core Values | 08 |
| Our Background..... | 11 |
| What is a Charter School? | 12 |
| School Organization | 13 |
| Board of Directors (BOD)..... | 13 |
| Executive Director | 13 |
| Leadership..... | 14 |
| Faculty | 14 |
| School Administration..... | 14 |
| Parent Engagement Opportunities | 15 |
| The Parent Circle | 15 |
| Parent Volunteer Opportunities | 16 |
| Kindness Inclusion and Diversity (K.I.D.) Committee | 16 |
| Finance Committee..... | 16 |
| Sunshine charter school Educational Foundation | 17 |
| Fundraising and Donations | 18 |
| The Curriculum | 20 |
| TK & Kindergarten..... | 20 |
| The Heart of Childhood..... | 21 |
| Specialty Classes..... | 21 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Games / Physical Education | 22 |
| Music | 22 |
| Handwork | 23 |
| Gardening | 23 |
| Cultural Studies | 23 |
| The Connection Between Home and School | 24 |
| The Parent-Teacher Partnership | 24 |
| Technology and Media Use | 25 |
| Rhythm and Rest | 25 |
| Festivals and Celebrations | 25 |
| School Procedures and Protocol | 29 |
| Drop-Off and Pick-Up | 29 |
| Parking | 31 |
| Walking or Riding a Bike Home | 31 |
| After-School Late Pick-up | 31 |
| Early Releases | 32 |
| Tardies | 33 |
| Attendance Policy | 35 |
| Meal Program | 37 |
| Communication and Problem Solving..... | 38 |
| Communication Resources for our Community | 38 |
| Parent/Student Communication during the School Day | 39 |
| Parent/Teacher Communication | 40 |
| Confidentiality | 42 |
| Questions/Concerns | 43 |
| Health..... | 44 |
| Immunizations | 44 |
| Health Exams and Screenings | 46 |
| Administration of Medication..... | 46 |
| Lice and Communicable Disease Protocol | 47 |
| Safety | 49 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Safety Drills..... | 49 |
| Safety Protocol | 50 |
| Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs | 51 |
| Proper Storage of Firearms | 52 |
| Campus Visitors | 52 |
| Child Abuse Reporting | 53 |
| Change in Student Information | 53 |
| Child Parent Liability for Student Conduct..... | 54 |
| Child Custody/Divorce..... | 55 |
| Excusing Your Child from Physical Activities..... | 56 |
| Student Assessment | 57 |
| Fall/Winter Reports | 57 |
| Year - End Reports..... | 57 |
| Annual State Assessments..... | 58 |
| Library Use | 58 |
| Lost and Found | 59 |
| Birthdays and Parties | 60 |
| Admissions/Enrollment | 60 |
| Birth Date Deadlines | 61 |
| Application Process | 62 |
| Admissions Process..... | 63 |
| Enrollment Process | 63 |
| Open Enrollment Period | 66 |
| Lottery Process..... | 66 |
| Applications Outside the Enrollment Period | 67 |
| Misrepresentation of Admission and Enrollment Information | 67 |
| School Policies and Guidelines | 68 |
| Code of Conduct Policy..... | 68 |
| Campus Behavior Regulations..... | 70 |
| Bullying Prevention Policy..... | 73 |
| Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan | 78 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Programs & Curriculum..... | 82 |
| Student Council..... | 84 |
| Student Dress Code | 89 |
| Volunteer Policy..... | 94 |
| Suspension and Expulsion Policy | 99 |
| INDEPENDENT STUDY BOARD POLICY | 122 |
| Student Technology Policy | 123 |
| Title I Parents Right to Know | 133 |
| Parent and Family Engagement Policy (GVOS)..... | 137 |
| Parent and Family Engagement Policy (GVRS) | 145 |
| UCP Policy and Form | 151 |
| Title IX Policy | 164 |
| Wellness Policy | 185 |
| School Calendar | 193 |

DAILY SCHEDULE

Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

Half Day Program - Two sessions offered

Morning Session : 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Afternoon Session : 12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Kindergarten - Grade 5

Weekly minimum day dismissal at 12:30p.m.

8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Grades 6 – 8

Minimum days scheduled as needed

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival & Drop-Off

- TK: Drop-off begins at 8:15 a.m.
- Kindergarten – Grade 5: Drop-off begins at 7:45 a.m.
- Instruction begins promptly at 8:30 a.m.
- Students are expected to arrive on time each day

Dismissal

- Regular dismissal follows the schedule above
- Minimum days and early dismissals are communicated in advance

Daily Morning Assembly

- Daily morning assembly for Grades K – 8
- Time: 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
- Focuses on community building, cultural celebration, and school values


After-School Programs

After-School Programs (Optional)

- Grades K–8: 3:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.
- Programs include academic support and enrichment
- Availability depends on enrolment and staffing

CONTACTS DETAILS

Physical Address


 2500 Marconi Avenue Sacramento, CA 95821

Email

Contact Email

 info@sunshinecharterschool.org


Governing Board Email


 GBoard@sunshinecharterschool.org

Website

 www.sunshinecharterschool.org

Contact

 (510) 514-0050

 (279) 224-4084

Parent / Student Handbook

This handbook is designed to help you better understand your school and its policies. Please read it thoroughly. If you have questions or comments, please share them with your child's teacher or ask in the office. Through direct communication and understanding we will serve the students and our community.

Welcome Message

from the Founder & CEO

Dear **Sunshine Charter School Families**,

Welcome to Sunshine Charter School. It is truly an honour and a joy to welcome you and your children into our school community.

Sunshine Charter School was founded with a deep belief that **every child deserves to be seen, valued, and supported** academically, emotionally, culturally, and linguistically. This school was created from lived experience, community voices, and a strong commitment to serve families who seek an education that respects identity, language, and potential while preparing students for success in the United States and beyond.

At Sunshine, we believe learning is strongest when students feel safe, respected, and connected. Our program is designed to provide a rigorous academic foundation while honouring students' home languages, cultures, and experiences. We understand that many families come to school with different educational journeys, and we are committed to meeting students where they are and helping them grow with confidence and pride.

Parents and families are essential partners in this journey. Your trust, involvement, and collaboration are at the heart of our success. We encourage open communication, shared responsibility, and active participation as we work together to support your child's growth and well-being.

This Parent Handbook is designed to help you understand our values, expectations, and daily practices. Please take time to review it carefully and never hesitate to reach out with questions or concerns. Our doors and hearts are always open.

Thank you for choosing Sunshine Charter School. We are grateful to walk this educational journey with you and look forward to a bright future together.

With respect and gratitude,

Mohammad Sami Nabizada
Founder & Chief Executive Officer
Sunshine Charter School

Principal's Welcome Message

Dear **Parents, Guardians, and Students,**

Welcome to a new school year at **Sunshine Charter School**. It is truly an honour to welcome you to our learning community and to begin this journey together.

To our new families, **welcome**. We are grateful that you have chosen Sunshine Charter School, and we look forward to building a strong partnership with you and your child.

At Sunshine Charter School, we are committed to providing a high-quality, tuition-free public education that is academically rigorous, culturally responsive, and grounded in respect, inclusion, and community. Our school is designed to support the whole child academically, socially, emotionally, and culturally while honouring each student's language, identity, and lived experiences.

We believe that students thrive when schools and families work together. Strong communication, mutual respect, and shared responsibility are at the heart of our school culture. This Parent Handbook is designed to serve as a helpful guide, outlining our policies, expectations, and procedures so that everyone has a clear understanding of how we work together to support student success.

Our dedicated teachers and staff are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment where students feel valued, challenged, and inspired to reach their full potential. We encourage families to stay actively involved, ask questions, attend school events, and communicate openly with our team.

Thank you for being a part of the Sunshine Charter School community. We are excited for the year ahead and look forward to a successful, joyful, and meaningful school year together.

With appreciation and commitment,

Principal

Sunshine Charter School



SUNSHINE CHARTER SCHOOL

2025 – 2026 Parent & Student Handbook

Please Note:

This Parent Handbook is available in Farsi-Dari and Pashto. Please contact the school's front office to request a copy.

یادداشت:

این کتاب راهنمای والدین به زبان های فارسی - دری و پشتو نیز تهیه و در دسترس می باشد. والدین و فامیل گرامی می توانند جهت دریافت نسخه مورد نظر خود، با دفتر اداری مکتب تماس حاصل نمایند.

The words “parent” and “parents” will be used throughout this document. These terms should be considered the same as a legal “guardian” or “guardians.”

Mission Statement



Mission Statement: Sunshine Charter School's mission is to create an academically rigorous and culturally enriching learning environment that prepares students for success in college, careers, and life. We graduate multilingual, lifelong learners who are intellectually curious, culturally competent, and globally minded. Rooted in equity and character education, our students develop strong moral values, a sense of responsibility to their community and the environment, and the skills to become real-world problem solvers. Sunshine Charter School empowers students with the knowledge, confidence, and experiences needed to thrive in a diverse society and to contribute meaningfully to an inclusive and united community.

Vision Statement



Sunshine Charter School will be recognized as a national leader in multilingual public education. We will provide an outstanding and innovative immersion program in Farsi-Dari, Pashto, and English that inspires students to achieve their fullest potential.

Our vision is to cultivate compassionate, resilient, and globally minded citizens who not only excel academically but also develop the cultural understanding, problem-solving skills, and confidence to lead in an interconnected world. By fostering equity, creativity, and a deep respect for diverse perspectives, Sunshine Charter School will empower students to make meaningful contributions to their communities and beyond.

School Culture



The culture of Sunshine Charter School reflects the Charter School's mission, values, and the harmonious integration of Eastern and Western educational philosophies. The physical school environment is designed to represent this balance, hallways and classrooms feature trilingual signage (English, Farsi-Dari, and Pashto) and artwork that

highlights the beauty, diversity, and cultural richness of Afghanistan.

Classrooms are decorated with culturally relevant materials in both languages of instruction, celebrating Afghan heritage while promoting inclusivity and global awareness.

Educational Philosophy



Sunshine Charter School’s educational philosophy is grounded in the belief that every child is capable of high achievement when provided with meaningful, engaging, and culturally responsive learning experiences. We believe learning occurs best in environments that nurture curiosity, creativity, and emotional well-being while honouring each student’s background, language, and identity.

SCS views education as a holistic process that develops both the mind and character. Our instructional model rooted in the Highly Effective Teaching (“HET”) framework connects academics to real-life experiences through hands on, brain-compatible learning. Students learn by exploring concepts, asking questions, and applying knowledge in authentic ways. By integrating dual language immersion, social emotional learning, and family engagement, SCS fosters lifelong learners who are confident, compassionate, and prepared to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

Our Core Values

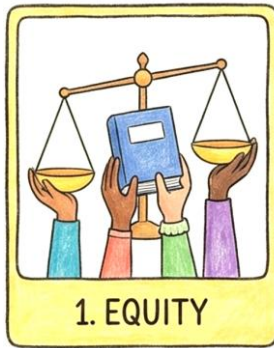
At Sunshine Charter School, our core values guide every decision we make, every classroom we build, and every relationship we nurture. These values reflect our deep commitment to serving students with excellence, honouring their identities, and partnering with families and communities to support lifelong success.



Our educational model is grounded in the following core values:

1. Equity
2. Multilingualism
3. Community
4. Academic Excellence

1. Equity



We believe every child deserves access to a high-quality education, regardless of language background, immigration status, learning history, or life circumstances.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to equity by meeting students where they are and providing the individualized support, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive. We recognize that fairness does not mean sameness and we intentionally design instruction, interventions, and supports to close opportunity gaps and ensure all students can succeed.

2. Multilingualism



We believe multilingualism is a strength and a powerful asset for academic, cultural, and personal growth.

Sunshine Charter School values students' home languages and is committed to developing strong proficiency in both English and partner languages. Through intentional language instruction and culturally responsive teaching, students build biliteracy, deepen their identity, and gain the skills needed to navigate and contribute confidently in a multilingual world.

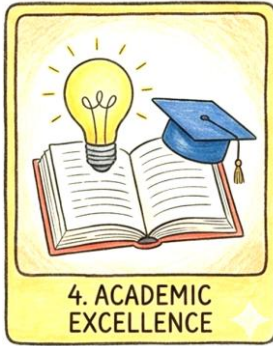
3. Community



Education is a shared responsibility built on trust, partnership, and collaboration.

Sunshine Charter School actively fosters strong relationships among students, families, educators, and community members. We honour families as essential partners in learning and create welcoming spaces where voices are heard, cultures are respected, and collective responsibility supports student success.

4. Academic Excellence



We hold high expectations for all students and believe every learner can achieve at high levels when provided with strong instruction, meaningful support, and a nurturing environment.

Sunshine Charter School delivers rigorous, engaging, and student-centered learning experiences that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and intellectual curiosity. Our commitment to academic excellence prepares students for future educational pathways, careers, and lifelong learning.

Living Our Values



At Sunshine Charter School, these core values are not just statements they are lived daily through our instructional practices, school culture, family partnerships, and commitment to student growth. Together, they form the foundation of a school where students feel valued, empowered, and prepared to shine.

Our Background:

Sunshine Charter School is built on a long-standing commitment to quality education, strong values, and close partnership with families.

Our roots trace back to Sunshine Private School in Kabul, Afghanistan, founded by parents and educators who believed that every child deserves access to a safe, nurturing, and high-quality education even during times of instability. What began in a small facility quickly earned the trust of families through strong academics, caring teachers, and a supportive school culture.

Over time, Sunshine School became a highly successful and respected educational network, growing into a respected TK–12 institution and serving thousands of students over 18 years. Many graduates went on to higher education, earning scholarships and becoming leaders in their communities. A key part of this success was the school's focus on supporting students with interrupted education through targeted academic support programs.

Building on this foundation, members of the Sunshine education leadership team later established Sunshine College and Sunshine University, which together served and graduated thousands of students across various fields of study at the bachelor's and master's levels. Sunshine University expanded to multiple campuses in Kabul and became known for preparing graduates for meaningful careers in both public and private sectors, particularly in fields such as Computer Science, Business, and Law.

After moving to Sacramento, Mohammad Sami Nabizada, one of the founders of the Sunshine education network, heard similar concerns from immigrant and refugee families, including language barriers, cultural disconnect, and students falling behind academically. In response, Sunshine Charter School was created to bring a proven, culturally responsive educational model to the local community through a Farsi-Dari and English dual-language immersion program, Pashto as a world language, and strong family engagement.

Today, Sunshine Charter School seeks to carry forward a trusted legacy of educational excellence, inclusion, and community partnership. We are honored to serve our families and work together to support every child's success.

What Is a Charter School?



A charter school is a public school that provides instruction to students in grades Kindergarten through 12. Like other public schools, charter schools are tuition-free, open to all eligible students, and accountable to state academic standards.

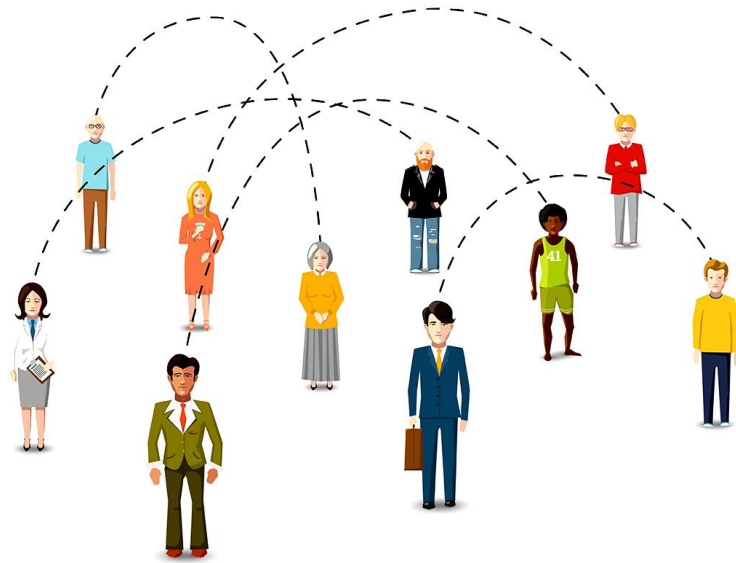
Charter schools are typically founded by educators, parents, and community leaders and are authorized by a local school district or county office of education. The school's mission, goals, and operating practices are outlined in a formal agreement, known as a charter, between the authorizing agency and the charter school.

Charter schools have flexibility in how they design and implement their educational programs while remaining accountable for student learning and fiscal responsibility. Students attending charter schools participate in the same statewide assessments as students in traditional public schools, including the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), as required by law.

Parents and guardians have the right, under specified conditions, to request that their child not participate in state testing. Sunshine Charter School respects and upholds this parental right in accordance with California law.

Public charter schools are required to be nonsectarian in all programs and operations. They may not charge tuition and may not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

School Organization



Board of Directors (BOD)

Our schools are governed collaboratively by our Board of Directors, which is made up of parents and community members. The Board of Directors is the legal and fiscal body of our school organization, responsible for ensuring that the school's policies are consistent with the Mission, Vision, and Values of the organization, approving budgets, and for overseeing the Executive Director. Board of Directors meetings are open to the public, and parents are encouraged to attend.

 Email: BOD@sunshinecharterschool.org

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) serves as the lead executive of Sunshine Charter School and provides overall leadership and strategic direction. The CEO supports and supervises school leadership, maintains collaborative working relationships with the authorizing school district, and guides the school through planning, implementation, and growth.

The CEO works closely with external consultants on budgeting, financial planning, and the annual audit. School principals report to the CEO. The CEO serves as the primary liaison between the school and the authorizing district, state agencies, and partner organizations. All roles and responsibilities are subject to the Governing Board for review and approval.

School Leadership Team

The School Leadership Team supports the day-to-day and long-term operations of the school and may include the school principal(s), compliance personnel, and other administrative staff as needed. This team collaborates to support instructional quality, student services, school operations, and compliance.

The Leadership Team meets regularly to review school processes, discuss student and school-wide needs, and plan for continuous improvement. Roles and team composition may evolve during the planning year and as the school grows.

Faculty: TK–Kindergarten and Classroom Teachers

The purpose of Sunshine Charter School is to meet the academic, social, and developmental needs of all students. Our faculty plays a central role in fulfilling this mission by implementing a curriculum aligned with California state standards and tailored to support diverse learners.

All full-time, credentialed teachers meet regularly to collaborate on instructional practices, discuss student progress, and plan school activities and events. Faculty responsibilities include supporting positive student behavior, sharing best practices, strengthening curriculum implementation, and monitoring student learning and growth. Lead teachers are responsible for daily classroom instruction, maintaining attendance records, and completing student report cards. They also serve as the primary point of contact for parents and guardians, maintaining open communication, and working closely with families to support student success.

School Administration

School administration at Sunshine Charter School is responsible for supporting the day-to-day operations of the school and fostering a safe, organized, and welcoming learning environment. School administration is expected to include the principal and office support staff, who work collaboratively with teachers, students, and families.

The principal serves as the instructional and operational leader of the school and acts as a primary point of contact for families regarding school-related matters, including communication, student support, and coordination of school activities. Office staff support daily operations and family communication to help ensure a positive school experience for all students.

Parent Engagement Opportunities

Sunshine Parent Circle

Sunshine Charter School values families as essential partners in their children's education. To strengthen this partnership, Sunshine Charter School has a Sunshine Parent Circle (SPC). Every parent or guardian of a Sunshine student is considered a member of the Parent Circle.

Parent Circle representatives are selected by classroom groups and, together, choose a Parent Circle Chair each year. The Chair may appoint additional officers, such as Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, to support the work of the Parent Circle. The primary purpose of the Sunshine Parent Circle is to organize parent volunteers, support school activities, and foster a strong sense of belonging and connection among families. The Parent Circle helps build a welcoming school community where families feel informed, involved, and valued.

Parent Circle meetings are typically held monthly at the school site. The Parent Circle Chair meets regularly with the School Principal or school leadership to coordinate activities, discuss upcoming events, and support school priorities. All Parent Circle–led events must be submitted for approval through the school's event calendar process.

The Sunshine Parent Circle may maintain a bank account to support approved activities and initiatives that benefit the school community.

Examples of Parent Circle activities may include:

- Back-to-School gatherings and family picnics
- Cultural and art activities for parents and families
- Family game nights and community events
- Teacher and staff appreciation activities
- Supporting school celebrations and cultural events
- Welcoming families and visitors during special school days
- Volunteering during school-wide events, festivals, or service days

Through the Sunshine Parent Circle, families play an active role in strengthening our school community and supporting student success.

 Email: Pc@sunshinecharterschool.org

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

Sunshine Charter School values family involvement as a vital part of our school community. Families are encouraged to participate in volunteer opportunities throughout the school year in ways that support school programs, events, and community building.

Volunteer opportunities are coordinated through the Sunshine Parent Circle and are designed to be flexible and inclusive, with options available both on campus and off site. Sunshine Charter School recognizes that families have varying schedules and responsibilities, and participation in volunteer activities is entirely voluntary.

Family involvement strengthens our school culture and supports student success. We deeply appreciate the time, talents, and commitment families choose to share with the Sunshine Charter School community.

Kindness, Inclusion & Diversity (K.I.D.) Committee

The Kindness, Inclusion and Diversity Committee comprises faculty, staff and families working collaboratively to advocate, educate and support inclusiveness in our community. The committee encourages opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to grow in their own understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Email: Diversity@sunshinecharterschool.org

Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Directors. The committee supports the Board in reviewing budgets, fiscal policies, audit services, and financial planning. Meetings are conducted in accordance with applicable open meeting laws and are open to the public.

Committee membership may include Board members and, as appropriate, non-Board participants with relevant expertise.

Sunshine Charter School – Nonprofit Status & Fundraising



Sunshine Charter School is operated by a nonprofit public benefit organization that is registered with the California Secretary of State and recognized as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, subject to final authorization and approval.

As a nonprofit organization, Sunshine Charter School may receive charitable donations and conduct fundraising activities to support school programs, student services, and community initiatives. All donations, whether in the form of cash, materials, equipment, or services, are accepted by the school in accordance with applicable laws and sound financial practices.

Fundraising activities are coordinated by school leadership and may involve families, staff, and community partners. All funds received are properly accounted for and used solely to support the educational mission of Sunshine Charter School.

Additional information about donations and fundraising opportunities will be shared with families throughout the school year.



Visit our webpage for more information: www.sunshinecharterschool.org

Fundraising and Donations



Like all California public schools, Sunshine Charter School receives state funding to support its educational programs. However, state funding alone is not always sufficient to fully meet the needs of our students. To enhance classroom resources, support enrichment activities, and help fund field trips and special programs, families and community members may choose to provide additional support through fundraising and donations.

Families may support Sunshine Charter School in the following ways:

- Making voluntary charitable donations directly to Sunshine Charter School
- Participating in school-wide or class-based fundraising activities
- Supporting fundraising efforts coordinated in collaboration with the Sunshine Parent Circle

All donations and fundraising proceeds are used solely to support educational programs and student experiences and are managed in accordance with applicable laws and sound financial practices.

Participation in fundraising and donations is voluntary, and all families are valued as members of the Sunshine community regardless of their ability to contribute financially.

Annual Giving Campaign

The **Annual Giving Campaign (AGC)** is Sunshine Charter School's primary fundraising effort. Families are invited to participate by making voluntary donations, annual pledge gifts, and/or corporate matching contributions to support classroom resources, enrichment programs, and student learning experiences.

While all contributions are voluntary, the school encourages **100% family participation at any level**, as every contribution regardless of amount helps strengthen our school community and programs.

Additional information about the Annual Giving Campaign will be shared with families throughout the school year.

Types of Fundraisers

All fundraising activities conducted on behalf of Sunshine Charter School fall into the following categories:

Annual Giving Campaign (AGC)

The school's primary fundraising initiative, inviting voluntary family donations and corporate matching throughout the year.

Large-Scale Fundraising Activities

School-wide or community-supported efforts such as major events, grant applications, corporate donations, or capital campaigns.

School-Wide Fundraisers

Events involving the entire school community that raise funds and build connections, such as festivals, family events, or dine-and-donate opportunities.

Class Fundraisers

Fundraisers organized by individual classes, with all proceeds benefiting that class. Class fundraisers require prior approval from school administration and are limited in number per grade level. All fundraising activities are managed in accordance with school policies, applicable laws, and sound financial practices. **All fundraising activities are subject to Governing Board oversight and approval.**

The Curriculum



TK & Kindergarten

Sunshine Charter School's Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Kindergarten program is designed to provide a warm, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment that supports a wide range of meaningful activities. The program emphasizes play-based learning experiences such as watercolor painting, beeswax modeling, sewing, handwork, storytelling, puppet shows, and imaginative play. These activities are intended to nurture creativity, social development, and a love of learning.

As preparation for the more structured curriculum in the upper grades, practical activities in the kitchen, garden, and classroom are incorporated as developmentally appropriate. Through observing, imitating, and engaging in real-life experiences, children begin to build independence, responsibility, and confidence.

The activities described above are examples of play-based, developmentally appropriate learning experiences and may vary based on student needs, staff expertise, and instructional planning.

The Heart of Childhood



Imagination

As children prepare to transition from kindergarten into elementary grades, their learning evolves from imitation toward deeper engagement through imagination.

At this stage of development, children begin to explore the world with greater awareness and curiosity, using imagination as a powerful tool for understanding and meaning making.

Instruction during this phase is designed to support students' growing capacity to form mental images, connect ideas, and engage in deeper learning experiences that lay the foundation for future academic growth.

Specialty Classes

Specialty classes are an important component of the Sunshine Charter School curriculum and are designed to support students' physical, social, emotional, and creative development. These classes complement classroom instruction and provide students with opportunities to explore learning through movement, music, creativity, and hands-on experiences.

Games / Physical Education

Physical Education is an essential part of a well-rounded education. Through planned movement and physical activity, students develop strength, coordination, balance, and overall physical well-being. Instruction is designed to meet students' natural need for movement through age-appropriate games and activities that build basic motor skills such as running, jumping, climbing, turning, and coordination. Emphasis is placed on sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, and positive social interaction rather than competition.

As students progress through the upper grades, physical education activities may include more structured movement experiences and school-based or interschool activities that promote teamwork, endurance, and personal growth.

Music

Music is introduced as a meaningful form of expression and communication, similar to another language that students grow to understand, enjoy, and appreciate over time. Through singing together, students develop listening skills, collaboration, and a sense of connection with others.

Beginning in the elementary grades, students may engage in singing and age-appropriate instrumental instruction that supports the exploration of rhythm, language, and melody. As students advance, instruction expands to include simple harmony, ensemble participation, and guided choral experiences.

Over time, students become familiar with basic music notation and participate in musical activities that reflect the cultural backgrounds and languages of the school community. The music program supports creativity, discipline, teamwork, and confidence while fostering a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

Handwork

Handwork at Sunshine Charter School is designed to develop alongside students as they grow, supporting fine motor skills, focus, creativity, and perseverance. Beginning in the early grades, students are introduced to hands-on activities that explore materials, color, form, and practical creation.

As students progress through the elementary grades, handwork experiences may expand to include techniques such as knitting, crochet, stitching, and other fiber-based projects that require increased

coordination, patience, and attention to detail. In later grades, students may engage in more complex handwork and woodworking projects that encourage planning, problem-solving, and creative expression. In the middle grades, handwork activities may include hand sewing, machine sewing, and advanced practical projects. Through creating items that are both functional and meaningful, students experience a sense of accomplishment, confidence, and pride in their work.

Gardening

Gardening instruction is designed to provide students with hands-on learning experiences that connect academic concepts to the natural world. Beginning in elementary grades, students may be introduced to gardening in developmentally appropriate ways, including activities such as planting, harvesting, composting, seed saving, and caring for garden spaces.

Through gardening, students develop responsibility, observation skills, patience, and an understanding of natural systems. These experiences support cognitive development, problem-solving, and early mathematical concepts while fostering respect for the environment and sustainable practices.

Cultural Studies

Cultural Studies provides students with meaningful exposure to diverse languages, traditions, and cultural practices. Through songs, stories, traditions, and daily language use, students develop curiosity, cultural awareness, and respect for different ways of life. As students progress through the grades, Cultural Studies may expand to include listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and conversation. The program supports language development, global understanding, and social-emotional growth, helping students become confident, culturally responsive learners in a diverse and interconnected community.

The Connection Between Home and School



The Parent–Teacher Partnership

At Sunshine Charter School, we believe that a strong partnership between families and teachers is essential to a child’s success. The family plays a central role in a child’s growth and development, and the school works to support and build upon the foundation established at home.

When families and educators work together, children benefit most. Consistency between home and school helps students feel secure, supported, and ready to learn. Simple routines, healthy nutrition, adequate rest, and balanced daily rhythms at home all contribute positively to a child’s focus, behavior, and overall well-being at school.

Limiting excessive screen time, encouraging meaningful conversations, reading together, and supporting creative and hands-on experiences at home help children fully engage in the learning opportunities provided at school. These practices allow students to benefit more deeply from classroom instruction, storytelling, artistic activities, and collaborative learning.

Sunshine Charter School values open communication and collaboration with families. Together, parents and teachers form a team dedicated to nurturing each child’s academic growth, social development, and emotional well-being.

Technology and Media Use

Sunshine Charter School recognizes that technology and media are a part of modern life however, research shows that excessive screen time can negatively impact children's attention, sleep, behavior, and overall development especially in the early years.

To support healthy development and effective learning, we encourage families to **limit their children's use of media and technology at home**, including television, computers, tablets, video games, and personal devices. Reducing screen time helps children remain more focused, imaginative, and engaged in hands-on learning experiences at school.

By creating balance at home prioritizing rest, reading, conversation, creative play, and family time students are better prepared to benefit from the rich academic, artistic, and social experiences offered at Sunshine Charter School.

We appreciate families' partnership in supporting healthy habits that promote student well-being and success.

Rhythm and Rest

Providing children with consistent daily rhythms such as regular chores, family meals, and set bedtimes within daily and weekly routines helps them develop self-discipline and a strong sense of security that supports lifelong well-being.

In today's busy and fast-paced world, it is easy to forget the importance of rest and "down time." Children benefit greatly from unstructured time to relax, reflect, and recharge. When children are well rested, they come to school better able to focus, learn, and participate fully in classroom activities.

Most children need **nine to eleven hours of sleep each night**, depending on their age. Establishing healthy sleep routines at home plays an important role in supporting academic success and overall development.

Festivals and Celebrations

Throughout the school year, Sunshine Charter School may host a variety of festivals and special events designed to build community, celebrate culture, and create a positive yearly rhythm for students. These celebrations provide opportunities for students and families to come together

through shared experiences such as storytelling, music, art, food, and cultural activities. Sunshine Charter School values cultural diversity and honors the backgrounds of the families we serve. As part of our commitment to inclusion and cultural understanding, the school may recognize and celebrate important cultural and seasonal events, including but not limited to:

- Nowruz (Persian New Year) – celebrating themes of renewal, hope, and new beginnings
- Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha – recognized as important cultural traditions observed by many families in our community
- Afghan Culture Day – highlighting Afghan history, language, music, clothing, and traditions
- Multicultural and Community Celebrations – honoring the diverse cultures represented in the school

All celebrations are educational and cultural in nature and are designed to promote respect, inclusion, and appreciation for diverse traditions. Participation is inclusive and respectful of all students and families. Sunshine Charter School remains nonsectarian in all programs and activities. In addition to school-wide events, teachers may incorporate classroom-based celebrations connected to cultural studies, seasonal themes, or instructional units throughout the year.

Opening Day – Welcome Celebration

The school year may begin with an Opening Day Welcome Celebration designed to create a warm and welcoming start for students and families. This event brings together students, families, teachers, and staff in a spirit of unity, excitement, and community.

Activities may include singing, music, movement, and age-appropriate celebrations, as well as welcoming messages from school leaders. Additional activities may include student performances, cultural expressions, and opportunities for families to connect with teachers and staff. The Opening Day celebration is designed to help students feel safe, supported, and excited to begin the school year while strengthening the connection between home and school.

Year-End – Closing Celebration

Sunshine Charter School may conclude the school year with a year-end celebration that reflects the character and spirit of the school community. This event provides an opportunity for students, families, and staff to reflect on learning, growth, and shared experiences throughout the year.

Festival of Light

The Festival of Light is a school-centered, seasonal celebration that may take place during the fall. The event focuses on reflection, togetherness, and seasonal awareness and is open to the school community.

Journey Around the World

Journey Around the World is a multicultural celebration that may feature student work, storytelling, music, food, and hands-on activities. This event is designed to celebrate cultural diversity and encourage participation from families and community members.

May Festival & Hamdeli (Unity and Empathy) Community Picnic

The May Festival and Hamdeli Community Picnic may take place in the spring and is designed to bring together students, families, staff, and community members in a joyful celebration of unity and connection.

Activities may include music, dance, student performances, cultural expressions, and interactive experiences that reflect the diversity of the school community. The celebration may be followed by a family picnic, providing time for connection and community building.

The purpose of this event is to promote hamdeli a sense of empathy, solidarity, and belonging by strengthening relationships across the school community.

Kindergarten and 8th Grade Graduation Ceremonies



Sunshine Charter School may celebrate important educational milestones through graduation ceremonies for Kindergarten and 8th Grade students. These events honor students as they transition to the next stage of their educational journey.

Students may be recognized individually and celebrated through certificates, music, student performances, and encouraging messages from teachers and school leaders. Families are warmly invited to attend, and celebrations may include opportunities for community connection.

Graduation ceremonies may be held on campus or at an appropriate community venue, depending on space and planning needs.

School Procedures and Protocols

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up

To ensure the safety of all students, families, and staff, Sunshine Charter School has established the following Drop-Off and Pick-Up procedures. Your cooperation is essential in keeping our campus safe and traffic flowing smoothly.

Designated Drop-Off and Pick-Up Loop (“Safety Zone”)

All students must be dropped off and picked up in the designated loop unless a parent or guardian parks in an approved parking space and walks onto campus to drop off or pick up their child.

We understand that traffic congestion may occur during peak times. Please follow the guidelines below to help keep everyone safe and minimize delays.

Keep Moving

- Pull into the loop on the side closest to the school.
- Drop off or pick up your child promptly.
- Pull forward and exit the loop as soon as your child has safely entered or exited the vehicle.

Stay Right

- The right lane of the loop is for drop-off and pick-up only.
- Do not drop off or pick up students in the left lane.
- Drivers in the right lane should pull forward as space becomes available to allow vehicles behind them to enter the loop.
- The left lane may be used only for exiting the loop after your child has been picked up.
- Please do not pass vehicles on the right or cut into the line.

No Parking in the Loop

- Parking or waiting in the loop is not permitted.
- This rule applies daily from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m..
- Following this rule ensures the loop remains accessible and safe for all families.

Thank you for your patience, cooperation, and commitment to keeping our school community safe.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Drop-Off Procedures

- Whenever possible, parents and guardians are encouraged to park in the parking lot or on the street and walk onto campus to drop off their child.
- Families are encouraged to arrive 10 minutes before the start of the school day to allow students time to transition smoothly from home to school.
- School personnel are available to supervise students 15 minutes before the start of the school day.
- Parents and guardians are responsible for the supervision and welfare of their children until 15 minutes before the school day begins.

Pick-Up Procedures

- Parents and guardians are expected to pick up their child promptly at the end of the school day.
- Student supervision ends 15 minutes after the school day concludes.
- If a child is not picked up on time, the school will make every effort to contact the parent, guardian, or emergency contact listed on the Emergency Card.
- All students not picked up by 3:25 p.m. must be signed out by a parent, guardian, or authorized emergency contact. A record will be kept of all late pick-ups.
- If no authorized contact can be reached, the school may contact the Sheriff's Department or Child Protective Services (CPS) to ensure the child's safety.
- Students are not permitted to remain on campus after school hours unless they are:
 - Attending a school-sponsored activity with a parent or guardian, or
 - Enrolled in an After-School Enrichment or Aftercare Program.

Please refer to the **After-School Pick-Up Policy** for additional details.

Parking

We encourage parents to park and walk up to campus to drop off and pick up their children. This fosters community and safety. However, we do ask that you please be courteous to our neighbors when parking on the street. Do not block driveways even “just for a minute.”

Walking or Riding a Bike Home

If your child lives close enough to the school to walk or ride a bike home, parents must provide the school office with a permission note that includes the child’s route home and a parent signature. This permission note must be updated at the beginning of each school year. Ask the school office support staff for details.

After-School Late Pick-up

School is released daily at 12:00 pm for transitional Kindergarten, 3:30 pm for 1st-8th grade. Unless students are participating in an authorized pre-arranged, school sponsored activity, they must be picked up at dismissal time. Students who are not picked up 15 minutes after school dismissal will be brought to the office and staff will call ALL contacts on the student’s Emergency Card until someone can be reached. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide up-to-date contact information, including information for individuals other than the parent(s)/guardian(s) who are authorized to pick up the child.

Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the student’s Emergency Card on file in the school office at the time of pick-up. This includes carpool and daycare drivers. All parent(s)/guardians(s) and people authorized to pick-up students must go into the office and sign the Late Pick-up Log. The office will verify identity before releasing the student. Remember students will not be released to anyone who is not currently listed on the Emergency Card. School staff and personnel are unable to provide supervision for students after school. As stated in Penal Code Section 11165.2, it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student to provide care and supervision. If students are left in the office beyond 30 minutes from the end of any school day, we may have no choice but to report the concern to law enforcement or Child Protective Services.

Procedure for Repeated Late Pick-ups

- **Verbal reminders to the parent(s)/guardian(s) from the school staff, as appropriate**
 - **Letters/emails sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) communicating the number of Late Pick-ups**
 - **SART (Student Attendance Review Team) meeting to discuss attendance**
 - **Possible call to law enforcement or Child Protective Services**
-

Early Releases

Children will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the student's Emergency Card on file in the school office - this includes carpool and daycare drivers. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide up-to-date information for the Emergency Card. Children will be brought to the office to be signed out by the authorized person signing the Early Release Log. The office will verify identity before releasing the student.

Process for Early Dismissals

If your child needs to be taken out of school before the regular dismissal:

- **Send a note to the teacher clearly stating the expected time of Early Dismissal and who is expected to be picking them up.**
- **Come to the office to sign your student out with your photo ID for identity verification.**
- **Do not go to the classroom to get your child.**
- **The office will call for your child.**
- **Expect to wait in the office until after morning/lunch recess is over as necessary.**
- **Students will not be released to anyone not listed on the Emergency Card.**
- **The students must be signed back into school if they return before school is dismissed.**

Procedure for Repeated Early Dismissals

- Verbal reminders to the parent(s)/guardian(s) from the school staff, as appropriate
 - Letters/emails sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) communicating the number of Early Releases
 - SART (Student Attendance Review Team) meeting to discuss attendance
-

Tardies



At Sunshine Charter School, the daily schedule and learning environment depend on students being present from the very beginning of the school day. For this reason, a student is considered tardy if they arrive at the classroom after instruction has begun. Arriving even one minute after the start of the school day is considered a tardy.

School gates open and campus supervision begins 15 minutes before the official start of the school day. Families are strongly encouraged to arrive early and build in extra time as part of their morning routine. Most children benefit from 10–15 minutes on campus before class begins to settle in, connect with peers, and prepare for learning.

We encourage all families to arrive well before the morning bell so students can begin the day calmly and ready to learn.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to working in partnership with families to support regular and timely attendance. The school may communicate with parents and guardians regarding tardiness in the following ways:

- **Verbal or written communication with parents/guardians**
- **Letters or emails informing families of the number of student tardies**
- **Meetings with school administration to discuss the importance of arriving on time**
- **Periodic communications or newsletters explaining the impact of punctuality on student learning**

Arriving on time helps students feel prepared, reduces classroom disruptions, and supports a positive start to the school day for everyone.

Please Remember, tardiness is defined as arriving at the classroom door after the Teacher commences class, even if only one minute late. Copies of attendance records and all correspondence and written communication about attendance-related problems will be placed in a student's academic records.

and all correspondence and written communication about attendance-related problems will be placed in a student's academic records. If tardiness occurs, the following set of progressive steps may be taken by the school:

Verbal reminders to the parent(s)/guardian(s) by school staff, as appropriate.

First letter/email sent home as a warning after the 5th tardy for the year.

Second letter/email sent home after the 10th overall tardy notifying parents that a SART meeting in person or by phone will be required

Requires parent(s)/guardian(s) and older students to attend a SART (Student Attendance Review Team) meeting. Other steps may be recommended at the time of the SART meeting, such as student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) donating time to school to compensate for lost class and administrative time.

An agreement will be signed by the family that acknowledges their commitment to solving the tardiness problem.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is essential to a student's academic progress, social development, and overall well-being. At Sunshine Charter School, learning experiences are designed to be interactive, collaborative, and connected to daily classroom instruction. When students are absent, even for part of the day, they may miss important learning opportunities and meaningful social interactions that are difficult to replicate outside the classroom.

Consistent attendance helps students build strong routines, maintain engagement with peers and teachers, and fully benefit from the instructional program. Frequent absences, whether excused or unexcused, can interrupt learning continuity and impact academic growth.


Sunshine Charter School is committed to working in partnership with families to support regular attendance. We recognize that families may face challenges that affect attendance, and we encourage open communication with the school so that appropriate support can be provided when needed.

Daily attendance also supports the school's ability to offer high-quality educational programs and services for all students. By prioritizing consistent attendance, families help ensure a strong learning environment for their children and the entire school community.

Reporting Absence

If a student is absent, parents are required to call the school attendance line for the appropriate campus before school begins each day that the child is absent. Absences not cleared within 48 hours will be recorded as unexcused (truant).

Attendance Line

 **510-514-0050**

Absences Allowed by Law (Ed. Code 46010, 48205)

It is important for parents to inform the school whenever their child is absent. However, under state law, an absence is considered “excused” only for the following reasons:

- **Illness - A child is too ill to attend school if he or she has a contagious condition, a temperature of over 100.4° Fahrenheit, symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea (currently or in the past 24 hours), or written orders from a doctor to stay home. Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without the use of fever-reducing drugs.**
- **Appointments - Student’s medical, dental or chiropractic appointments (bring written verification).**
- **Funeral Services - Immediate family (1 day in state, 3 days out of state).**
- **Court Appearance - Verified with documentation.**
- **Religious Holiday - With a note and approval by the school prior to the holiday. By law, attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed 8 hours per year (Ed. Code 45194)**
Examples of unexcused absences (but not limited to): out of town, personal day, family vacation, car problems.

Truancy/Excessive Absence Notification

- **The 1st absence letter will be sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) at:
5 absences**
- **The 2nd absence letter will be sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) at:
10 absences**
- **The 3rd absence letter will be sent to parent(s)/guardian(s), requiring a mandatory SART (Student Attendance Review Team) meeting at:
15 or more absences**

Copies of attendance records and all correspondence and written communication about attendance related problems will be placed in the student’s academic records.

Chronic Illness

If your student has a diagnosed chronic illness, please contact the front office.

School Attendance Review Team (SART) Meeting (Ed. Code 48320-48325)

Student Attendance Review Team (SART) is designed to meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) of children who have exceeded the allowable amount of excused or unexcused absences. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the child's attendance record and develop a plan for the child's regular participation in school and improved attendance. A contract will be signed at the meeting. By law, employers must allow parent(s)/guardian(s) to attend school meetings pertaining to their child.

Independent Study Independent Study is available for students under certain circumstances. Please see our Independent Study Policy for details.

Meal Program



As part of the California Universal Meals program, Sunshine Charter Schools offers two nutritionally adequate meals each day of the instructional calendar, free of charge to any student that requests a meal. All meals must be consumed on campus. All meals meet the USDA school meal nutritional standards

Meal Service Times

- **Breakfast- 7:45 am to 8:00 am in the Multi-Purpose Room**
- **Lunch- 12:40-1:00 Pm in the Multi-Purpose Room**

Communication and Problem Solving

Communication Resources for Our Community

Sunshine Charter School is committed to open, clear, and consistent communication with families. We make every effort to share information about school-sponsored events, news, policies, volunteer opportunities, and classroom activities in a timely and accessible manner. The following resources are used to keep our community informed:

- **Parent Handbook**

This handbook provides an overview of school policies, expectations, and daily procedures. Families are encouraged to refer to the Parent Handbook and the school website for answers to general questions.

- **School Newsletter**

The Sunshine Charter School newsletter is shared bi-weekly through ParentSquare or a similar system and keeps families informed about school activities, grade-level updates, upcoming events, festivals, fundraisers, and sign-ups for special programs. Printed copies may be available in the school office for families without internet access. Parent contributions are welcome and may be submitted to the school for review prior to publication.

- **School Communication Platform (Planned)**

Sunshine Charter School plans to use a school-to-home communication platform, such as ParentSquare or a similar system, to share announcements, newsletters, volunteer opportunities, attendance notifications, events, and other important updates.

- **Event Flyers**

From time to time, students may bring home flyers related to school events, festivals, classroom activities, or other school-sponsored programs. Families are encouraged to regularly check backpacks and ask students to share any information sent home.

- **Class Newsletters and Teacher Communications**

Classroom teachers may send weekly or monthly newsletters or emails to keep families informed about classroom learning, assignments, projects, and upcoming events.

- **School Website**

The Sunshine Charter School website provides general information about the school,

programs, policies, and announcements. Families are encouraged to visit the website for up-to-date information and answers to general questions.

Sunshine Charter School values collaboration and respectful communication. If questions or concerns arise, families are encouraged to use these communication channels and reach out to teachers or school staff so that concerns can be addressed promptly and effectively.

Parent/Student Communication During the School Day

We understand that there may be times when parents or guardians need to communicate with their children during the school day. To support effective communication while also protecting instructional time, Sunshine Charter School asks families to follow the procedures below to help minimize classroom interruptions and reduce the impact on teachers and office staff.

Urgent Messages

If you have an urgent message, please contact the school office. Office staff will take the information and relay it to the teacher as soon as possible.

For emergencies that require a student to leave school, the school will not relay emergency messages directly to the student. A parent or guardian must come to the school to pick up the child.

Non-Urgent Messages

The school office will make reasonable efforts to deliver non-urgent messages; however, due to the structure of the school day, delivery cannot be guaranteed. If absolutely necessary, parents may call the school office to leave a message. Messages may be placed in the teacher's mailbox or delivered to the classroom before dismissal when possible.

Please note: The school office is especially busy at the end of the day. Messages received near dismissal time are difficult to deliver, and the school cannot guarantee that students will receive messages left at that time.

Playdates and Carpool Arrangements

We ask that families make playdate and carpool arrangements in advance, outside of school hours. This helps reduce stress for students and allows the school day to remain focused on learning. Students are not permitted to use school phones to arrange playdates, carpools, or after-school plans.

Dropping Off Lunch or Homework

If you need to drop off a lunch, homework, or other items during the school day, please bring them to the school office. Office staff will make every effort to deliver the item to the student at the next appropriate break in instructional time.

Calling Home

Students may be allowed to call home only with permission and only when they come to the office with a pass signed by their teacher. Calls home are limited to situations involving illness or emergencies.

Students may not call home to arrange playdates or other social activities. Families are encouraged to help students plan their day before arriving at school.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us protect instructional time while ensuring student safety and well-being.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Sunshine Charter School teachers dedicate significant time and care to preparing lessons and supporting student learning. They also welcome communication from families and are committed to addressing questions or concerns outside of instructional time.

Parents and guardians may communicate with teachers by:

- **Leaving a message in the teacher's mailbox at the school office**
- **Emailing the teacher**
- **Leaving a voicemail message, when available**
- **Teachers will respond as soon as reasonably possible during school hours.**

Use of Email

Email is a convenient and commonly used form of communication and is best suited for arrangements, confirmations, and general information related to school or classroom activities. Email should not be used to submit complaints or to address student-specific concerns that require discussion or confidentiality.

Concerns or questions do not necessarily indicate a problem; they are a natural part of partnership and often provide opportunities for understanding and improvement. When a concern arises, families are encouraged to request a meeting or conversation so the matter can be discussed thoughtfully and effectively.

Respecting Instructional Time

To protect instructional time, we ask that parents and guardians refrain from interrupting teachers during class time, including immediately before the start of the school day. Scheduling a meeting or phone call allows teachers to give families their full attention and ensures more productive communication.

Sunshine Charter School values respectful, open, and collaborative communication and appreciates families' partnership in supporting student success.

Parent Concerns

If you have a question or concern related to your child's classroom experience, we encourage you to speak directly with your child's teacher as the first step. Open communication at the classroom level often leads to the quickest and most effective resolution.

If you feel that your concern has not been resolved, please inform the teacher and request further discussion. If necessary, you may then bring the concern to the School Principal. When appropriate, a follow-up meeting may be scheduled to support collaboration and resolution.

Sunshine Charter School also provides scheduled opportunities for families and teachers to connect and discuss student progress and classroom experiences.

Fall Parent–Teacher Conferences

TK, Kindergarten, and classroom teachers meet with parents during the fall semester to discuss student progress. Sign-up information will be shared in advance so families can plan their schedules to attend these important conferences.

Parent Meetings

TK, Kindergarten, and classroom teachers schedule at least three parent meetings each school year. Parents are required to attend a minimum of two meetings and are encouraged to attend all meetings. These meetings provide opportunities to discuss classroom activities, student behavior, curriculum, field trips, and to better understand what is happening within the classroom community.

Spring Parent–Teacher Conferences

Time is set aside during the spring semester for Parent–Teacher Conferences. These conferences are optional and offer an additional opportunity for families and teachers to discuss student progress. Meetings may also be scheduled at any time if a teacher or parent has a concern about a student.

Sunshine Charter School values respectful communication and collaboration and believes that strong partnerships between families and educators best support student success.

Confidentiality

To maintain a supportive, respectful, and welcoming school community, Sunshine Charter School asks parents, guardians, and students to refrain from discussing teachers, students, families, or staff in ways that could be perceived as gossip. Informal conversations, often referred to as “parking lot talk,” are discouraged, as they can lead to misunderstandings and harm trust within the community.

If a concern or issue arises, families are encouraged to speak directly with the person or persons involved or follow the school’s established communication and problem-solving process. Open, respectful communication helps resolve concerns more effectively and supports a positive environment for all members of the school community.

Questions / Where to Address Concerns

Sunshine Charter School recognizes parents and guardians as essential partners in their children's education. Open, respectful communication is key to supporting student success and maintaining a strong school community.

Questions or concerns that arise through participation in the school community are best addressed at the point of origin through direct communication. Families are encouraged to contact the staff or faculty member most closely involved with the matter as the first step. In many cases, concerns can be resolved quickly and effectively through this initial conversation.

If a concern is not resolved after speaking with the appropriate staff or faculty member, and they have been informed of the issue, families may proceed to the next level of support, following the school's communication and problem-solving process.

This communication pathway is designed to help guide parents and guardians to the appropriate source for answers and to ensure concerns are addressed in a thoughtful, respectful, and timely manner.

Sunshine Charter School values collaboration and believes that clear communication and mutual respect strengthen our ability to serve students and families effectively.

Health

Immunization Requirements



Sunshine Charter School complies with California State immunization requirements for school attendance. Immunizations are required for enrollment unless a valid medical exemption is provided in accordance with state law.

Required Immunizations for TK & Kindergarten Entry

All incoming **TK and Kindergarten students** are required to have age-appropriate immunizations as mandated by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) prior to school entry.

Required immunizations include:

- Polio
- **DTP/DTaP** (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis)
- **MMR** (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella)
- Hepatitis B
- **Varicella** (Chickenpox)

Required Immunizations for 7th Grade Entry

All incoming **7th-grade students** must have their immunization records reviewed and updated prior to the start of the school year. California law requires that all immunizations be **current**, and **personal belief exemptions are not permitted**.

Required immunizations for 7th-grade entry include:

- Polio
- **DTaP/DTP** (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis)
- **MMR** (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella)
- **Varicella** (Chickenpox)
- Tdap Booster

Medical Exemptions



Students with a medical exemption must submit a valid exemption issued by a licensed physician, consistent with California law, at the time of registration. Medical exemptions must be documented and kept on file with the school.

Families are encouraged to consult their healthcare provider to ensure immunizations are complete prior to enrollment.

Health Exams and Screenings

Health Examination for Kindergarten Entry

California state law requires that parents or guardians of Kindergarten students provide the school with a **completed Health Examination form** signed by a licensed healthcare provider, or a **signed waiver**, as permitted by law. The examination may be completed up to **18 months before** or **90 days after** school entry.

Hearing, Vision, and Scoliosis Screenings

In accordance with California state requirements, Sunshine Charter School will **ensure compliance with required student health screenings**.

Families are **encouraged to complete hearing, vision, and scoliosis screenings with their child's primary care provider** and submit appropriate documentation to the school. When permitted by law, parents or guardians may submit a **written waiver** to decline screenings.

If documentation or waiver is not provided, the school may arrange screenings through **approved partners**, such as the authorizing district or public health providers, as required.

Parents and guardians will be notified if screening results indicate the need for follow-up with a healthcare provider.

Administration of Medication

Whenever possible, families are encouraged to **schedule medication outside of the school day**, such as before school, after school, or in the evening. Parents or guardians may also come to school to administer medication to their child.

If a student's healthcare provider determines that medication **must be taken during school hours**, the school may administer medication **only after receiving a completed Administration of Medication form** signed by both the parent or guardian and the licensed healthcare provider.

Medications will be administered by designated school personnel in accordance with school policy and applicable laws. Please refer to the **Administration of Medication Policy** for detailed procedures and requirements.

Asthma and Inhalers

Students with asthma who require access to an inhaler during the school day must have a completed **Administration of Medication form** on file. Once the form is received:

The student may be permitted to **carry the inhaler**,

Keep the inhaler in the **classroom**, or

Store the inhaler in the **school office**,

as appropriate and consistent with the student's age and medical guidance.

Families are responsible for ensuring medications are properly labeled, current, and replaced as needed.

Lice and Communicable Disease Protocol

Head Lice

Like many schools, Sunshine Charter School may occasionally experience cases of head lice. When this occurs, the school follows established procedures in both the classroom and school office to address the situation promptly and discreetly.

Families are asked to **regularly check their children for lice at home** and to **notify the school office immediately** if lice are discovered. Early communication helps reduce the spread and allows the school to take appropriate steps.

For detailed procedures, please refer to the **Lice Control Administrative Regulation** in the School Policies and Guidelines section of this handbook.

Communicable Diseases

If the school is notified that a student in a class has a **verified communicable disease**, the school will send an **exposure notice to families in that class** using the school's official communication system, while maintaining student confidentiality.

The following diseases and conditions may require notification, in accordance with public health guidelines:

- **Chickenpox** (Varicella)
- **Conjunctivitis** (Pink Eye)
- **COVID-19**
- **Fifth Disease**
- **Head Lice**
- **Impetigo**
- **Mononucleosis**
- **Pinworms**
- **Ringworm**
- **Scabies**
- **Scarlet Fever**
- **Shingles**
- **Strep Throat**
- **Whooping Cough** (Pertussis)

Families are encouraged to keep children home when they are ill and to follow healthcare provider guidance regarding treatment and return to school. The school may require medical clearance before a student returns, depending on the condition.

Sunshine Charter School works closely with families and follows applicable public health guidance to help maintain a safe and healthy school environment.

Safety



Sunshine Charter School is committed to providing a **safe, secure, and supportive environment** for all students, staff, and families. The safety and well-being of our school community is a top priority.

In the event of an emergency, Sunshine Charter School has **emergency preparedness and safety plans** in place. These plans are designed to guide staff and students through a variety of situations and are regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with applicable laws and best practices.

Families will be informed of relevant safety procedures, and the school works closely with local agencies and partners as appropriate to ensure preparedness and effective response.

Safety Drills

To promote awareness, preparedness, and student safety, Sunshine Charter School conducts **regular emergency drills** in accordance with state and local requirements. These drills help students and staff understand procedures and respond calmly and safely in the event of an emergency.

The school conducts:

- Fire drills on a regular basis
- Lockdown drills at least twice per year

All drills are conducted in a developmentally appropriate manner, with staff guidance and reassurance provided to students. Families will be informed of drill procedures as appropriate.

Safety Protocol

Disasters and Emergencies

In the event of a disaster or emergency, Sunshine Charter School follows established safety procedures to protect students and staff. The following protocols are essential to ensuring an orderly and safe response:

- **Family Notification**
Parents and guardians will be notified through the school's official communication system (such as phone, email, or text) as information becomes available.
- **Staff Responsibilities**
All school staff are required to remain on campus until all students have been safely released to authorized individuals.
- **Student Supervision**
Students will remain at school under the supervision of their classroom teachers until the emergency has ended and it is safe for parents or guardians to enter campus for pick-up.
- **Authorized Release Only**
Students will be released only to parents, guardians, or authorized individuals listed on the student's Emergency Card. School personnel will verify authorization before releasing any child, especially during an emergency.
- **Coordination with Authorities**
During emergencies, school personnel will follow directions from legal, emergency, or civil authorities. All official instructions must be followed.

- **Alternate Assembly Locations**

If school buildings are deemed unsafe, students will be assembled by class in designated outdoor areas or transported to another safe location as directed by emergency authorities.

- **Use of Phones During Emergencies**

Students will not be permitted to use school phones to contact parents during an emergency. Phone lines must remain open for emergency communications and coordination with authorities.

Family Responsibilities

- Ensure the school always has **current contact information**, including addresses and phone numbers.
- Discuss school safety procedures with your child and emphasize the importance of remaining calm and cooperative during emergencies.
- Do not attempt to remove your child from campus unless directed to do so by school staff.

Contact the school if you become aware of a potentially dangerous situation that may impact campus safety. Under no circumstances may a student leave school premises during an emergency without being released to a parent, guardian, or authorized individual.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs

Sunshine charter school does not tolerate the illegal use, possession, or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or related paraphernalia by students while engaged in school sponsored educational activities or events. School administrators are required to take immediate action to prevent, discourage, and eliminate the illegal use, possession, or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or related paraphernalia while engaged in school sponsored educational activities or events. Students found in violation are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Smoking and the use of all tobacco products, including the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems such as e cigarettes, is prohibited on all SCS property, including any owned or leased buildings and in school vehicles, at all times by all persons, including employees, students, and visitors.

Proper Storage of Firearms

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

Please take some time to review the information below and evaluate your own personal practices to assure that you and your family are in compliance with California law.

- California makes a person criminally liable for keeping a loaded firearm, under their custody and control, where that person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian and the child obtains access to the firearm and thereby: (1) causes death or great bodily injury to the child or any other person; (2) carries the firearm to a public place, including to any preschool or school grades kindergarten through twelfth grade, including to any school sponsored event, activity, or performance or (3) brandishes a firearm to others. The criminal penalty may be greater if someone dies or suffers great bodily injury as a result of the child gaining access to the firearm.
- As of 2014, California makes a person criminally liable if they negligently store or leave any loaded firearm on their premises where a child is likely to gain access to it regardless of whether or not the child brings the gun to a public place.
- A parent or guardian may also be civilly liable for damages resulting from the discharge of a firearm by that person's child or ward. These damages may be up to \$30,000 per victim.
- Thank you for helping to keep our children and schools safe. Remember that the easiest and safest way to comply with the law is to keep firearms in a locked container or secured with a locking device that renders the firearm inoperable. For more information on the proper storage of firearms, you may visit this website www.sunshinecharterschool.org

Campus Visitors

For the safety and security of our students, all visitors, including parents and guardians, must check in at the school office upon arrival and wear a Visitor Pass while on campus. This policy applies during school hours and at school-sponsored activities held during the school day.

Please refer to the Visitor Policy for additional details.

Campus and Classroom Volunteers & Field Trip Chaperones

Parents and guardians who wish to volunteer with students on campus or serve as a field trip chaperone must complete the required clearance process before participating.

This process includes:

- Fingerprinting through the Live Scan system
- Submission of a negative TB test, as required by law

No adult may volunteer in a classroom or participate in student activities until all clearance requirements have been met and approved by the school.

For additional information, please refer to the Fingerprinting and TB Clearance Policy located at the end of this handbook.

Child Abuse Reporting

Teachers, instructional aides, classified staff, and other school employees are required by law to report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement or child welfare agency. (Pen. Code, § 11166.)

Change in Student Information

It is extremely important that Sunshine Charter School maintain accurate and up-to-date student information. Parents and guardians must notify the school office immediately of any changes to a student's address, phone number(s), or emergency contact information during the school year.

To update information, please visit the school office and complete a Student Information Change Form. Keeping this information current ensures effective communication and student safety, especially in emergency situations.

Parent Liability for Student Conduct

The law states that a parent or guardian of any minor whose willful misconduct results in injury or death to any pupil or any person employed by, or performing volunteer services for, a school, or who willfully cuts, defaces, or otherwise injures in any way any property, real or personal, belonging to a school, or personal property of any school employee, shall be liable for all damages so caused by the minor. Further, the parent or guardian of a minor shall be liable to a school for all property belonging to the school loaned to the minor and not returned upon demand of an employee of the school authorized to make the demand.

Any school whose real or personal property has been willfully cut, defaced, or otherwise injured, or whose property is loaned to a pupil and willfully not returned upon demand of an employee of the school authorized to make the demand may, after affording the pupil his or her due process rights, withhold the grades, diploma, and transcripts of the pupil responsible for the damage until the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian has paid for the damages thereto, unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent as outlined in board approved policy number 5130 – Damaged or Lost Instructional Materials located on the Sunshine Charter School website.

The school will notify the parent or guardian of the pupil's alleged misconduct before withholding the pupil's grades, diploma, or transcripts.

Child Custody / Divorce



It is extremely important that parents and guardians inform the school of any custody arrangements that may affect a student. Families must provide the school with current court orders or legal documents related to custody, along with up-to-date contact information for custodial parents or guardians. This ensures the school has a clear and accurate understanding of each family's legal arrangements.

Sunshine Charter School faculty, staff, and administrators cannot intervene in custody disputes, sign documents, or take actions that favor one parent or guardian over another outside of court-mandated agreements on file with the school.

School personnel will cooperate with court-appointed mediators, counselors, or other professionals only when appropriate legal documentation and, when required, written permission from both parents or legal guardians is provided.

The school will strictly follow all court orders on file regarding student release, communication, and access. Parents and guardians are responsible for keeping custody documentation current and notifying the school immediately of any changes.

Excusing Your Child from Physical Activities

- If a student has a temporary physical condition that prevents participation in physical activities (such as physical education, games, or movement activities), the school will accept a written note from a parent or guardian explaining the reason and duration.
- If a student needs to be excused from physical activity for an extended period (more than one school week), a note from a licensed healthcare provider must be submitted. The note should clearly state the reason for the restriction and the expected length of time the student should not participate.
- Students who are excused from physical activities during the school day are not permitted to participate in school-sponsored after-school athletic or extracurricular activities (such as basketball, volleyball, or similar programs) on the same days they are excused.
- This policy helps ensure student safety and consistency across school-day and after-school activities.

Student Assessment and Reporting



Fall and Winter Progress Reports

Families will receive a Fall Progress Report for their child during the fall semester, typically in connection with Parent–Teacher Conferences. Fall reports provide a brief overview of student progress and learning growth.

A Winter Progress Report is provided during the spring semester for students in Grades 1–8. Parent–Teacher Conferences may be offered for this reporting period and are optional.

Year-End Reports

Year-End Report Cards are issued within a few weeks after the conclusion of the school year. These reports provide a comprehensive overview of each student’s academic progress and may include:

- Grade-level academic performance
- Narrative comments
- Specialty subject reports
- Progress updates connected to earlier reports

Annual State Assessments

Sunshine Charter School administers state-required assessments in accordance with California law.

- CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress)
Administered annually to students in Grades 3–8, typically during the spring testing window established by the state.
- California Science Test (CAST)
Administered to students in Grades 5 and 8 during the state-designated testing period.
- Physical Fitness Testing (PFT)
Administered to students in Grades 5 and 7, typically during the spring semester.

Specific dates for report cards, conferences, and assessments will be communicated to families prior to the start of the school year.

Library Use



Sunshine Charter School is pleased to offer library materials for students and families to enjoy and support learning. To help maintain a high-quality and accessible library collection, we ask families and students to observe the following guidelines:

- **Book Checkout**
Students may check out **one (1) book at a time**. Whenever possible, library books are intended to **remain at school for classroom use**, as most loss or damage occurs when materials are taken home. Students and families are encouraged to take advantage of their **local public library** for home reading.

- **Care of Materials**

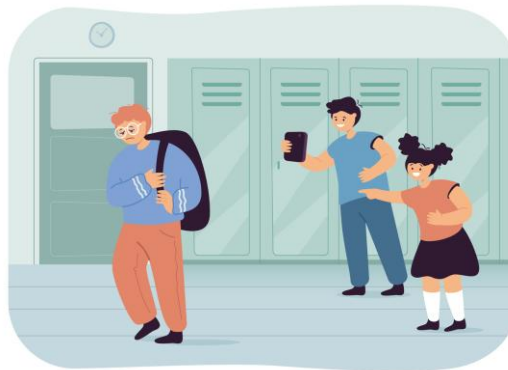
Borrowers are responsible for the **care and condition** of all library materials while they are checked out. Parents or guardians may be charged for **lost or damaged items**.

- **Outstanding Materials**

If a student has outstanding library books or unpaid fines, report cards or classroom projects **may be held** until all materials are returned or fees are resolved.

Thank you for helping us care for shared resources and support a respectful learning environment.

Lost and Found



To help us return items to their owners, **please clearly label all student belongings**, including clothing, lunchboxes, water bottles, and backpacks.

- **Found Items**

Small items should be turned in to the school office. Larger items (such as jackets or sweaters) will be placed in the Lost and Found bins or racks.

- **Checking Lost and Found**

Students may check the Lost and Found during recess with adult supervision or before or after school. Parents and guardians are welcome to check the Lost and Found at any time. Families may also wish to check the student's classroom or the Aftercare/After-School Program room, if applicable.

- **Unclaimed Items**

Items that are unclaimed after a reasonable period—typically three months or at the end of the school year—may become the property of Sunshine Charter School. Unmarked and unclaimed items may be donated to charity.

Thank you for helping us keep personal belongings organized and returned to students whenever possible.

Birthdays and Parties



To promote inclusivity and protect students' feelings, birthday or party invitations may be distributed at school only if:

- Every child in the class is invited, or
- All boys or all girls in the class are invited.

If a celebration is planned for a select group of students, invitations must be distributed outside of school and off campus.

Sunshine Charter School is a close-knit community, and being excluded from an activity or celebration can be hurtful for children. We ask families to be thoughtful and considerate of all students' feelings when planning celebrations.

If you have questions about classroom celebrations or invitations, please contact your Classroom Teacher or the School Principal for guidance.

Admissions and Enrollment

Sunshine Charter School is a tuition-free public charter school and admits all students who wish to attend, up to the school's approved capacity, in accordance with California law. All families must complete an enrollment application and will be asked to review and sign a Parent Agreement, which outlines shared expectations and school policies.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Sunshine Charter School admits students **without regard to** actual or perceived:

- Sex or gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or expression
- Race or ethnicity
- Ancestry or national origin
- Religion
- Age
- Color
- Physical or mental disability
- Or any other characteristic protected by law

Tuition-Free Education

As a public charter school, Sunshine Charter School **does not charge tuition** or enrollment fees.

Assessments

No test, interview, or assessment is administered prior to admission or used as a condition of acceptance. After enrollment, students may participate in diagnostic assessments to help teachers understand individual learning needs and design appropriate instructional programs. These assessments are used solely for instructional planning in areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics and do not affect a student's enrollment status.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to providing equitable access to high-quality education for all students and families.

Birth Date Deadlines and Age of Enrollment

Sunshine Charter School follows California state age requirements for enrollment while also considering the developmental readiness of each child to ensure appropriate placement and a strong start to their educational journey.

The school is open to all students who wish to enroll, subject to capacity, and has established age and grade-level guidelines consistent with state law and school policy.

Kindergarten and First Grade Placement

For students who meet the minimum age requirement for Kindergarten, placement decisions such as enrolling in Kindergarten or advancing to First Grade are made with careful consideration of the child's developmental, academic, and social readiness.

When appropriate, a student's readiness for First Grade may be informed by:

- A **First Grade Readiness Assessment**, administered prior to the start of the school year (typically in the spring or summer), and
- A **conference with parents or guardians** and relevant school staff.
- The goal of this process is to ensure that students are placed in a learning environment where they can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to working collaboratively with families to make thoughtful placement decisions that best support each child's success.

Application Process

Parents or guardians who wish to apply to Sunshine Charter School are asked to complete the following steps:

1. **Attend a Parent Information Meeting (PIM)**
Parent Information Meetings are designed to share details about the school's mission, program, expectations, and enrollment process.
2. **Submit an Enrollment Application**
After attending a Parent Information Meeting, parents or guardians must complete and submit an Enrollment Application, along with any required documents, as outlined by the school.

Open Enrollment Period

Sunshine Charter School will hold an Open Enrollment period each year. Applications submitted during this period will be considered for available spaces. Specific dates and deadlines for Open Enrollment will be announced and communicated to families in advance of the enrollment window.

Applications After Open Enrollment

If spaces remain available after the Open Enrollment period, parents or guardians may:

- Attend a scheduled Parent Information Meeting, and

- Submit an Enrollment Application and Parent Agreement for consideration, subject to availability.

If the number of applications exceeds available seats, admission will be determined through a public lottery, in accordance with California charter school law. Detailed enrollment timelines, meeting dates, and procedures will be communicated to families prior to the start of the enrollment process.

Admissions Process

1. Public Lottery and Waitlist

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available spaces in any grade level, Sunshine Charter School will conduct a **public random drawing (lottery)** in accordance with California law. Following the lottery, a **waitlist** will be established. Students will be offered enrollment **in the order they appear on the waitlist** as spaces become available.

2. Declining an Offer of Admission

If an applicant declines an offer of enrollment at the time it is extended, the applicant will be **removed from the waitlist**. To be considered for admission in the future, the family must **submit a new application** during the next enrollment or lottery period.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to a fair, transparent, and equitable admissions process for all families.

Enrollment Process

The following requirements must be completed in order for a student to be fully enrolled at Sunshine Charter School.

Required Prior to the First Day of Attendance

Parents or guardians must complete and submit an **Enrollment Packet** before the student's first day of attendance. This packet includes, but is not limited to:

- Enrollment/Registration Form
- Emergency Contact Card
- Parent Agreement
- Proof of Required Immunizations (or valid medical exemption, as permitted by law)
- Proof of Minimum Age Requirement (such as a birth certificate or other acceptable documentation)

Required On or After the First Day of Attendance

Parents or guardians must also complete and submit the following documents **on or after the student's first day of attendance**, within timelines communicated by the school:

- Health Examination for School Entry (submitted within the timeframe required by state law)
- Home Language Survey
- Income or Socioeconomic Survey
- Family Directory Release Form (optional)

Families will be informed of submission deadlines and provided guidance as needed to complete all enrollment requirements. Timely completion of enrollment documents helps ensure compliance with state regulations and supports student safety and services.

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- Home Language Survey
- Income or Socioeconomic Survey
- Family Directory Release Form (optional)

Families will be informed of submission deadlines and provided guidance as needed to complete all enrollment requirements. Timely completion of enrollment documents helps ensure compliance with state regulations and supports student safety and services.

Open Enrollment Period

Sunshine Charter School accepts applications for enrollment during the Open Enrollment period for the upcoming school year. At the conclusion of this period, the school will review all submitted applications to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than available seats. If the number of applications exceeds capacity in any grade level, Sunshine Charter School will conduct a public lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level(s), in accordance with California law.

Students who are currently enrolled at Sunshine Charter School are guaranteed enrollment for the following school year, provided they complete all required re-enrollment procedures by the specified deadlines. Specific Open Enrollment dates, application deadlines, and lottery information will be communicated to families in advance.

Lottery Process

If a public lottery is required following the Open Enrollment period, Sunshine Charter School may apply **enrollment preferences** as permitted by California law. Any enrollment preferences will be implemented in accordance with **Board-adopted policy** and the school's approved charter.

The order of enrollment preferences, if applicable, may include the following priorities:

1. **Children of Current Employees**
Students who are children of current full-time employees of Sunshine Charter School, not to exceed **10% of total student enrollment**, as permitted by law.
2. **Siblings of Currently Enrolled Students**
Students who have a sibling currently attending Sunshine Charter School.

3. **Siblings of Alumni**

Students who have a sibling who previously attended Sunshine Charter School and completed a minimum number of years or graduated from the highest grade offered by the school.

4. **District Residents**

Students who reside within the boundaries of the school's authorizing district.

5. **All Other Applicants**

All remaining applicants not included in the categories above.

Enrollment preferences, definitions, and procedures will be further detailed in Board policy and applied consistently and transparently during the lottery process. Sunshine Charter School is committed to a fair, open, and equitable admissions process.

Applications Outside the Enrollment Period

Applications for grade levels that are at capacity may still be accepted outside of the Open Enrollment period and placed into an application pool or waitlist. If a space becomes available in a full class, Sunshine Charter School will conduct a public lottery, as required by law, to determine which applicant is offered enrollment.

If no space becomes available before the start of the next Open Enrollment period, applications in the pool will not carry over to the following school year, and families must submit a new application to be considered for future enrollment.

Misrepresentation of Admission and Enrollment Information

Sunshine Charter School reserves the right to review and verify all information provided during the admission and enrollment process. The school may withdraw a student if it is determined that a parent or guardian has knowingly misrepresented material information, including but not limited to:

- Legal guardianship or custody status
- Place of residence
- Emergency contact information
- Any other information required on admission or enrollment documents

Parents or guardians will be provided with written notice of the concern and given an opportunity to respond before any final action is taken, in accordance with school policy and applicable law.

Students with Prior Expulsions

Students who have been expelled from another school may require additional review prior to enrollment. Admission decisions in such cases will be made on an individual basis, consistent with California law, and may include consideration by school administration to determine appropriate placement and supports.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to a fair and transparent enrollment process while ensuring the accuracy of information necessary to serve students effectively and safely.

SUNSHINE Charter School

Adult Code of Conduct Policy

(Parents, Guardians, Visitors, and Community Members)

Sunshine Charter School is a community built on **mutual respect, safety, and collaboration**. How adults interact with students, staff, and one another through words and actions directly shapes the school culture and learning environment.

While Sunshine Charter School strives to promote positive and respectful behavior, it is important to clearly state that **inappropriate or disruptive behavior on campus or at school-sponsored activities is unacceptable and, in some cases, illegal**. This policy outlines expectations, procedures, and consequences related to unacceptable behavior.

Definition of Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior is defined as **any conduct that disrupts the educational or work environment** on campus or at any school-sponsored activity.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Rude, loud, offensive, threatening, or slanderous language directed at a student, staff member, parent, or visitor
- Unwanted, aggressive, or inappropriate physical contact
- Refusal to stop disruptive behavior when asked by school staff

- Disregarding school rules, procedures, or safety directives
- Behavior that interferes with instruction, supervision, or school operations

Process and Consequences for Unacceptable Behavior

1. Initial Intervention

The individual will be asked to stop the disruptive behavior. If the behavior does not stop promptly, the individual may be asked to **leave the campus**.

2. Failure to Comply

If the individual refuses to leave when directed, **law enforcement may be contacted**.

3. Repeated or Serious Behavior

In cases of repeated or serious unacceptable behavior, the individual will receive a **written notice of reprimand**. This notice may include restrictions or a temporary ban from campus and/or school-sponsored events.

4. Campus Ban

Continued violations may result in a **formal written ban** from school grounds for a specified period of time. This ban is enforceable by law.

5. Violation of a Campus Ban

If a banned individual enters school property during the ban period, **law enforcement will be contacted**, and appropriate legal action may be taken.

State Law Regarding Disruptive Behavior

Please be advised that under **California Education Code Section 44811**, disruption by a parent, guardian, or other individual at a school or school-sponsored activity is illegal and punishable by:

- A fine of **\$500 to \$1,000**, and/or
- **Imprisonment in county jail for up to one year**

Commitment to a Safe School Environment

Sunshine Charter School is committed to maintaining a **safe, respectful, and welcoming environment** for students, staff, and families. All adults are expected to model appropriate behavior and contribute positively to the school community.

CAMPUS BEHAVIOR REGULATIONS



Our campus and our classrooms are safe places for children to learn under the guidance of teachers and staff. Please help us keep our school safe by following these simple rules:

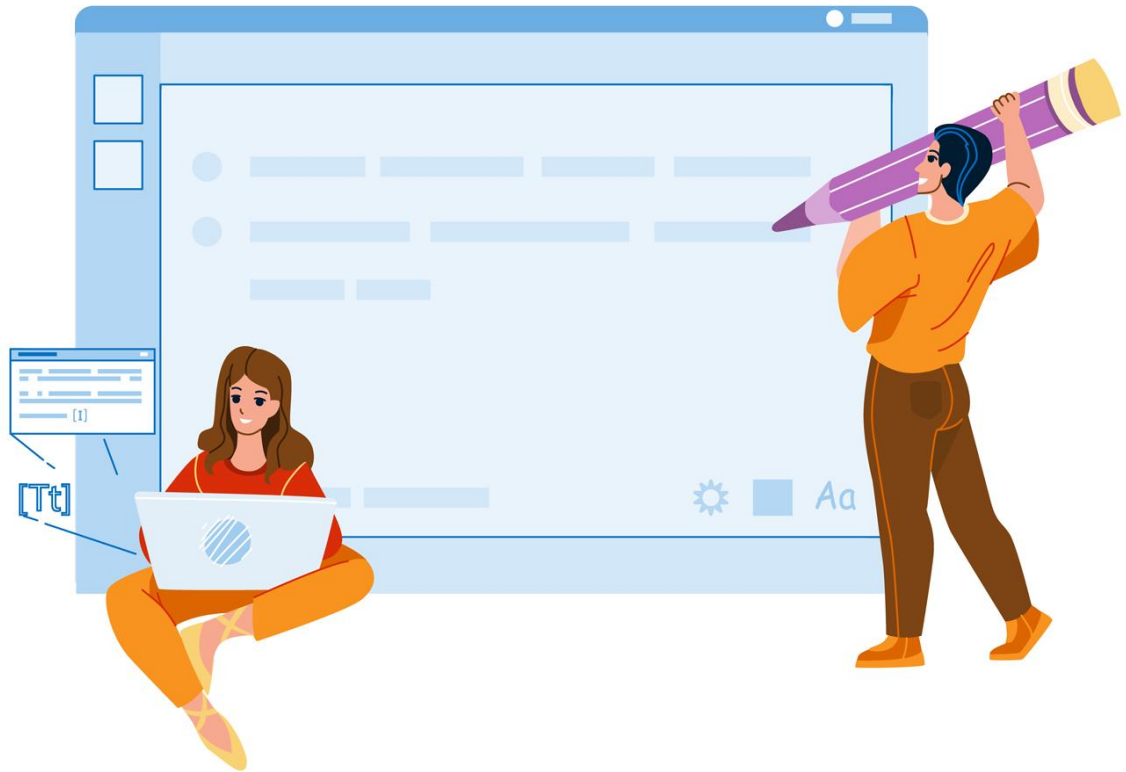
- Please refrain from the above Unacceptable Behaviors at all times.
- Please understand that school employees (teachers) may not be able to respond to your immediate need and that it may be necessary for you to come back at another time or to make an appointment.
- Please speak with your Class Teacher at an appropriate time if you or your child has an issue in the classroom or on the playground. If you have an issue with a Subject Specialist, Education Specialist, or Yard Duty person, please speak with your Class Teacher first.
- Please always use student-appropriate language and behavior on campus.
- Please honor each teacher's "Class Rules."
- Please do not enter the Home Room/Faculty Lounge unless you are a school employee.
- If you are asked to leave an area or room on campus, please do so immediately without resorting to any unacceptable behaviors as defined above.

SCHOOL OFFICE BEHAVIOR REGULATIONS

The school office is both a place of official school business and a place where students are frequently present. Given the importance of the office to the proper functioning of the school and its physical limitations in terms of space and privacy, it is very important that everyone understand and comply with the following “Rules of the Office”:

- Please refrain from the above Unacceptable Behaviors at all times.
- Please use student-appropriate language and behavior in the office at all times as students are often present.
- Please be patient and courteous when waiting for an office staff person to address your need or issue.
- Unless through prior arrangement with the office staff, please do not enter past the swinging doors without staff approval.
- Please understand that the office staff may not be able to respond to your immediate need and that it may be necessary for you to come back at another time or to make an appointment.
- If you have an issue with a school policy, procedure, or regulation (not including clarifying questions), you **MUST** make an appointment with either the Principal or the Business Manager to discuss.
- Please do not engage other school employees on issues of policy, procedure, or regulation.
- Please do not use the work room or any equipment in the school office for personal business not related to a school-approved function.
- Unless it is an emergency, please do not enter the office or engage a school employee regarding school-related business outside of established office hours.
- If you are asked to leave the office for any reason, please comply immediately without resorting to any unacceptable behavior as defined above.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE



Parents sometimes feel more comfortable communicating with their child’s teacher or school staff members via email. This can be a valuable tool. However, we ask that parents follow some simple guidelines when emailing teachers or staff members:

- If you have an issue with a teacher or staff member, please send an email message to set up an appointment to speak face-to-face with that person.
- Please be respectful in your language when emailing teachers or staff members. If it is something that is considered “unacceptable behavior” in a face-to-face encounter, it is considered unacceptable behavior in an email as well.

SUNSHINE CHARTER SCHOOL

Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan

Bullying Behavior Defined Bullying is defined in California Education Code Section 48900(r)(1). It means severe or pervasive physical or verbal act(s) or conduct including written or electronically transmitted material. Bullying is one or more acts committed by a student or group of students, directed toward one or more students which can reasonably be predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following on the targeted student(s):

- fear of harm to person or property
- detrimental effect on physical or mental health
- interference with academic performance
- interference with the ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided in school

Harassment consists of unwelcome written or spoken comments or conduct which violates an individual's dignity and/or creates an intimidating, degrading, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment.

California Education Code Section 220 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or another characteristic contained in the definition of hate crimes (Penal Code Section 422.55).

Further, in California, required school safety plans must include policies and procedures to reduce bias-related discrimination, harassment, intimidation and bullying based on identified actual or perceived characteristics identified above.

Accordingly, the term "bullying" for the purposes of this Prevention and Intervention Plan, is used in a comprehensive way to additionally include bias-related discrimination, harassment and intimidation.

Verbal & Written

Name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, “jokes” concerning perceived gender expression, sexual orientation or other distinguishing characteristics.

Physical

Hitting, tripping, punching, kicking, scratching, spitting, interfering with a person’s medical assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc.

Social & Psychological

Ignoring, shunning, excluding, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, spreading rumors, using threatening looks or gestures, hiding or damaging personal property.

Cyber

Use of electronic devices such as computers, phones, or cameras to accomplish verbal, written or social/psychological bullying behavior

This Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan describes our process for preventing and responding to bullying in our school community and our goal to create a more peaceful world. This plan includes Sunshine Charter Schools’ policies and procedures for creating a positive, peaceful education environment, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student and adult behavior.

Responsibilities

We exist in a society where incidents of bullying behavior may occur. Preventing and responding to this behavior in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility. In order for bullying to be addressed appropriately, all administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the greater school community must recognize bullying behavior and take individual and collective responsibility for its elimination at Sunshine Charter Schools and in our world.

Faculty and Staff Responsibilities

- Respect and support students
- Model and promote appropriate behavior
- Have knowledge of school policies relating to bullying behavior
- Implement policies relating to bullying behavior
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the Sunshine charter school.

Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan

- Address behavior that is disruptive, abusive and/or destructive to individuals or the class as a whole
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community
- Teach students skills and strategies to recognize and address bullying and destructive behavior as outlined in the Sunshine Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Respond to all reported and observed incidents of bullying as described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan and the school discipline policy.
- Ensure that students are supervised at all times.
- Report all instances of bullying.
- Create a culture where it is acceptable and encouraged to report bullying incidents.

Student Responsibilities



- Be kind and helpful to everyone.
- Respect individual differences.
- Behave as responsible citizens at school and in our greater community.
- Act as peacekeepers in the school community.
- Resolve differences with respect, seeking help when needed.
- Follow the Sunshine Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Act as a responsible witness or bystander by understanding destructive and bullying behavior.
- Report incidents of bullying according to the Sunshine Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Know what is unacceptable behavior at Sunshine Charter School.
- Help to create and maintain a culture where bullying is not tolerated by speaking out and exercising kindness, courage and compassion.
- Be assertive. Tell a person who is using bullying behavior that you do not like the behavior and how it makes you feel.

Parent Responsibilities



- Support their children to become responsible citizens and develop responsible behavior.
- Be aware of the Sunshine Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behavior.
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying, consistent with the school Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Report incidents of school related bullying to the teacher and principal.
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

School Community Responsibilities

- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community.
- Support the Sunshine Charter Schools Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan through words and actions.
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Practice Empathy and Compassion Everywhere



Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan

This plan outlines our process for preventing and responding to all forms of bullying in our community.

Bullying Prohibited

Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored or school-related activities, events, function or programs whether on or off school grounds, on field trips, during transportation to or from field trips, or through the use of technology or any electronic device owned, leased or used by Sunshine Charter School.

Sunshine Charter Schools expects administrators to communicate clearly to students, faculty, staff and the greater school community that bullying will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees.

All faculty and staff members are required to report any bullying or harassment they see or learn about. Each allegation of harassment or bullying will be promptly and reasonably investigated. The administration will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging harassment or bullying. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying, is prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students, and termination for employees.

Procedures

Reporting Acts of Bullying, Harassment or Retaliation

1. If any employee of Sunshine Charter Schools observes, has been reported to, or otherwise becomes aware of a possible act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation, that person must report the event to a school administrator within one full school day, using the Bullying Incident Reporting Form, or other appropriate means of communication.
2. If a student expresses a desire to report or discuss a possible incident of bullying, harassment or retaliation with a staff member, the staff member will, in a timely manner, provide the student with a practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate way of doing so.
3. Reporting forms may be obtained in the school's main office, classrooms, on the school website, and other locations determined by the school. All members of the school community (students, faculty, staff, parents, and members of the greater community) may report an act of bullying or retaliation to a school administrator via the Bullying Incident Reporting form or other appropriate means of communication. If a student requires help completing the form, a staff member will provide the necessary assistance.
4. Sunshine Charter School will create ways in which Bullying Incident Reporting forms may be submitted to the school administration, including means to report anonymously.
5. Information obtained from the Bullying Incident Report form shall be recorded and filed by the school.

Investigating of Acts of Bullying, Harassment and Retaliation

1. The designated administrator must initiate an investigation of a report of bullying, harassment, or retaliation within one school day after being notified of a possible incident, consistent with due process rights, using the Bullying Investigation and Determination form.
2. The designated administrator will conduct an investigation to determine both whether an act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation occurred, and which person(s) were responsible for the act(s) and/or who played a role in perpetrating it.
3. Other related complaints regarding the involved parties, including those from previous schools, will be reviewed as part of the investigation process.
4. The designated administrator will contact the parents/guardians of all related parties by the end of the administrator's day in which the investigation was initiated and inform them of the status of the investigation.

5. Discussions with all parties should be documented by the investigating administrator as soon as possible after the event.
6. When an act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation has been determined the designated administrator will apply consequences consistent with due process rights using the school Code of Conduct as a guide.
7. Measures will be taken to ensure that any person providing information contributing to the investigation of an incident will be protected from retaliation.
8. If the act of bullying, harassment or retaliation are considered to be delinquent acts, the individual involved shall be reported to the designated administrator promptly and if necessary to the responsible law enforcement agency in accordance with the laws of the State of California.
9. The designated administrator will notify parents/guardians of all parties involved in the incident, the outcome of the investigation and whether disciplinary action was taken.
10. The designated administrator will create a written record of the incident and any disciplinary actions taken, as well as the statements of each party involved.

Following Up on Acts of Bullying, Harassment or Retaliation

1. After the determination that an act of bullying, harassment, or retaliation has occurred and after appropriate disciplinary action has been taken, the designated administrator will develop with all parties involved and their parents or guardians an appropriate plan of action - a Safety Plan for the “target” or a Conduct Plan for the “aggressor”. Both plans will include notifying teachers not only of the incident, but also of all the parties involved, specifying their roles.
2. The Safety Plan will include, but not limited to, the following: a staff member (as designated by the administrator, student, and the parents/guardians) will be assigned as a check-in person to regularly meet with the student to ensure the following:
 - No acts of retaliation have occurred.
 - Strategies are provided for dealing with future incidents, emphasizing immediate reporting of any further acts.
 - Information regarding outside support services are provided to students and family.
 - The frequency and duration of check-ins will be determined on a case-by-case basis but will not be less than two times per week for a period of four weeks.

- After two weeks, the check-in person will provide a progress report on the emotional well-being of the student to the designated administrator.
 - The safety plan cannot be discontinued without the agreement of the student, the parents/guardians, the designated check-in person, and the designated administrator.
3. The Conduct Plan will include, but not be limited to, the following: a staff member (as designated by the administrator, student, and the parents/guardians) will be assigned as a check-in person to regularly meet with the student to ensure the following. Compulsory Conduct meetings will be held by the designated administrator as part of the Conduct Plan.
- No further acts of bullying, harassment, or retaliation have been committed.
 - The student has been educated regarding acceptable alternative behaviors.
 - The student has received further education regarding the school's bullying prevention policy, including the potential for more severe school consequences and/or criminal charges being filed. In addition, the student will be informed of the consequences for retaliating against targets, reporters or witnesses.
 - The frequency and duration of these meetings will be agreed upon and will depend upon future actions. However, the minimum requirement will not be less than two times per week for a period for four weeks.
 - Information regarding outside support resources will be made available to the student and their parents/guardians.
 - A progress report identifying student conduct will be provided after two weeks.
 - Discontinuation of the conduct plan will be determined by the designated administrator. All meetings and the ending of the conduct plan should be documented and kept throughout the student's school career. Parents/ guardians will be notified of the discontinuance of a conduct plan.

Strategies

At Sunshine Charter School we will

- Openly talk about bullying - what it is, how it affects us, what we can do about it.
- Teach students the skills they need to build their self-esteem.
- Empower students to take responsibility for their own well-being, and give students the opportunity to practice these skills.
- Investigate all reports of bullying behavior according to the procedures described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Follow up on all reports of bullying behavior according to the procedures described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.
- Respond to substantiated instances of bullying behavior according to the discipline policy and all relevant GVCS policies and procedures.
- Involve students, faculty, staff, parents and members of the greater community in creating a positive and peaceful school community.

Programs & Curriculum

Sunshine Charter School utilizes a variety of instructional programs and curriculum designed to meet the academic, social, emotional, and cultural needs of our students. Our educational approach is grounded in the belief that children learn best when instruction supports the whole child academically, socially, emotionally, and culturally while honoring their individual strengths and developmental stages.

Teachers at Sunshine Charter School design instruction that is developmentally appropriate, engaging, and aligned with California state standards, while also incorporating language development, critical thinking, creativity, and real-world learning experiences. Instruction is carefully sequenced so that concepts and skills are introduced at appropriate times, allowing students to build understanding gradually and meaningfully. In addition to core academic curricula, Sunshine Charter School uses supplementary programs and instructional strategies to enhance learning, support multilingual learners, and promote a positive and inclusive school culture. These programs are selected to complement classroom instruction, strengthen academic foundations, and foster a supportive, respectful, and peaceful learning environment.

The cornerstone programs and curricular approaches described below reflect Sunshine Charter School's commitment to academic excellence, cultural responsiveness, and community-centered education.

Character Education & Community Values

Sunshine Charter School is committed to nurturing students' character alongside their academic growth. We believe that values such as respect, responsibility, compassion, integrity, and perseverance play a vital role in helping students become confident learners and positive contributors to their community.

To support this goal, Sunshine Charter School integrates character development into daily classroom instruction, school routines, and community interactions. Throughout the school year, the school may highlight a **focus value or virtue** to help students develop a shared understanding of positive behavior and ethical decision-making. These values are reinforced through classroom discussions, modeling by adults, reflective activities, and school-wide practices that encourage kindness, service, and mutual respect.

By intentionally embedding character education into everyday school life, Sunshine Charter School works to create a **safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment** where students feel valued and supported.

Community Agreements and Positive Conduct

Community Agreements serve as a shared code of conduct that guides how members of the Sunshine Charter School community interact with one another. These agreements are developed collaboratively at multiple levels of the school, including among students, teachers, staff, and school leadership. The goal of these agreements is to promote respectful communication, cooperation, and accountability.

At the classroom level, teachers work with students to establish age-appropriate agreements that reflect the developmental, social, and academic needs of each grade. These agreements support positive behavior, classroom routines, and a strong sense of belonging. School-wide agreements help ensure consistency and shared expectations across the campus.

When agreements are not followed, appropriate follow-up actions are addressed in a supportive and restorative manner. The focus is on reflection, learning, and growth, rather than punishment, helping students understand the impact of their actions and make better choices moving forward.

Class Meetings & Sharing



Regular Class Meetings or an organized Class Sharing Time are important tools toward creating a peaceful school environment. Class meetings can be very effective and have a powerful influence on the trust and honesty as well as the level of communication that exist in a class. An effective class meeting has very specific ground rules for how individuals interact. These ground rules should be set and agreed upon by the group. In an organized class meeting, the teacher / facilitator leads the meeting so that each student has the opportunity to share something with the group. As students share with the group, the teacher / facilitator has the task of engaging the group in a discussion and keeping that discussion on task and positive by asking guiding questions and participating according to the established procedures for the class meeting. A class meeting offers a safe venue for students to make acknowledgements or share concerns with their class as a whole.

Student Council

Our Student Council is a student-run governance body that exists in our school. Student Council works to plan special days for students, to recommend changes to policies that directly affect students, and advocate for students in our school community. Student government is a positive way for students to be actively involved in their school, empowering students and giving them a voice in their school. Grades 5 - 8 are involved with Student Council with each grade being represented by two students chosen by their class and their teacher.

Empathy training is simply offering tools and practice to sharpen student's listening skills. The focus is on listening to what is most important to the person talking rather than listening for the story. This program would offer these skills to middle school students who could serve as 'empathy first responders' for the younger grades.

Student Empowerment Project

This concept has been used in other school's to empower students to co-create their school social health experience. It is focused on offering students a new approach to deal with conflict through 'empathy' and basic mediation training. The curriculum would be offered to middle school grades who then could practice and support the younger grades on the playground or during 'buddy' time. It would also include fun, interactive training that will help students develop their sense of values and leadership skills, expanding their 'toolbox' in stressful or conflict situations both when they are directly involved or a witness to conflict.

Cyber Civics

Cyber Civics is a computer literacy program designed to bring an appropriate approach to online communication. It teaches etiquette, as well as respect for this powerful form of communication. Cyber Civics begins in Grade 6 and continues through Grade 8.

Faculty / Staff Development

Throughout the school year, SunshineCharter Schools hosts a variety of Faculty / Staff enrichment and development events. Presentations are geared toward a variety of topics, but social health and a peaceful school environment are areas that will be addressed regularly.

Parent Enrichment



Throughout the school year, Sunshine Charter School offers a variety of Parent Enrichment opportunities designed to support families as partners in their children’s education. These events may include presentations, workshops, and discussions focused on child development, effective parenting strategies, responsible use of technology, social-emotional development, and fostering positive relationships at home and in the school community.

Parent Enrichment events are intended to strengthen home–school connections, provide practical tools for families, and create a supportive network where parents can learn, share experiences, and engage meaningfully in their children’s educational journey.

Outcomes

As a result of implementing a Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan, we strive to see:

- Sunshine Charter Schools providing a safe place for students to learn and play.
- An initial increase in the number of students who report bullying behavior, followed by an elimination of bullying behaviors.
- Better attendance at school and Better performance in school work.
- Sunshine Charter Schools faculty and staff utilizing strategies and procedures as described in the Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan.

- Sunshine Charter Schools students utilizing strategies and procedures as modeled and taught by school faculty and staff.
- Parents and community members recognizing and supporting the school Anti-Bullying Plan.
- The whole school community working to create a peaceful and supportive school environment.

Evaluation

Sunshine Charter School conducts annual parent surveys, as well as faculty and staff surveys. By including questions related to the school climate, we will have the opportunity to gather information from our community as a whole regarding the social health of our school from a variety of perspectives. Student surveys are also an important tool. An annual review of reported bullying behaviors as well as suspensions and expulsions is included in our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). The LCAP is presented to our school district as well as the state and outlines goals and outcomes measuring overall school performance

“The Healing Social Life is found, when in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community, the virtue of each one is living.”

Rudolf Steiner

School Uniforms & Equity Support



Sunshine Charter School requires all students to wear the official school uniform. Uniforms are provided **at cost**, meaning families are charged only the **actual cost of production**, with no markup or profit.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to equity and ensuring that all students have access to required uniforms. **Financial assistance and uniform support are available** for families who may be unable to afford the cost. Families who qualify may receive **free or reduced-cost uniforms** through the school's uniform assistance program.

Information regarding uniform styles, ordering procedures, pricing, and assistance options will be shared with families prior to the start of the school year. Families are encouraged to contact the school office confidentially if they need support.

Our goal is to ensure that every student feels included, comfortable, and ready to learn—regardless of financial circumstances.

Student Dress Code

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

Introduction

The scope of education provided at Sunshine Charter Schools does not stop with the core curriculum but extends to consideration of the environment into which the children come as they attend school. We wish to surround the child with a nourishing environment that is beautiful and supports learning. The dress code shall apply to school functions and field trips.

Dress Code

SCS endeavors to form a healthy school-time environment by guiding children towards appropriate school attire. Support is most needed and appreciated in the following areas.

To ensure a safe environment for our children, have them:

- Leave dangling jewelry and earrings at home. The only pierced jewelry allowed is earrings (except where permitted for the 7th and 8th grades, see below).
- Come well dressed for the weather and movement. Our educational model includes movement several times a day. Rain Policy: Your child should plan to play outside even when it rains. Children will not be allowed outside on rainy days without a raincoat and hat, which excludes them from much needed play.
- Come wearing comfortable, practical, flat-soled, shoes that are firmly attached to the feet. No flipflops or shoes with heels are allowed. Check schedules for GAMES classes. These classes require flexible, firm- fitting running shoes worn with socks, though every day at school requires physical activity and movement.
- To create an environment focused on learning and which provides a wholesome social atmosphere, the children should wear: Clothing, hats and lunchboxes free of printed messages, pictures or images. Words or images on clothing should be no larger than 2" X 4". The one exception shall be for single images from nature and the words from the list of virtues.

Dress Code and Free Speech Guidelines

- Prints, plaids, stripes or solids are allowed
- School related apparel such as:
Sunshine charter school T-shirts, Eagle Chase T-shirts, etc.
- Shoes free of lights and/or wheels.
- Clothing (tops, pants, dresses...) cut so that underwear is not visible. Specific examples are
 - Tops that cover the midriff even when arms are extended overhead, with the torso completely covered.
 - Pants that cover the hipbones.
 - Skirts and shorts at least mid-thigh length.
 - Clothing free of purposeful cutting, slashing, or ripping.
 - Width of straps on shoulders a minimum of 1" wide. Tops with necklines and sleeve-holes that keep the chest covered. No spaghetti straps (except where allowed in 7th and 8th grades; see below).
- Children (kindergarten through 6th grade) are asked to come to school free of make-up. Exaggerated, distracting hair-dos, such as mohawks or spikes, are not permitted at school. Hair color must look natural – it must be a color that grows on humans.
- Children sent to school inappropriately attired will be sent to the office receptionist and given a t-shirt to wear for the day. With the first two occurrences, the parents will be notified. On the third occurrence, the parents will be called to either bring a change of clothes or to bring their child home.
- These guidelines may not cover all situations and teachers may have special need to address particular attire.
- Please contact your class teachers if you have any questions about specific articles of clothing.

Upper Grades 7-8 ONLY:

- Only positive messages/words are permitted on outerwear.
- Spaghetti straps are permitted, as long as the chest area is adequately covered.
- Piercings allowed include stud-type nose rings and earrings ONLY. For the safety of students, no hoops or dangling nose rings or earrings are permitted.
- Animals, Elements of nature, Landscape scenes.

Free Dress Days

On designated spirit days, cultural celebration days, or special school events, students may be permitted to wear non-uniform clothing. Families will be notified in advance of these days.

Religious, Cultural, and Medical Accommodations

Sunshine Charter School respects and honors students' religious, cultural, and medical needs.

- Religious attire (such as hijabs, turbans, or other faith-based garments) is always permitted
- Cultural clothing may be worn on designated cultural days or with prior approval
- Medical accommodations will be honored with appropriate documentation.

Non-Compliance with Uniform Policy

If a student arrives at school without a uniform:

- The student will **not** be sent home or excluded from class
- School staff may provide a reminder or temporary solution
- Families may be contacted to discuss ongoing support if needed
- The goal of the uniform policy is to support students, not to punish them.

Opt-Out Policy

In accordance with California law, parents or guardians may request an exemption from the uniform policy for personal or religious reasons. Requests should be submitted in writing to the school office and will be reviewed respectfully and promptly.

Dress Code Expectations for All Clothing

Regardless of uniform or free dress days, clothing must:

- Be safe and appropriate for a school setting
- Not display offensive language, images, or symbols
- Not promote violence, drugs, alcohol, or hate speech

Assembly & Performance Attire

- Certain school assemblies, performances, celebrations, and ceremonies may require **specific attire** to support the purpose, theme, or formality of the event. Examples may include special performances, cultural celebrations, graduations, or school-wide assemblies.
- When special attire is required, **families will receive clear guidelines in advance** from the school or classroom teacher. These guidelines may include color themes, uniform variations, or performance-appropriate clothing. Students may be asked to bring a change of clothes for recess or regular school activities on performance days.
- Appropriate attire helps create a sense of unity, respect, and pride during school events. Students who do not meet the communicated attire expectations may be unable to participate in the presentation or performance. This policy applies to all school-sponsored assemblies, ceremonies, and designated gathering days.

Free Speech



- Students at Sunshine Charter School have the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press as provided under **California Education Code Sections 48907 and 48950**. These rights are protected so long as their exercise does not interfere with the rights of others or disrupt the educational process.
- Speech or actions that are **obscene, libelous, or slanderous**, or that create a **clear and present danger** of unlawful acts, violation of school regulations, or a **substantial disruption** to the orderly operation of the school are not permitted. Speech that constitutes **harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying** is also prohibited.
- The school administration reserves the right to place reasonable restrictions on the **time, place, and manner** in which students may exercise these rights in order to maintain a safe, respectful, and effective learning environment.

Sunshine Charter School

Volunteer Policy

Sunshine Charter School believes that students and schools thrive when families and community members work together to support education. For this reason, the school administration and Board of Directors encourage parents, guardians, and community members to share their time, knowledge, and skills in support of the school.

Volunteers play an important role in enriching educational programs, strengthening connections between the school and the community, and supporting a positive school culture. The presence of volunteers in classrooms, on campus, and during school-sponsored activities also enhances student supervision and contributes to a safe and supportive learning environment.

Sunshine Charter School values the partnership of volunteers and is committed to ensuring that all volunteer activities align with school policies, student safety requirements, and instructional goals.

Definitions

For clarity, the following definitions apply to Sunshine Charter School:

Volunteer

A **Volunteer** is an individual who voluntarily assists with school-related activities and is in proximity to or has direct contact with students. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who regularly support classrooms, serve as instructional or non-instructional aides, chaperone field trips or school activities, assist with after-school programs or clubs, or support athletic or enrichment activities. Volunteers may work with individual students or small groups under the direction and supervision of a teacher or school staff member.

During school hours, all volunteers must **sign in at the school office** and follow school procedures. Volunteers are required to complete a **background check through the Live Scan process** and provide **Tuberculosis (TB) clearance** prior to working with students. Additional screenings or requirements may be required in accordance with **federal, state, or local laws**, including applicable public health regulations. All volunteers must comply with Sunshine Charter School's **Volunteer Policy** and related school policies at all times.

Visitor

A **Visitor** is any individual who comes onto campus for a short-term or limited purpose and does not have ongoing contact with students. Visitors may include parents or guardians attending meetings, conferences, or school events, as well as vendors, service providers, or guests. Visitors must **sign in at the school office**, wear a **visitor badge**, and follow all campus safety procedures. Visitors are not permitted to interact with students unless authorized and supervised by school staff.

Volunteer Supervision, Behavior, and Responsibilities

- All volunteers are required to **read and sign the Volunteer and/or Chaperone Agreement** before being approved to serve at Sunshine Charter School. Volunteers are also expected to comply with the school's **Adult Code of Conduct Policy** at all times while on campus or participating in school-sponsored activities.
- Upon arriving on campus to volunteer, individuals must **sign in at the school office**, report their volunteer role or assignment, and follow all campus procedures. Volunteers must wear **volunteer identification** when required by the school.
- Teachers, school staff, and administrators retain **primary responsibility for student instruction, supervision, and discipline** at all times. Volunteers are expected to work under the direction of school personnel and to defer to teachers, staff, and administrators in all matters related to students and school operations.

Volunteer Training, Supervision, and Removal

Training may be provided to volunteers by Sunshine Charter School staff when needed to ensure that volunteers understand school expectations, procedures, and student safety requirements. All volunteers serve at the discretion of the school and may be asked to **cease volunteering at any time**.

Volunteers work under the **direct supervision of credentialed staff or designated school personnel**. Sunshine Charter School is responsible for the education, safety, and well-being of all students and for maintaining a safe, respectful, and harassment-free environment for students, staff, and volunteers. For this reason, a teacher, staff member, administrator, or volunteer coordinator may request the **reassignment or removal of a volunteer** whose actions are determined not to be in the best interest of the school or its students.

The **Principal and/or Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**, in consultation with school leadership, shall make the final determination regarding whether a volunteer may be reassigned or is no longer eligible or permitted to volunteer at the school or at school-sponsored events.

Service as a volunteer on the **Board of Directors** or on any board- or administration-designated committee is also considered a privilege. Board members are considered volunteers for the purposes of complying with the requirements outlined in this policy. To prevent conflicts of interest, the **Board of Directors** retains sole authority over the reassignment or removal of volunteers serving in board or committee capacities, in accordance with the school's bylaws and charter.

Any individual who has previously received a reprimand or restriction pursuant to **California Penal Code Section 626.7** or **California Education Code Sections 32210, 32211, 44810, or 44811** may be prohibited from serving as a volunteer, board member, or committee participant at Sunshine Charter School.

Confidentiality and Student Records

All volunteers at Sunshine Charter School are required to comply with state and federal laws governing confidentiality and the protection of personally identifiable information (PII). This includes, but is not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and applicable sections of the California Education Code.

Information regarding a student's academic performance, behavior, abilities, disabilities, family circumstances, relationships, or personal matters is confidential and must not be discussed with anyone unless there is a legitimate educational or professional need to know, as determined by school administration.

Volunteers are not permitted access to student records and may not review, copy, photograph, or share student information in any form. Any questions or concerns related to student information must be directed to the classroom teacher or school administration.

Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance

In accordance with California Health and Safety Code Sections 1597.005, 121525, 121545, and 121555, and California Education Code Sections 49406 and 87408.6, all volunteers at Sunshine Charter School are required to complete a tuberculosis (TB) risk assessment and/or testing and receive clearance from a licensed health care provider prior to volunteering.

TB clearance must be current within the past four (4) years. Proof of a valid TB clearance completed within the past four years for another school district may be accepted. Volunteers must provide documentation verifying that their TB clearance is current.

If a TB skin test or assessment indicates a positive result, a chest X-ray will be required. If the X-ray confirms a positive TB result, the individual will not be permitted to volunteer in any capacity that involves contact with students during school hours or at school-sponsored events.

The cost of obtaining TB clearance is the responsibility of the volunteer. Volunteers with questions or concerns regarding this requirement should contact the School Principal or school administration for guidance.

Background Check via Live Scan Process

In accordance with California state law, volunteers who have direct contact with students at Sunshine Charter School are required to complete a criminal background check prior to volunteering. This background check is conducted through fingerprinting and submitted to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) via the Live Scan process.

As part of the Live Scan process, volunteers must present valid government-issued identification and complete all required verification steps. Background screenings review convictions related to crimes against children or the community, including but not limited to assault, sexual abuse, physical abuse, reckless driving, or driving under the influence (DUI). Convictions related to driving offenses may disqualify a volunteer from serving as a driver for field trips or athletic events.

Background check results are reported only to the school's authorized custodian of records as either indicating no criminal record or a record of convictions. Based on this determination, the volunteer will either be cleared or not cleared to volunteer. All background check information is confidential and may not be shared with any other entity, in accordance with DOJ regulations.

The Live Scan background check for volunteers is generally required only once, and clearance remains valid and continuously monitored for the duration of the individual's volunteer service with Sunshine Charter School. The cost of the Live Scan background check is the responsibility of the volunteer.

Volunteers with questions or concerns regarding this process should contact the School Principal or school administration for assistance.

Volunteer Chaperone Drivers for Field Trips and Athletic Events

To ensure student safety, volunteers who wish to **drive students** for field trips or athletic events must meet **additional requirements** beyond standard volunteer clearance. These requirements must be completed **for each specific trip**, in the time and manner prescribed by the school office.

Volunteer drivers are required to:

- Read and comply with the school's **Field Trip Policy**
- Submit a **Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) driving record** as directed by the school office
- Provide proof of a **valid California driver's license**
- Provide proof of **current vehicle registration**
- Provide proof of **current automobile insurance** that meets school requirements

All documentation must be reviewed and approved by Sunshine Charter School **prior to the field trip or athletic event** in order for a volunteer to be cleared as a chaperone driver. Sunshine Charter School appreciates the cooperation and support of volunteer drivers. These requirements help ensure the **safety, well-being, and positive experience** of our students while maintaining high standards for school-sponsored activities.

Sunshine Charter School

PUPIL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

I. Introduction

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy (the “Policy”) for **Sunshine Charter School (“SCS”)** has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students. When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. At the same time, **SCS** intends to provide effective interventions for pupils who engage in acts of problematic behavior to help them change their behavior and avoid exclusion from **SCS**.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students. The Policy will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. The Student Services Coordinator shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy is available on request at the school office. Discipline includes, but is not limited to, advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, community service on or off campus, the use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

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 the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee’s use of reasonable force necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

A student has the right to be free from the use of seclusion and behavioral restraints of any form imposed as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation by staff. This right includes, but is not limited to, the right to be free from the use of a drug administered to the student in order to control the student’s behavior or to restrict the student’s freedom of movement, if that drug is not a standard treatment for the student’s medical or psychiatric condition.

School staff may use seclusion or a behavior restraint only to control behavior that poses a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the pupil or others that cannot be immediately prevented

by a response that is less restrictive. School staff shall avoid, whenever possible, the use of seclusion or behavioral restraint techniques.

School staff shall not do any of the following:

- Use seclusion or behavioral restraint for the purpose of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation.
- Use locked seclusion, unless it is in a facility otherwise licensed or permitted by state law to use a locked room.
- Use a physical restraint technique that obstructs a pupil's respiratory airway or impairs the pupil's breathing or respiratory capacity, including techniques in which a staff member places pressure on a pupil's back or places his or her body weight against the pupil's torso or back.
- Use a behavioral restraint technique that restricts breathing, including, but not limited to, using a pillow, blanket, carpet, mat, or other item to cover a pupil's face.
- Place a pupil in a facedown position with the pupil's hands held or restrained behind the pupil's back.
- Use behavioral restraint for longer than is necessary to contain the behavior that poses a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the pupil or others.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom **Sunshine Charter School (“SCS”)** has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”)** or who is qualified for services under **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”)** is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures.

SCS will follow **Section 504**, the **IDEA**, the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”)**, and all applicable federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom **SCS** has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections, in accordance with due process requirements for such students.

II. Suspension

A. Definition

Suspension is the temporary removal of a pupil from class instruction for adjustment or disciplinary reasons. Suspension does not mean any of the following:

- Reassignment to another education program or class at **Sunshine Charter School (“SCS”)** where the pupil will receive continuing instruction for the length of day prescribed by the Principal for pupils of the same grade level;
- Referral to a certificated employee designated by the Principal to advise pupils;
- Removal from the class, but without reassignment to another class for the remainder of the class period without sending the pupil to the Principal or designee.

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

SCS shall consider suspension only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct or where the student’s presence would constitute a danger to persons or property or seriously disrupt the educational process.

B. Authority

The Principal or his/her designee may suspend a student from class, classes, or the school for a period not to exceed five days. The Principal or his/her designee may extend a student’s suspension pending the final decision by the **Board of Directors of Sunshine Charter School (“SCS”)** on a recommendation for expulsion. Such extended suspension should not exceed ten (10) days, unless specific procedural safeguards are met. Those safeguards are identified below.

On a recommendation for expulsion, the **Board of Directors** may suspend a special education student being considered for expulsion in accordance with laws relating to the expulsion of special education students.

A pupil may not be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this Policy unless the act is related to school activity or school attendance of **SCS**. A pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts enumerated in this Policy and related to school activity or attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, the following:

- While on school grounds
- While going to or coming from school
- During the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus
- During, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity
- All acts related to school activity or school attendance occurring within **SCS**

C. Grounds

The Principal may use his/her discretion to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion recommendations that are age appropriate and designed to address and correct the student's specific misbehavior. Alternatively, students may be suspended or recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts (whether completed, attempted, or threatened) when it is determined the pupil:

- Caused physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from an authorized certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee's written concurrence
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of, any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code sections 11053–11058 (including, but not limited to, opiates, hallucinogenic substances, stimulants, depressants, and narcotic drugs), alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind
- 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 the same as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property
- Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property (as used in this policy, "school property" includes but is not limited to electronic files and databases)
- Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, betel, and e-cigarettes, whether or not they contain tobacco. However, this section does not prohibit the use or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription products
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Unlawfully possessed or offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code section 11014.5

- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property
- 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
- Committed a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 289, or former section 288a, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code section 243.4
- 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
- Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma
- Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. "Hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil 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 pupil. "Hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events
- Engaged in an act of bullying. "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 pupil or group of pupils directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicated to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - Placing a reasonable pupil(s) in fear of harm to that pupil(s)' person or property
 - Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the pupil's physical or mental health
 - Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with the pupil's academic performance
 - Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with the pupil's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school

- An electronic act, for purposes of the immediately preceding paragraph, means the transmission, by means of an electronic device, including but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including but not limited to, any of the following:
 - A message, text, sound, or image
 - A post on a social network Internet website, including, but not limited to:
- Posting to or creating a burn page. “Burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed above.
- Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
- Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
- An act of cyber sexual bullying.
- For purposes of this section, “cyber sexual bullying” means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil 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 above. A photograph or other visual recording shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording or other electronic act.
- Cyber sexual bullying does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
- 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.
- A “reasonable pupil” means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill and judgment in conduct for a person that age, or for a person of that age with the pupil’s exceptional needs.

- Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For the purpose of this section, “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 \$1,000.00, 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 his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of charter school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his/her immediate family.
 - For students in grades 4 to 8, committed sexual harassment
 - Caused or participated in an act of hate violence
 - Carried, possessed, sold or otherwise furnished an electronic signaling device
 - Committed vandalism/malicious mischief
 - Violated academic ethics
 - Falsified or misinterpreted notes or phone calls of parents or guardians
 - Falsely activated fire alarm
 - Habitually violated the dress code
 - Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment
 - Discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, and/or bullied any person or groups of persons based on the following actual or perceived characteristics: those set forth in Penal Code section 422.55, including immigration status, and Education Code section 220, disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or association with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. This policy applies to all acts related to school activity or school attendance occurring within the school.
 - A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this policy, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical

violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury may be recommended for expulsion.

- A student in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, shall not be suspended on the basis of having disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties (the “Act”), and those Acts shall not constitute grounds for a student enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12 to be recommended for expulsion.
- A certificated or classified employee may refer a student to school administrators for appropriate and timely in-school interventions or supports from the list of other means of correction specified in Education Code section 48900.5(b) for any of the Acts.
- A school administrator shall, within five school days, document the actions taken in response to the referral identified above and place that documentation in the student’s record to be available for access, to the extent permissible under state and federal law. The school administrator shall, by the end of the fifth business day, also inform the referring certificated or classified employee, verbally or in writing, what actions were taken and, if none, the rationale used for not providing any appropriate or timely in-school interventions or supports.
- A suspension or expulsion shall not be imposed against a student based solely on the fact that they are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from school activities.
- The above list is not exhaustive and depending upon the offense, a pupil may be suspended or recommended for expulsion for misconduct not specified above.

D. Procedures Required to Suspend

Step One: Investigation

The Principal shall investigate the incident and determine whether the conduct warrants suspension.

Searches:

In order to investigate an incident, a student’s attire,¹ personal property, vehicle, or school property including books, desks, school lockers, computers, and other electronic devices—may be searched by the Principal or designee who has reasonable suspicion that a student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of Sunshine Charter School. Any illegally possessed items shall be confiscated and turned over to law enforcement.

Step Two: Informal Conference

Unless a student poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, a suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference between the Principal and the student. During this conference, the student shall be orally informed of:

- The reason for the suspension
- The evidence supporting the suspension
- The other means of correction that were attempted prior to suspension

The student shall also be given the opportunity to present informal evidence and explain their side of the story.

If the student poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, the informal conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason, including but not limited to hospitalization or detention in a correctional facility.

At the time of the suspension, a Sunshine Charter School employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian. For foster children, reasonable efforts shall also be made to contact the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, reasonable efforts shall be made to contact the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker. Notification may be made by telephone, email, or in person and shall include the reason for the suspension and the date and time when the student may return to school.

If a student is suspended without an informal conference, both the student and the parent/guardian and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

The parent or guardian of a student and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker shall respond without delay to a request from school officials to attend a conference regarding the student's behavior. No penalties shall be imposed on a student due to the failure of the parent or guardian, or the above-listed parties, to attend a conference with school officials.

Reinstatement of a suspended student shall not be contingent upon the attendance of the student's parent or guardian, or for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker, at the conference.

¹ This does not include removing clothing to permit visual inspection of the pupil's underclothing, breasts, buttocks, or genitalia.

Step Three: Length of Suspension

The Principal shall determine the appropriate length of the suspension, which may be up to five (5) school days. When a suspension does not include a recommendation for expulsion, it shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Step Four: Notice of Suspension

The Principal shall complete a Notice of Suspension Form. A copy of this form shall be provided to the student and sent to the student's parent/guardian. For foster children, copies shall also be sent to the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, copies shall be sent to the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

A copy of the Notice of Suspension Form shall also be placed in the student's cumulative file at Sunshine Charter School.

The Notice of Suspension Form shall include:

- The fact of the suspension
- The duration of the suspension
- The specific offense committed by the student

In addition, the notice may state the date and time when the student may return to school.

The notice shall also state that, if requested by the parent/guardian and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker a prompt meeting or hearing shall be held at which the suspension may be discussed. The student may be present at such meeting or hearing and shall be afforded the opportunity to present informal evidence regarding their side of the matter.

Additionally, if Sunshine Charter School officials request that the parent/guardian—and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social

worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that such parties respond without delay.

Step Five: Law Enforcement Notification

The Principal shall determine whether the offense warrants a report to law enforcement. Certain offenses shall be reported to law enforcement authorities in accordance with California Education Code section 48902.

When the Principal releases a minor pupil to a peace officer for the purpose of removing the minor from school premises, the Principal shall take immediate steps to notify the parent, guardian, or responsible relative of the minor regarding the release and the location to which the minor is reportedly being taken, unless the minor has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse, pursuant to California Education Code section 48906.

Step Six: Behavior Contract

The Principal may require the student and the student's parent/guardian to sign a behavior contract outlining the conditions the student is expected to meet while enrolled at Sunshine Charter School.

For foster children, the contract may also require the signatures of the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, the contract may also require the signatures of the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

Copies of the signed behavior contract shall be retained by Sunshine Charter School and provided to the parent/guardian.

Step Seven: Homework During Suspension

Upon the request of a parent/guardian, educational rights holder, or student and for foster children, upon the request of the student's attorney and county social worker, and for American Indian children, upon the request of the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker a teacher shall provide a student in any of grades 1 through 12 who has been suspended from **Sunshine Charter School** for two or more school days with the homework assignments the student would otherwise have received.

If a requested homework assignment is completed and submitted to the teacher either upon the student's return from suspension or within the timeframe originally

prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, and the assignment is not graded before the end of the academic term, the assignment shall not be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in that class.

Special Education and Section 504 Student Suspensions

When suspensions involve students with disabilities receiving special education services or students with a Section 504 Plan, a **manifestation determination meeting** shall be held no later than the **tenth (10th) day of suspension**, whether the days are consecutive or cumulative within the same school year.

The Principal shall notify the student's special education teacher or regular education teacher when the student's cumulative days of suspension for the school year reach eight (8). That teacher shall promptly notify the Director of Special Education of the need to convene a manifestation determination meeting.

The manifestation determination meeting shall include representatives of the Local Educational Agency (LEA), the parent/guardian, and for foster children, the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, the meeting shall include the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker. The meeting shall also include relevant members of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team or Section 504 Plan Team, as determined by the parent/guardian—and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker—and the LEA.

The student shall be treated as a general education student for disciplinary purposes, except that educational services must continue, if at the manifestation determination meeting, **both** of the following determinations are made in the negative after reviewing all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP or 504 Plan, teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent/guardian:

1. The conduct in question was **not** caused by, and did **not** have a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504; **and**
2. The conduct in question was **not** the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

If either determination is answered in the affirmative, the conduct shall be deemed a **manifestation of the student's disability**.

If the conduct is determined to be a manifestation of the disability, the IEP Team or Section 504 Plan Team shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment (or other appropriate assessment for a Section 504 student) and implement a behavioral

intervention plan. If a behavioral plan already exists, the team shall review and modify it as necessary to address the behavior.

In cases where the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the student shall be returned to the placement from which they were removed, unless the LEA and the parent/guardian agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan or updated Section 504 Plan.

For students receiving special education services or covered under Section 504, a **new manifestation determination meeting** shall be required for all proposed suspensions exceeding ten (10) cumulative school days in a single school year.

A student with a disability may be removed to an **interim alternative educational setting** for up to forty-five (45) school days, regardless of whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if the student:

1. Carries or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of **Sunshine Charter School**.
2. 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 under the jurisdiction of **Sunshine Charter School**; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of **Sunshine Charter School**.

E. Appeal Process

A student or the student's parent/guardian may appeal disciplinary actions imposed upon a student for **Sunshine Charter School**-related offenses, **other than expulsion**. For foster children, appeals may also be made by the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, appeals may also be made by the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

Appeals shall first be submitted **in writing at the Sunshine Charter School level** and directed to the Executive Director within **ten (10) school days** of Sunshine Charter School sending the Notice of Suspension Form to the student and the parent/guardian—and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

The Executive Director shall attempt to resolve the appeal and shall provide a **written response within ten (10) school days** of receiving the written appeal.

If the student or parent/guardian—and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker—wishes to pursue a further appeal following the Sunshine Charter School–level response, the appeal shall be submitted **in writing to the Sunshine Charter School Board of Directors** within **ten (10) school days** of the date of the school-level written response. The appeal shall be directed to the Chair of the Board, who shall issue a final resolution within **fifteen (15) school days**.

If any appeal is denied, the student or the student’s parent/guardian may submit a **written rebuttal** to be placed in the student’s cumulative file.

III. Expulsion

A. Definition

Expulsion means the involuntary disenrollment of a student from Sunshine Charter School.

B. Authority

A student may be expelled by the Board of Directors following a hearing before the Board, or by the Board of Directors upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel appointed by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an offense for which expulsion is permitted by law.

Upon voting to expel a student, the Board of Directors may suspend the enforcement of the expulsion order for a period not to exceed one (1) calendar year. As a condition of suspending enforcement, the Board may assign the student to a school, class, or program deemed appropriate for the student's rehabilitation, or impose other conditions such as good behavior, attendance, or participation in specified interventions.

The rehabilitation program to which the student is assigned may include requirements for the involvement of the student's parent or guardian in the student's education, as specified in the program. A parent or guardian's refusal to participate in the rehabilitation program shall not be considered in the Board of Directors determination of whether the student has satisfactorily completed the rehabilitation program.

C. Grounds for Expulsion

Category I Expulsions – Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion

The Principal shall **immediately suspend** a student and **recommend expulsion** if the student is found to have committed one or more of the following acts:

- Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm, when a school employee verifies firearm possession, unless the student obtained prior written permission from a certificated school employee to possess the firearm, and such permission was concurred in by the Principal or the Principal's designee;
- Brandishing a knife at another person;
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance;
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault, or committing a sexual battery;
- Possessing an explosive.

Category II Expulsions – Recommendation for Expulsion Required, Unless Inappropriate Under the Circumstances

A student who commits one or more of the following acts of misconduct **shall be recommended for expulsion**, unless the Principal determines that expulsion should not be recommended under the circumstances, or that an alternative means of correction would address the conduct:

- Causing physical injury to another person, except in cases of self-defense;
- Possession of any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student.
- Unlawful possession of a controlled substance, except for:
 - The first offense involving possession of not more than one ounce of marijuana, other than concentrated cannabis; or
 - Possession of over-the-counter medication for use by the student for medical purposes; or
 - Possession of medication prescribed for the student by a licensed physician;
- Robbery or extortion;
- Assault or battery on a school employee.

Category III Expulsions – Discretionary Expulsion Recommendation

At the discretion of the Principal or the Principal's designee, a student **may be recommended for expulsion** when serious misconduct occurs and other means of correction have been unsuccessful or are not appropriate under the circumstances. Discretionary expulsion may be considered when a student's behavior presents ongoing health or safety concerns, or when the student has repeatedly engaged in serious misconduct that substantially disrupts the learning environment.

In making an expulsion recommendation, the school will consider the student's age, intent, disciplinary history, the circumstances surrounding the incident, and whether alternative or restorative interventions could effectively address the behavior.

In accordance with California law, a student shall not be expelled solely for disrupting school activities or for willful defiance of the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to using positive behavior supports, restorative practices, counseling, and other appropriate interventions whenever possible to support student growth and accountability.

D. Procedures to Expel a Student

Step One: Investigation and Initial Suspension

The Principal shall investigate the incident and determine whether the offense warrants suspension. If suspension is imposed, the Principal shall follow the suspension procedures outlined above.

Step Two: Extension of Suspension Pending Expulsion

At the discretion of the Executive Director, a student's suspension may be **extended pending expulsion**.

If an extended suspension **exceeds ten (10) school days**, or for any suspension exceeding ten (10) school days, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The Executive Director shall provide **timely written notice** of the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights; and
2. **Sunshine Charter School** shall provide a hearing adjudicated by a **neutral hearing officer** within a reasonable number of days. At this hearing, the student shall have a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses, to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and to be represented by legal counsel.

At this hearing, it shall be determined whether the continued presence of the student at **Sunshine Charter School** would pose a danger to persons or property or a threat of disrupting the instructional process pending the outcome of the expulsion hearing.

If the proposed extended suspension is **under ten (10) school days**, a meeting shall be held within **five (5) school days** of the student's suspension to consider the extension. The student and the student's parent/guardian shall be invited to attend this meeting with the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee.

At this meeting, the offense and the potential consequences shall be discussed. An extension of the suspension may be granted **only** if the Executive Director or designee determines, after the meeting, that the presence of the student at **Sunshine Charter School** would pose a danger to persons or property or a threat of disrupting the instructional process.

If the student has committed an offense that requires a **mandatory recommendation for expulsion**, this shall be discussed so that all parties clearly understand the implications. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether the suspension should be extended and may be held in conjunction with the initial meeting with the parent/guardian following the suspension.

Step Three: Notice of Expulsion Hearing

Sunshine Charter School shall send written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian regarding the expulsion hearing. For foster children, notice shall also be sent to the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, notice shall also be sent to the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

The expulsion hearing shall be held **no later than thirty (30) school days** from the date the expulsion is recommended, unless a brief extension is requested by the student or the student's parent/guardian.

The notice shall be sent **by certified mail** to the student and parent/guardian—and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker—at the address listed in the student's official school records. The notice shall be mailed **at least ten (10) calendar days** prior to the date of the hearing.

The notice shall inform the student and the parent/guardian—and for foster children, the educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, and for American Indian children, the tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker—of the following rights and information related to the expulsion hearing:

- The **date, time, and location** of the expulsion hearing;
- A **statement of the facts, charges, and offenses** upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
- A copy of **Sunshine Charter School's disciplinary rules** relating to the alleged violation;
- Notification of the obligation of the student or parent/guardian to provide information regarding the student's enrollment status at **Sunshine Charter School** to any other school or school district to which the student seeks admission;
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to **appear in person** and to **be represented by legal counsel or an advocate**;
- The **right to inspect and obtain copies** of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- The opportunity to **present testimony, evidence, and witnesses**, and to **confront and question witnesses** who testify at the hearing, pursuant to Education Code section 47605(b)(5)(J); and
- The opportunity to **question all evidence presented** and to submit oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf, including witness testimony.

Step Four: Review of Documents

The Executive Director shall maintain all documents that may be used at the expulsion hearing and shall make such documents available for review by the student and/or the student's parent/guardian. For foster children, the documents shall also be made available to the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, the documents shall also be made available to the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

Such documents may include, but are not limited to:

- A record of the student's attendance and grades;
- A record of the student's prior disciplinary infractions, if any;
- A written statement of facts surrounding the incident prepared by the Principal;
- Written statements of facts prepared by witnesses;
- Reports prepared by law enforcement agencies, if applicable; and
- Any other relevant materials related to the case.

Step Five: Expulsion Hearing

An expulsion hearing shall be held before the **Sunshine Charter School Board of Directors**

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, provided that a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be produced if required.

While the formal rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and relied upon only if it is the type of evidence upon which reasonable persons customarily rely in the conduct of serious affairs.

A decision by the **Sunshine Charter School Board of Directors** to expel a student must be supported by **substantial evidence** that the student committed an offense for which expulsion is permitted. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

Hearsay evidence shall be admissible; however, **no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay evidence**. Sworn declarations may be admitted in lieu of live testimony from witnesses when the Board of Directors determines that disclosure of the witness's identity or live testimony at the hearing would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, pursuant to a written request by the student, the expulsion hearing is conducted in a public session, and the charge involves committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in California Education Code section 48900, the complaining witness shall have the right to have their testimony heard in a **closed session**.

Step Six: Decision and Final Determination

The decision of the **Sunshine Charter School Board of Directors** shall be issued in the form of a **written recommendation**, including **findings of fact**, following the conclusion of the expulsion hearing. The **Board of Directors** shall make the **final determination** regarding the expulsion.

The final decision shall be made **within ten (10) school days** following the conclusion of the hearing, or **within forty (40) school days** after the date the pupil was removed from **Sunshine Charter School** for the incident for which expulsion was recommended, whichever occurs first.

If the **Board of Directors** determines **not** to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall be **reinstated** and permitted to return to the appropriate classroom program. A decision not to recommend expulsion shall be **final**.

Step Seven: Notice of Expulsion Decision

Following a decision of the Sunshine Charter School Board of Directors to expel a student, the Executive Director or designee shall send written notice of the expulsion decision, including the Board of Directors' findings of fact, to the student and the student's parent/guardian. For foster children, notice shall also be sent to the student's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker. For American Indian children, notice shall also be sent to the student's tribal social worker and, if applicable, the county social worker.

The notice shall include all of the following:

- Notice of the specific offense committed by the student;
- Notice of the right to appeal the expulsion to the County Board of Education. If the County Board of Education does not hear such appeals, the student or parent/guardian may submit a written objection and request for reconsideration to the Sunshine Charter School Board of Directors within ten (10) days. Decisions of the Board of Directors shall be final;
- Notice of the obligation of the student or parent/guardian to inform any school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment of the student's expulsion status from Sunshine Charter School.

Within thirty (30) days of the decision to expel, the Executive Director or designee shall send written notice of the expulsion to the student's district of residence, the County Office of Education, and the charter-authorizing district (if different from the student's district of residence). This notice shall include the student's name and the specific expellable offense committed by the student.

Step Eight: Alternative Education

Students who are expelled are responsible for seeking **alternative educational programs**, including, but not limited to, programs offered by the County Office of Education or the student's school district of residence.

Step Nine: Records, Rehabilitation, and Readmission

Sunshine Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the school site. Such records shall be made available for review by the **San Juan Unified School District** upon request.

Students who are expelled from **Sunshine Charter School** shall be provided with a **rehabilitation plan** at the time of expulsion. The rehabilitation plan shall be developed by the **Board of Directors**, or its designee, at the time the expulsion order is issued. The plan may include, but is not limited to, periodic reviews and assessments conducted at the time of review to determine eligibility for readmission.

The rehabilitation plan shall include a date **not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion** on which the pupil may reapply to **Sunshine Charter School** for readmission.

The decision to readmit a pupil, or to admit a pupil who was previously expelled from another school district or charter school, shall be within the **sole discretion of the Board of Directors**, or its designee. This decision shall be made following a meeting with the Executive Director, the pupil, and the pupil's parent/guardian to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and whether the pupil poses a threat to others or would be disruptive to the school environment.

Following this meeting, the Executive Director shall make a **recommendation** to the **Board of Directors** regarding readmission.

Readmission shall also be **contingent upon the school's capacity** and compliance with any other admission requirements in effect at the time the student seeks admission or readmission.

INDEPENDENT STUDY BOARD POLICY

These policies apply to all pupils participating in independent study at **Sunshine Charter School** (the “Charter School”). Each student’s independent study program shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of an assigned certificated employee or employees.

Assignment Timelines

For students enrolled in any independent study program, the **maximum length of time** that may elapse between the date an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work shall be as follows:

- **TK & Kindergarten through Grade 3: up to 15 days**
- **Grades 4 through 8: up to 15 days**

When special or extenuating circumstances justify a longer completion period for an individual student, the **Executive Director or designee** may approve an extension, not to exceed **30 days**.

Missed Assignments and Satisfactory Progress

When a student fails to complete four (4) assignments within any 15-day period, or fails to make satisfactory educational progress (as defined below), Sunshine Charter School shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to continue in independent study or to return to the regular classroom-based instructional program.

A written record of the findings of any such evaluation shall be maintained in the pupil’s permanent record and treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. This record shall be retained for three (3) years from the date of the evaluation. If the pupil transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

Definition of Satisfactory Educational Progress

Satisfactory educational progress shall be determined based on all applicable indicators, including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Pupil achievement and engagement**, as measured by one or more of the following, as applicable:
 - Performance on statewide assessments that are part of the **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)**, or any successor assessments adopted by the California State Board of Education.
 - Progress toward English language proficiency for English Learner students, as measured by the **English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)** or any successor English proficiency assessment adopted by the California State Board of Education.
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Missed Assignments and Satisfactory Progress

When a student fails to complete **four (4) assignments** within any **15-day period**, or fails to make **satisfactory educational progress** (as defined below), **Sunshine Charter School** shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to continue in independent study or to return to the regular classroom-based instructional program.

A **written record** of the findings of any such evaluation shall be maintained in the pupil’s permanent record and treated as a **mandatory interim pupil record**. This record shall be retained for **three (3) years** from the date of the evaluation. If the pupil transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

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 - Progress toward English language proficiency for English Learner students, as measured by the **English Language Proficiency Assessments for California**

(ELPAC) or any successor English proficiency assessment adopted by the California State Board of Education.

- **English Learner reclassification rates**;
- **Pupil engagement**, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:
 - School attendance rates;
 - Chronic absenteeism rates;
 - Middle school dropout rates;
- **Completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators** demonstrating that the pupil is actively working on assigned coursework;
- **Learning required concepts**, as determined by the supervising teacher;
- **Progress toward successful completion** of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

Academic Content

Independent study shall include the provision of academic content that is **aligned to grade-level standards** and is **substantially equivalent to in-person instruction**.

Tiered Reengagement Strategies

For all pupils participating in independent study for sixteen (16) or more school days in a school year who meet one or more of the following conditions:

- Are not generating attendance for more than ten percent (10%) of the required minimum instructional time over four (4) continuous weeks of the school's approved instructional calendar;
- Are found to be non-participatory in required synchronous instructional offerings for more than fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled synchronous instruction times in a school month, as applicable to the student's grade span; or
- Are in violation of their written independent study agreement;

Sunshine Charter School shall implement local programs intended to address chronic absenteeism and disengagement, as applicable. These programs shall include, at a minimum, the following reengagement strategies:

- Verification of current contact information for the pupil
- Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one (1) school day of the recording of a non-attendance day or lack of participation
- Development of an outreach plan by Sunshine Charter School to determine pupil needs, including referrals or connections to health and social services, as appropriate
- A clear requirement for a pupil parent educator conference, as defined by school policy, to:

- o Review the pupil’s written independent study agreement;
- o Reconsider the impact of the independent study program on the pupil’s academic achievement and overall well-being; and
- o Ensure alignment with Sunshine Charter School policies regarding:
 - ♣ The maximum amount of time allowed between assignment and completion of assigned work;
 - ♣ Satisfactory educational progress; and
 - ♣ The number of missed assignments permitted before an evaluation is conducted to determine whether the pupil should continue in independent study.

Pupil Parent Educator Conference

For purposes of this policy, a “pupil parent educator conference” means a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the pupil’s written independent study agreement.

Opportunities for Live Interaction and Synchronous Instruction

Sunshine Charter School shall plan to provide opportunities for live interaction and synchronous instruction for all pupils participating in independent study for sixteen (16) or more school days in a school year, as follows:

- **Transitional Kindergarten through Grades 1-3:**
Sunshine Charter School shall plan to provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year.
- **Grades 4-8:**
Sunshine Charter School shall plan to provide opportunities for daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year.
- **Grades 9-12:**
Sunshine Charter School shall plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year.

For purposes of this policy, “live interaction” means interaction between the pupil and certificated or non-certificated school staff, and may include peers, provided for the purpose of maintaining school

connectedness. Live interaction may include, but is not limited to, wellness checks, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction. Live interaction may occur in person or through internet-based or telephonic communication.

For purposes of this policy, “synchronous instruction” means classroom-style instruction or designated small-group or one-on-one instruction delivered in person or through internet-based or telephonic communication and involving live, two-way communication between the pupil and the teacher of record.

Return to In-Person Instruction

For pupils who participate in independent study for sixteen (16) or more school days in a school year and whose families request a return to in-person instruction, Sunshine Charter School shall allow the pupil to return as expeditiously as possible, and in no case later than five (5) instructional days from the date of the request.

Exception for Pupils Under Professional Care

Pupils enrolled in a comprehensive, classroom-based instructional program who participate in independent study due to necessary medical treatment, inpatient mental health care, or substance abuse treatment, and who are under the care of appropriately licensed professionals, shall not be subject to the tiered reengagement, live interaction, synchronous instruction, or return-to-in-person instruction requirements described above.

Sunshine Charter School shall obtain documentation from appropriately licensed professionals verifying the need for the pupil to participate in independent study under this exception.

Written Agreements

A current written independent study agreement shall be maintained on file for each pupil participating in independent study at Sunshine Charter School.

Written Independent Study Agreements

For a pupil participating in an independent study program scheduled for more than fourteen (14) school days, the written independent study agreement shall be signed prior to the commencement of independent study by all of the following, as applicable:

- The pupil.
- The pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is under eighteen (18) years of age.
- The certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study; and
- The certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the pupil's special education programming, if applicable.

For a pupil participating in an independent study program scheduled for fifteen (15) or fewer school days, the written independent study agreement shall be signed during the school year in which the independent study takes place by all of the parties listed above, as applicable.

The independent study agreement shall include a study plan that represents an amount of study equivalent to that required of a classroom-based student and shall be consistent with the Sunshine Charter School curriculum and course of study for students participating in the regular classroom program.

Agreement Content

Each written independent study agreement shall include, at a minimum, all of the following provisions:

- The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting assignments, reporting academic progress, and communicating with the pupil's parent or guardian regarding the pupil's academic progress.
- The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
- The specific resources to be made available to the pupil, including instructional materials and personnel. These resources shall include confirmation of, or provision of, access to connectivity and devices sufficient for the pupil to participate in the academic program and complete assigned work.

- A statement of the school's policies regarding:
 - The maximum length of time allowed between assignment and completion of assigned work.
 - The level of satisfactory educational progress; and
 - The number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation is conducted to determine whether the pupil may continue in independent study.
 These standards shall conform to the requirements set forth elsewhere in this Independent Study Board Policy.
- The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates of participation, recognizing that no independent study agreement shall be valid for a period longer than one (1) school year.
- A statement of the number of course credits to be earned by the pupil upon completion of the independent study program, or for pupils in elementary grades, other appropriate measures of academic accomplishment aligned with the written agreement.
- A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of pupils who are not performing at grade level or who require additional support, including, but not limited to:
 - English Learners
 - Pupils with exceptional needs, as required to be consistent with the pupil's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794)
 - Pupils in foster care
 - Pupils experiencing homelessness; and
 - Pupils requiring mental health supports.

- A statement included in each independent study agreement confirming that independent study is an optional educational alternative and that no pupil shall be required to participate in independent study.

Written independent study agreements may be maintained electronically and may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts, assignment records, and work logs. Written agreements may be signed electronically, provided the electronic signature complies with applicable state and federal requirements and is intended by the signatory to have the same legal effect as a handwritten signature.

Prior to signing a written independent study agreement under this policy, a parent or guardian may request that Sunshine Charter School conduct a pupil parent educator conference by telephone, videoconference, or in person. During this meeting, the pupil, the parent or guardian, and if requested by the pupil or parent an education advocate, may ask questions regarding available educational options, including the curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports that will be provided through independent study, before making a decision regarding enrollment or disenrollment in any learning option.

Independent study plan due to school closure or material decrease in attendance for affected students

For any student impacted by fire, flood, impassable roads, epidemic, earthquake, the imminence of a major safety hazard as determined by a local law enforcement agency, a strike involving transportation services to pupils provided by a non-school entity, or an order issued pursuant to California Education Code section 41422, Sunshine Charter School shall offer independent study to affected students within ten (10) instructional days of the first day of a school closure or a material decrease in attendance.

Students with exceptional needs shall continue to receive all services and supports identified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and may participate in independent study in accordance with their educational plans. Sunshine Charter School shall reopen for in-person instruction as soon as practicable, unless reopening is prohibited by an order or directive issued by a local or state public health officer or other authorized governmental entity.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The Board of Directors of Sunshine Charter School (“Sunshine Charter School” or the “Charter School”) adopts this Student Use of Technology Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement.

New technologies continue to modify the way information is accessed, communicated, and transferred. These changes also influence instructional practices and student learning.

Sunshine Charter School provides students with access to technological resources that may include internet access, electronic mail, and equipment, such as computers, tablets, and other multimedia hardware.

Sunshine Charter School intends that all technological resources, including equipment provided by the school, be used in a safe, responsible, and appropriate manner in support of the instructional program and for the advancement of student learning.

Educational Purpose

Use of **Sunshine Charter School** equipment and access to the internet through school-owned devices and networks is intended solely to support and advance **educational goals and purposes**. Student use of the internet and technological resources is therefore limited to activities that further or enhance instruction and learning.

Students have a responsibility to use Sunshine Charter School technological resources **only in the manner specified in this Policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement**.

For purposes of this policy, “**educational purpose**” includes, but is not limited to:

- Classroom instruction and learning activities;
- Research in academic subject areas;
- Career or professional development activities;
- School-approved personal research; and
- Other purposes as defined by Sunshine Charter School from time to time.

“**Inappropriate use**” means any use that is inconsistent with an educational purpose or that violates this policy and/or the Acceptable Use Agreement.

Notice and Authorized Use

Sunshine Charter School shall notify students and parents/guardians of:

- Authorized and prohibited uses of school-owned computers and technological resources
- User obligations and responsibilities; and
- Consequences for unauthorized use or unlawful activities.

Before a student is authorized to use Sunshine Charter School technological resources, the student and the student's parent/guardian must sign and return an Acceptable Use Agreement acknowledging user obligations and responsibilities.

By signing the Acceptable Use Agreement, the student and parent/guardian agree not to hold Sunshine Charter School or its staff responsible for:

- The failure of any technology protection measures
- Violations of copyright restrictions by the user; or
- User mistakes, misuse, or negligence.

The student and parent/guardian further agree to indemnify and hold harmless Sunshine Charter School and its personnel from any damages, losses, or costs incurred as a result of the student's misuse of technological resources.

Safety

Sunshine Charter School shall ensure that all school-owned computers and devices with internet access are equipped with technology protection measures that block or filter access to websites that have no educational purpose and/or contain visual depictions that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or are harmful to minors.

While Sunshine Charter School exercises reasonable control over content that is created or purchased by the school, it has limited control over content accessed via the internet, and no filtering system is completely effective. Neither Sunshine Charter School nor its staff shall be responsible for the failure of any technology protection measures, violations of copyright restrictions, or user mistakes, misuse, or negligence.

To reinforce these protections, the Executive Director or designee shall implement rules and procedures designed to:

- Restrict student access to harmful or inappropriate online content; and
- Prevent students from engaging in unauthorized or unlawful online activities.

Staff members shall supervise students while they are using online services. Teacher aides, student aides, and volunteers may assist in this supervision, as appropriate.

The Executive Director or designee shall also establish regulations addressing the safety and security of students and student information when using email, chat rooms, messaging platforms, and other forms of direct electronic communication.

Sunshine Charter School, through its Executive Director and/or teaching staff, shall provide age-appropriate instruction regarding safe and responsible online behavior. This instruction shall include, but not be limited to:

- Maintaining a positive and safe online reputation;
- Protecting personal information and understanding the dangers of sharing information online.
- Awareness of online misrepresentation and predatory behavior;
- How to report inappropriate or offensive content or online threats
- Understanding behaviors that constitute cyberbullying; and
- Appropriate responses when subjected to cyberbullying.

Students are expected to follow **safe and responsible practices** when using Sunshine Charter School technology and network resources.

Students shall not use the internet or school technology to engage in or assist others in performing any illegal acts.

Illegal acts include, but are not limited to, activities that violate local, state, or federal law, or accessing information designed to further criminal or dangerous activities.

Such prohibited information includes content that, if acted upon, could cause harm, present a danger, or disrupt Sunshine Charter School, other students, or the community.

The intentional damage, disruption, or disabling of computers, networks, or systems including through excessive electronic distribution, the spread of computer viruses, or other harmful programs is strictly prohibited.

Unauthorized access to other computers or systems, including hacking, downloading or using hacking tools (such as port scanners or password crackers), or attempting to evade network restrictions, is also strictly prohibited.

Social Networking, Oversight, and Compliance

Student use of Sunshine Charter School computers to access social networking sites is not prohibited; however, such access is limited strictly to educational purposes. To the extent feasible, the Executive Director or designee shall implement measures to block access to social networking sites on school-owned computers with internet access when such access does not serve an educational purpose.

The Executive Director or designee shall oversee the maintenance and operation of Sunshine Charter School's technological resources and may establish guidelines and limitations governing their appropriate use.

All employees shall receive a copy of this Student Technology Policy and the accompanying Acceptable Use Agreement, which describe expectations for appropriate use of technological resources. Employees shall also be provided with guidance regarding their role in supervising student use of school technology.

All employees are required to comply with this policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement, as well as any other applicable policies governing employee use of technology.

Student use of school computers, networks, and internet services is a privilege, not a right. Compliance with Sunshine Charter School's technology policies and rules is mandatory. Students who violate these policies may have their technology privileges restricted or revoked and may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or expulsion, in accordance with Sunshine Charter School policy.

Parents’/Guardians’ Right to Know

Title I, Part A Programs

A Title I, Part A Program Fact Sheet for Parents

The Title I, Part A Program makes it possible for schools and districts to expand their basic educational programs by providing additional services and interventions that support students who are struggling academically.

Title I, Part A is one of several federal programs governed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

There are two types of programs that schools may fund through Title I, Part A:

- **Schoolwide Program:**
A schoolwide program allows all students, based on academic need, to receive additional instruction and support funded by Title I, Part A.
- **Targeted Assistance Program:**
A targeted assistance program provides the same types of services, but only to selected students who are identified as needing additional academic support.

Your Right to Know Under Title I, Part A

ESEA requires schools and districts receiving Title I, Part A funds to notify parents and guardians of the following key rights and information:

1. Professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who instruct students
2. Notification if your child’s teacher is not appropriately qualified for the subject being taught
3. Access to individual student academic reports, including information on your child’s progress
4. Notification if the school is identified for improvement, meaning the school did not meet state academic standards in reading, mathematics, or both for two consecutive years.

Your Right to Know: Professional Qualifications of Teachers

Parents and guardians of students attending schools that receive Title I, Part A funding have the right to request and receive information regarding the professional qualifications of the educators who teach their children in core academic subjects, including:

- Reading
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics

This right also applies to paraprofessionals who provide instructional support.

At a minimum, the information provided will explain the following three essential components of an educator's qualifications:

- Whether the teacher has met state credentialing and licensing requirements for the grade levels and subject areas taught
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional status for which state qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived; and
- The teacher's college major, graduate degree(s), and field of discipline, as applicable.

Our Right to Know: Professional Qualifications of Teachers

At a minimum, parents and guardians may request and receive information regarding the following aspects of a teacher's qualifications:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualification and certification requirements for the grade level(s) and subject area(s) being taught;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or conditional credential for which state qualification or certification requirements have been waived;
3. The teacher's undergraduate and graduate degree(s), including any graduate certificates, additional degrees, and the major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

Your Right to Know: Qualifications of Paraprofessionals Who Instruct

School districts and charter schools may employ **paraprofessionals** to provide instructional support under the supervision of a certificated teacher.

- In schools operating a schoolwide Title I, Part A program, all paraprofessionals who provide instructional support must meet required qualification standards.
- In schools operating a targeted assistance program, paraprofessionals who provide instructional support to students served by Title I, Part A must also meet the same qualification standards.

At a minimum, instructional paraprofessionals must have **one of the following**:

1. Completed **at least two (2) years of study** at an institution of higher education;
or
2. Obtained an **associate's degree or higher**.

Notification if Your Child's Teacher Is Not Appropriately Qualified

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), parents and guardians must receive timely written notification if their child has been assigned to, or taught for more than four (4) consecutive weeks, by a teacher of a core academic subject who does not meet applicable qualification requirements.

Report Card for Every Student

Parents and guardians have the right to know how well their child is progressing academically.

Schools operating Title I, Part A programs must provide a report card for every student that includes information on the student's performance on statewide assessments, at a minimum in:

- Reading
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics

School Accountability Report Card (SARC)

California state law has required all public schools receiving state funding to prepare and distribute a School Accountability Report Card (SARC) since November 1988. A similar requirement is also included in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The purpose of the SARC is to provide parents and the community with important information about each public school, including academic performance, school conditions, staffing, and resources. The SARC also serves as a tool for parents and community members to evaluate school progress and compare schools using a variety of indicators.

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

I. Introduction

Sunshine Charter School (“SCS”) recognizes that meaningful parent and family engagement is essential to student success. Research consistently shows that students achieve higher academic outcomes, demonstrate stronger social-emotional growth, and develop positive attitudes toward learning when families are actively involved in their education.

In partnership with families, Sunshine Charter School is committed to fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and collaborative school environment that supports learning both at school and at home. This Parent and Family Engagement Policy is adopted to promote shared responsibility, strengthen communication, and ensure that families have meaningful opportunities to participate in their children’s education, including programs supported through Title I, Part A funding, if and when applicable.

II. Annual Parent and Family Engagement Meeting

Sunshine Charter School shall convene an annual Parent and Family Engagement Meeting to which all parents and guardians of students participating in Title I, Part A programs are invited and encouraged to attend.

The purpose of the annual meeting is to:

- Inform families of the school’s participation in Title I, Part A programs.
- Explain the requirements of Title I, Part A.
- Review parents’ rights to be involved in Title I-supported programs; and
- Provide opportunities for family input, discussion, and questions.

To encourage maximum participation, Sunshine Charter School may offer additional meetings or provide the same information at flexible times, including morning or evening sessions, as appropriate.

III. Parent Notification

Within sixty (60) days of the beginning of each school year, Sunshine Charter School shall provide written notice to parents and guardians of participating students. This notice shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- An overview of Title I, Part A programs offered at the school
- An explanation of Title I, Part A requirements
- A description of parents' rights to be involved in Title I programs
- Information on how parents can participate in the planning, review, and improvement of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.
- A description of the school's curriculum, academic programs, and instructional approaches.
- Information about the academic assessments used to measure student progress and achievement of California state standards.
- An invitation to attend the annual Parent and Family Engagement Meeting, including the purpose, date(s), time(s), and location(s)
- A copy of the most current Parent and Family Engagement Policy; and
- A feedback opportunity allowing parents and guardians to provide comments and suggestions regarding this policy.

All notices shall be provided in a language and format that is understandable and accessible to families, to the extent practicable.

IV. Ongoing Family Engagement and Communication

Sunshine Charter School is committed to maintaining **ongoing, two-way communication** with families throughout the school year. Parents and guardians are encouraged to share feedback, participate in school activities, and collaborate with teachers and staff to support student learning and overall well-being.

The school values families as essential partners in education and will continue to seek meaningful input to strengthen programs, policies, and practices that support student success. Family engagement opportunities may include, but are not limited to, parent-teacher conferences, workshops, advisory committees, surveys, volunteer opportunities, and school-wide events.

IV. Title I, Part A Program Involvement

In order to involve parents and guardians in a meaningful, organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I, Part A programs, Sunshine Charter School will engage parents of participating students through the following practices:

- At the request of parents or guardians of participating students, Sunshine Charter School will schedule meetings that provide opportunities for families to share input, offer suggestions, and participate, as appropriate, in decisions related to their children's education and Title I programs.
- Sunshine Charter School will carefully consider all parent input and will provide a response to suggestions and recommendations within a reasonable timeframe, not to exceed ten (10) school days, when practicable.

These opportunities are intended to strengthen collaboration between families and the school and to ensure that Title I programs reflect the needs, experiences, and perspectives of the school community.

V. Building Capacity for Parent and Family Involvement

A. Standards, Assessments, Title I Requirements, Monitoring Progress, and Improving Student Achievement

To support effective parent and family engagement and to strengthen partnerships among the school, families, and the community, Sunshine Charter School will provide opportunities and resources to help parents and guardians understand:

- California state academic standards
- State and local academic assessments
- Title I, Part A program requirements
- Ways to monitor student progress and collaborate with educators to support student achievement

To support this goal, Sunshine Charter School will implement the following practices:

- **Grade-Level Family Meetings:**

Each grade level will host a minimum of two (2) family meetings per school year. These meetings provide opportunities for parents and guardians to connect with teachers, learn about curriculum and expectations, review assessment information, and discuss practical ways to support learning at home.

- **Access to Public Accountability Information:**

Sunshine Charter School will provide families with access to the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) through a link on the school's website and will assist families in understanding this information upon request.

B. Supporting Families in Working with Their Children

In an effort to strengthen family engagement and support student learning at home, Sunshine Charter School will provide parents and guardians with information, resources, and referrals designed to build capacity and confidence in supporting their children's academic success.

These supports may include:

- **Language and Communication Support:**

Sunshine Charter School will provide information and referrals to community-based English language learning opportunities and resources for families with limited English proficiency, when available. School staff may assist families in accessing these resources and understanding how language development supports student learning.

- **Adult Education and Family Learning Resources:**

When available, the school may share information about adult education opportunities, such as GED programs, literacy initiatives, and community learning programs, offered by local agencies, school districts, libraries, or nonprofit organizations.

- **Family Literacy and Learning Activities:**

Sunshine Charter School will encourage family literacy by sharing resources that promote reading at home, use of public library services, and family-centered learning experiences that strengthen academic skills and family connections.

These efforts are intended to empower families as partners in education and to support student achievement through collaboration, communication, and shared responsibility.

- Sunshine Charter School will provide parent enrichment opportunities focused on effective parenting strategies, family well-being, and strengthening parent child communication.
- The school psychologist will collaborate with parents and guardians to help them better understand their children’s social-emotional needs and the challenges they may be facing, and to provide guidance and appropriate support strategies.

C. Education on Parent Involvement

Sunshine Charter School shall annually educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, other school leaders, and school staff—**with the assistance of parents and guardians**—on the value and importance of parent and family contributions to student success.

This education shall focus on:

- Effective strategies for reaching out to and communicating with parents and guardians
- Working with families as **equal partners** in students’ education
- Implementing and coordinating parent and family engagement programs; and
- Building strong, collaborative relationships between families and the school.

This training shall take place through staff orientations, annual professional development activities, and ongoing in-service trainings held throughout the school year.

To ensure that parent engagement efforts are responsive to the needs and interests of families, Sunshine Charter School shall conduct research within the first thirty (30) days of the school year, which shall include:

Distributing a **parent survey** to families of participating students to identify:

- Skills, talents, and resources parents may be able to contribute to the school; and
- The types of parent involvement and engagement activities in which families are most interested in participating.

D. Coordination with Other Programs

To the extent feasible and appropriate, Sunshine Charter School shall coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and shall conduct additional activities such as parent resource opportunities that encourage and support families in actively participating in their children's education.

Coordination and integration efforts shall include, but not be limited to:

- Designating family engagement as a goal within the school's Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), including related actions, services, expenditures, and annual measurable outcomes; and
- Coordinating parent and family engagement strategies with other school programs, including Special Education, English Learner programs, and other student support services, to better support families in participating meaningfully in their children's educational programs.

E. Other Optional Parent Participation Opportunities

Sunshine Charter School shall involve parents and guardians in the development and improvement of staff training related to the importance of parent and family engagement.

To strengthen the effectiveness of such training, the school shall:

- Solicit parent feedback through annual surveys or other input mechanisms; and
- Use this feedback to improve training provided to teachers, principals, and other educators regarding effective parent and family engagement practices.

V. Additional Parent Engagement Strategies

Sunshine Charter School shall provide parent enrichment opportunities designed to strengthen parent leadership and encourage parents to support and engage other families within the school community.

To maximize parent and family participation, Sunshine Charter School shall:

- Arrange school meetings at varied and flexible times, including morning or evening sessions; and
- When necessary, conduct in-home conferences or alternative meeting formats between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating students and parents or guardians who are unable to attend meetings at the school site.

The school shall adopt and implement research-based and model approaches to improving parent and family engagement.

Sunshine Charter School shall also develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and local businesses in supporting parent and family engagement activities. These partnerships may include, but are not limited to:

- Sponsoring school or family engagement events.
- Providing volunteers for school activities.
- Supporting enrichment programs; and
- Creating internships, mentorship, or career exposure opportunities for students, as appropriate.

VII. School Parent Compact

At the beginning of each school year, Sunshine Charter School shall develop and implement School Parent Compacts in collaboration with parents and guardians of participating students.

The School Parent Compact shall outline:

- How parents and guardians, the school staff, and students will share responsibility for improved student academic achievement; and
- The ways in which the school and families will build and maintain a strong partnership to help students meet California's academic standards.

The Parent Council (or other designated parent leadership body) shall annually review and evaluate the effectiveness of the School Parent Compact and provide feedback and recommendations for revisions, as needed.

VIII. Inclusion of Parents of English Learners, Parents with Disabilities, and Parents of Migratory Children

Sunshine Charter School shall provide full and equitable opportunities for participation for parents and family members of:

- English Learner students,
- Parents with disabilities, and
- Parents of migratory children.

To support inclusive participation, Sunshine Charter School shall, to the extent practicable:

- Provide language interpretation or translation services at parent meetings and school events.
- Schedule meetings and activities that allow families to share information about their culture, background, children's strengths, and individual needs; and
- Provide parents of students with limited English proficiency with information and access to English language learning opportunities, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or community-based language programs, to help them better support their children's learning at home.

IX. Accessibility of Information

Sunshine Charter School shall ensure that all information related to school programs, parent and family engagement activities, meetings, and other opportunities is provided to parents and guardians in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that families can understand.

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

I. Introduction

Research has shown that the attitudes, behavior, and academic achievement of children are enhanced when parents, guardians, or other caregivers are actively involved in their children's education.

To that end, Sunshine Charter School ("SCS") has adopted this Parent and Family Engagement Policy to promote student learning, strengthen school family partnerships, and provide a positive and supportive educational experience for all students.

II. Annual Parent and Family Engagement Meeting

Sunshine Charter School shall convene an annual Parent and Family Engagement Meeting, to which all parents and guardians of students participating in Title I, Part A programs are invited and encouraged to attend.

To ensure maximum participation, the school may hold **additional meetings** and provide the same information at **flexible times**, such as morning or evening sessions.

During these meetings, parents and guardians shall be informed of:

- The school's participation in and receipt of Title I, Part A funds
- The requirements of Title I, Part A; and
- Parents' and guardians' rights to be involved in Title I, Part A programs.

III. Parent Notification

Within **sixty (60) days** of the beginning of each school year, Sunshine Charter School shall provide written notice to parents and guardians of participating students. This notice shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- An overview of Title I, Part A programs offered at the school
- An explanation of Title I, Part A requirements
- A description of parents' and guardians' rights to participate in Title I programs
- Information on how parents and guardians may participate in the planning, review, and improvement of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, including meeting times and locations
- A description of the curriculum, instructional programs, and the academic assessments used to measure student progress and achievement of California state academic standards
- An invitation to attend the annual Parent and Family Engagement Meeting and any additional meetings, including the purpose, date(s), and time(s); and
- A copy of the most current Parent and Family Engagement Policy, along with an opportunity for parents and guardians to provide feedback and comments.

All notices shall be provided in a **language and format that is understandable and accessible** to families, to the extent practicable.

IV. Title I, Part A Program Involvement

To ensure that parents and guardians are involved in an **organized, ongoing, and timely manner** in the planning, review, and improvement of **Title I, Part A programs**, Sunshine Charter School shall involve parents and guardians of participating students as follows:

- Upon request by parents or guardians of participating students, Sunshine Charter School shall schedule **regular meetings** at which parents and guardians may formulate suggestions and participate, as appropriate, in decisions related to the education of their children.
- Sunshine Charter School shall **consider parent input** and provide a response to submitted suggestions **within ten (10) school days**, to the extent practicable.

V. Building Capacity for Parent and Family Involvement

A. Standards, Assessments, Title I Requirements, Monitoring Progress, and Improving Student Achievement

To support effective parent and family engagement and strengthen partnerships among the school, families, and the community, Sunshine Charter School shall provide programs and resources to assist parents and guardians in understanding:

- California state academic standards
- State and local academic assessments
- Title I, Part A requirements; and
- How to monitor their child's academic progress and work collaboratively with educators to improve student achievement.

These supports may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Each grade level shall host a minimum of two (2) parent meetings per school year**, providing parents and guardians with opportunities to meet with teachers and learn specific strategies to support their child's learning at home; and
- Sunshine Charter School shall provide access, through its website or other means, to the school's **School Accountability Report Card (SARC)** available on the California Department of Education website.

B. Helping Parents and Guardians Support Student Learning at Home

To further strengthen parent and family engagement, Sunshine Charter School shall provide materials, resources, and training opportunities to help parents and guardians support their children's learning and academic success. These efforts may include:

- Providing parents and guardians of students with limited English proficiency with **information and access to English language learning opportunities**, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or community-based programs, to assist them in supporting their children's learning at home.
- Sharing information about **adult education opportunities**, including GED or high school equivalency programs, available through community partners; and
- Promoting **family literacy activities**, including programs that encourage families to read together and utilize public library resources.
- The School will provide parent enrichment offerings on parenting skills and parent-child communication.

- The school's psychologist will work with parents to better understand their children and the issues facing them.

C. Education on Parent Involvement

Sunshine Charter School shall annually educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and the School. The training shall take place each year in staff orientations, annual staff development materials and other in-service trainings held throughout the school year. In order to better understand what works best for the current parents of participating children attending the School, the education will take place after the following research is done, which shall be accomplished within the first thirty (30) days of the commencement of the school year:

- A survey will be sent home to parents of participating students which solicits information on what skills each parent has to offer the School and what types of parental involvement programs in which parents would most likely participate.

D. Coordination with Other Programs

To the extent feasible and appropriate, Sunshine Charter School will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs. This coordination is intended to strengthen family participation, reduce duplication of efforts, and support a cohesive educational experience for students and families.

Sunshine Charter School will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement efforts through the following practices:

- **Integration with the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP):**
Family engagement will be identified as a priority within the school's Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), including related goals, actions, services, expenditures, and measurable annual outcomes aligned with student achievement and family partnership.

- **Alignment with Student Support Programs:**

Parent and family engagement activities will be coordinated, as appropriate, with other school programs and services, including but not limited to:

- Special Education programs
- English Learner and multilingual learner programs
- Academic intervention and support services
- Other programs designed to support families in actively participating in their children's education

- **Collaboration with Early Learning and Community Resources:**

When feasible, Sunshine Charter School may collaborate with public preschool programs, community organizations, and local agencies to share resources, information, and opportunities that support family engagement and smooth transitions for students and families.

Through coordination across programs and services, Sunshine Charter School seeks to create a unified, inclusive approach to family engagement that supports student success and strengthens partnerships with families and the broader community.

E. Other Optional Parent Participation

Sunshine Charter School shall involve parents in the development of training regarding the importance of parent involvement for teachers, principals, and other educators, in order to improve the effectiveness of such training by soliciting feedback through annual parent input surveys.

Sunshine Charter School shall provide parent enrichment offerings designed to encourage parents to support and enhance the involvement of other parents. In order to maximize parent and family involvement and participation, Sunshine Charter School shall arrange school meetings at various times or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating students and parents or guardians who are unable to attend such conferences at the school site. Sunshine Charter School shall adopt and implement model approaches to improving parent and family engagement. Sunshine Charter School shall also develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities, such as sponsoring events, providing volunteers for school activities, and creating internship or mentorship opportunities for students, as appropriate.

VI. School–Parent Compact

At the beginning of each school year, Sunshine Charter School shall enter into **School–Parent Compacts** with parents and guardians of participating students. The School–Parent Compact shall outline how parents and guardians, the entire school staff, and students will share responsibility for improved student academic achievement, and the means by which the school and families will build and develop a partnership to help students achieve California’s academic standards. The **Parent Council**, or other designated parent leadership body, shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the School Parent Compact and provide feedback and recommendations for revision.

VII. Involvement of Parents of Limited English Proficient Students, Parents with Disabilities, and Parents of Migratory Children

Sunshine Charter School shall provide full opportunities for participation for parents and family members of limited English proficient students, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children. To accomplish this goal, Sunshine Charter School shall do the following:

- Provide language interpretation or translation services at parent meetings, to the extent practicable.
- Schedule meetings that enable families to share information about culture, background, children’s talents, and particular needs with the school.
- Provide parents of students with limited English proficiency with information and access to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to increase their English language proficiency and assist them in supporting their children with homework.

VIII. Miscellaneous

Sunshine Charter School shall ensure that all information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is provided to parents and guardians of participating students in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language they can understand. Sunshine Charter School shall also provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities, as requested by parents and guardians.

SUNSHINE CHARTER SCHOOL

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE (UCP) FORM

SUNSHINE CHARTER SCHOOL

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE (UCP) FORM

Last Name

First Name / M.I

Student Name

(if applicable)

Grade

(if applicable)

Date of Birth

(if applicable)

Street Address

City / State / Zip Code

Home Phone

(if applicable)

Cell Phone

Work Phone

(if applicable)

School / Office of

Alleged Violation

Sunshine Charter

School

For allegation(s) of noncompliance, please check the program or activity referred to in your complaint, if applicable:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Youth / Homeless Youth Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After School Education and Safety's | <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Court School Pupils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Vocational Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Lactating Pupils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) / Local Control and |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability Plan (LCAP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Peer Assistance and Review Programs for Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> School Safety Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Categorical Aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Technical Education and Training | <input type="checkbox"/> State Preschool Health and Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil Fees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Occupational Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Pupils from Military Families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care and Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant and Parenting Pupils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Nutrition | <input type="checkbox"/> Migratory Pupils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compensatory Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco-Use Prevention Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Impact Aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) | |

For allegation(s) of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, please check the basis, if applicable:

- Age
- Race or Ethnicity
- Ancestry
- Color
- Disability (Mental or Physical)
- Ethnic Group Identification
- Medical Condition
- Gender / Gender Expression / Gender Identity
- Genetic Information
- Immigration Status / Citizenship
- Martial Status
- Nationality / National Origin
- Religion
- Sex (Actual or Perceived)
- Sexual Orientation (Actual or Perceived)
- Association with a person or group with one or more of the above actual or perceived characteristics

1. Please give facts about the complaint. Provide details such as the names of those involved, dates, whether witnesses were present, etc., that may be helpful to the complaint investigator.

2. Have you discussed your complaint or brought your complaint to any Charter School personnel? If you have, to whom did you take the complaint, and what was the result?

3. Please provide copies of any written documents that may be relevant or supportive of your complaint. I have attached supporting documents.

Yes. No

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail complaint and any relevant documents to the Compliance Officer:

Sunshine Charter School
2500 Marconi Avenue
Sacramento Ca 95821
(510) 514-0050

UNIVERSAL COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

It is the policy of **Sunshine Charter School** (the “School”) to maintain a positive, safe, and productive educational and working environment for all students, families, staff, and community members. Sunshine Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in California Penal Code section 422.55. The School also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, as required by law.

Sunshine Charter School is primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations governing its educational programs and operations. However, there may be circumstances in which students, parents/guardians, employees, or other individuals believe that a violation of law, policy, or regulation has occurred within a school program or activity, or when a concern arises involving the conduct of another student, employee, or school-related individual.

When appropriate and feasible, the School encourages complainants to first attempt to resolve concerns informally by addressing the issue directly with the involved individual using respectful communication and conflict resolution strategies. Informal resolution is voluntary and is not required prior to filing a formal complaint.

Types of Complaints to Be Filed Using the Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP)

If a complainant does not feel comfortable pursuing informal resolution, or if the issue is not resolved through informal means, and the complaint relates to one or more of the matters covered under the California Uniform Complaint Procedure, the complainant must use the Uniform Complaint Procedure described in this policy.

Complaints that fall under the UCP include, but are not limited to, allegations of noncompliance with state or federal laws or regulations governing educational programs, and allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in School programs or activities.

If a complaint relates to a matter that is not covered by the Uniform Complaint Procedure, or if additional information is needed regarding how to file a different type of complaint, individuals should contact the School’s administration for guidance on the appropriate complaint process.

Sunshine Charter School

2500 Marconi Avenue

Sacramento Ca 95821

(510) 514-0050

The Charter School shall investigate relevant complaints, as identified below, and seek to resolve them in compliance with this policy. Complaints subject to investigation under the Uniform Complaint Procedure include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group as identified under Education Code sections 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135, including any actual or perceived characteristic as set forth in Penal Code section 422.55, or based on a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, in any program or activity conducted by the School
- Improper charging of student fees, deposits, or other charges for participation in educational activities
- Failure to provide reasonable accommodations for lactating students, as required by law
- Noncompliance with the rights of pregnant and parenting students, including access to educational programs and supports.
- Failure to provide access to required resources and supports for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) students
- Failure to comply with statutes relating to foster youth education, including timely transfer of foster care pupil records
- Failure to comply with statutes relating to the education of homeless students, students in foster care, former juvenile court school students, students who are children of military families, or migratory students
- Complaints regarding the Charter School's School Safety Plan
- Complaints alleging that the Charter School has failed to comply with the requirements of Education Code section 47606.5 (annual updates to goals and annual actions) or Education Code section 47607.3 (outcomes for pupil subgroups), as applicable. Such complaints may be filed by any member of the public and may be submitted anonymously
- Complaints alleging noncompliance with requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- Complaints alleging that the governing body of the Charter School has refused to approve, or has prohibited the use of, any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or resource in a school library, on the basis that it includes the study of, or contributions by, individuals or groups consistent with Education Code sections 51204 and 60040, unless such study violates Education Code sections 51501 or 60044. Complaints filed for this reason may be submitted directly to the Superintendent of Public Instruction if immediate action is necessary and may be filed by any member of the public, including anonymously
- Complaints alleging that the governing body of the Charter School adopted or approved the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction that would subject a pupil to unlawful discrimination
- Complaints regarding school or athletic team names, mascots, or nicknames, pursuant to Education Code section 221.3
- Other violations of state or federal law related to Consolidated Categorical Aid Programs, including, but not limited to, programs supporting academic achievement, compensatory education, English learner programs, physical education, and School Plans for Student Achievement.

Types of Complaints Not Covered by the UCP

Many complaints do not fall within the categories listed above and therefore are **not addressed through the Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP)**. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Classroom assignments
- Common Core instructional content
- Grades and graduation requirements
- Hiring, assignment, or evaluation of staff
- Homework policies and practices
- Provision of core curriculum subjects
- Student advancement, promotion, or retention
- Student discipline matters
- Student records
- Employment-related complaints
- Open meeting or Board meeting issues
- Other general education requirements not covered under the UCP

Internal Procedures

Each supervisor is responsible for maintaining a workplace and educational environment free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or other prohibited conduct. If a supervisor becomes aware of conduct that may constitute discrimination, harassment, or other unlawful behavior, the supervisor shall take **immediate and appropriate action** to address and remediate the situation in accordance with school policies and applicable law.

Making a Complaint

Any person who has experienced or is aware of a situation that relates to a complaint to be made in accordance with this policy (as identified above), has a responsibility to report the situation immediately to:

Sunshine Charter School

2500 Marconi Avenue

Sacramento Ca 95821

(510) 514-0050

Employees who believe they have been the victim of any employment discrimination should follow the complaint procedures identified in the employee handbook. If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing, due to a disability or illiteracy, the Charter School will assist the complainant in filing the complaint. When making a UCP complaint, if the employee or student is not comfortable contacting the Principal or if that individual is not available, the employee or student should contact:

Executive Director or Designee

Sunshine Charter School

2500 Marconi Avenue

Sacramento, CA 95821

CEO@sunshinecharterschool.org

(279) 224-4084

The Executive Director and Principals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP) complaints and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) nondiscrimination notice. A UCP Complaint Form may be obtained from the Executive Director or a Principal.

Anonymous Complaints

Students making a complaint of improper pupil fees, or complaints alleging that the Charter School has failed to comply with Education Code sections 47606.5 or 47607.3, may file the complaint anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with the applicable Education Codes.

Six-Month Limit on Certain Complaints

Complaints relating to discrimination (other than employment discrimination) must be filed within six (6) months of the alleged discrimination or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the alleged discrimination, unless an extension has been granted by the Executive Director or his/her designee. Any extension shall be made in writing. The filing period may be extended for good cause for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days following the expiration of the six-month time period. The Executive Director shall respond promptly to any request for an extension.

Informal Resolution

If the parties mutually agree, the complainant and the Charter School may attempt to resolve the matter through mediation or other informal means. If mediation does not resolve the matter, or if the parties do not agree to mediate, the formal complaint procedures identified below shall be followed.

Investigation of Complaints

If a complaint alleges wrongdoing required to be addressed under the UCP, the Charter School shall conduct an investigation and issue a written decision to the complainant within sixty (60) days of receipt of the complaint. During the investigation, the complainant and/or his or her representative shall have the opportunity to present the complaint and provide evidence or information leading to evidence in support of the allegations. The sixty-day timeline may be extended by written agreement of the complainant.

Failure or refusal by the complainant to provide documents or other evidence related to the allegations, to cooperate in the investigation, or engaging in conduct that obstructs the investigation, may result in dismissal of the complaint due to insufficient evidence.

Complaints shall be handled as discreetly as possible, consistent with the need to conduct a thorough investigation and to resolve the matter promptly.

The Executive Director or his/her designee shall be knowledgeable of the laws and programs assigned for investigation. If a complaint alleges employment discrimination, the matter shall be referred to the appropriate state agency, including the California Civil Rights Department (CRD), as required by law.

Written Decision

The Executive Director or his/her designee shall prepare a written decision that includes all of the following:

1. Findings of fact based on the evidence gathered
2. Conclusions of law
3. Disposition of the complaint
4. The rationale for the disposition
5. Corrective actions, if any are warranted
6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal the decision to the California Department of Education
7. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal the Charter School's decision to the California Department of Education (CDE), including the procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.

Within sixty (60) days of receipt of the complaint, the Executive Director or his/her designee shall issue and send a copy of the written decision to the complainant.

Appeal of the Charter School's Decision

Appeal to the California Department of Education (CDE)

Except for complaints that are not required to be processed through the Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP), a complainant may appeal the Charter School's decision to the California Department of Education ("CDE") by filing a written appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the Charter School's written decision.

The appeal shall specify the basis for the appeal, including whether the facts are incorrect and/or whether the law was misapplied. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the complaint originally filed with the Charter School and a copy of the Charter School's written decision.

If the CDE determines that the appeal raises issues not included in the original local complaint, the CDE shall refer those new issues back to the Charter School for resolution. If the CDE determines that the Charter School's decision failed to address one or more issues raised in the complaint, the CDE shall refer the matter back to the Charter School to make the required findings and conclusions. The Charter School shall have twenty (20) days to complete and submit those findings.

Any employee found to have participated in unlawful harassment or discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Any student found to have participated in unlawful harassment or discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with school policies and applicable law.

External Procedures – Filing a Complaint with the California Civil Rights Department (CRD)

Employees or job applicants who believe they have experienced unlawful employment discrimination or harassment should follow the complaint procedures identified in the Employee Handbook, but may also file a complaint directly with the California Civil Rights Department (CRD).

The CRD serves as a neutral fact-finding agency and attempts to assist parties in voluntarily resolving disputes. If the CRD determines that sufficient evidence exists to establish that discrimination occurred and settlement efforts are unsuccessful, the CRD may file a formal accusation. Employees may also pursue the matter through a private civil lawsuit after filing a complaint with the CRD and receiving a Right-to-Sue Notice.

For additional information, the CRD may be contacted toll-free at (800) 884-1684, by email at contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov, or online at www.calcivilrights.ca.gov. To contact the nearest field office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), call 1-800-669-4000. State and federal laws establish specific time limits for filing complaints. Individuals are encouraged to contact the appropriate agency to determine applicable filing deadlines.

Retaliation Policy

It is a violation of Sunshine Charter School's policy for the Charter School or any of its employees to demote, suspend, reduce, fail to hire or consider for hire, fail to give equal consideration in employment decisions, fail to treat impartially in the context of recommendations for subsequent employment, adversely affect working conditions, or otherwise deny any employment benefit to an individual because that individual has opposed practices prohibited by law, or has filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation or proceeding conducted by the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) or its staff. Any employee who retaliates against another employee, applicant, or student for engaging in protected activity shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Examples of protected activities under this retaliation policy include, but are not limited to: seeking advice or assistance from the CRD or a civil rights agency; filing a complaint with the CRD, regardless of whether the complaint is ultimately sustained; opposing employment practices that the employee reasonably believes to be unlawful; participating in activities that are perceived by the Charter School as opposition to discrimination, whether or not such opposition was intended by the employee; and participating in proceedings before a local, state, or federal human rights or civil rights agency.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prevent Sunshine Charter School from enforcing reasonable disciplinary policies and practices, nor from taking appropriate action where an applicant's or employee's conduct is disruptive or otherwise detrimental to legitimate educational or operational interests, provided such action is not retaliatory in nature.

Dissemination

Sunshine Charter School shall annually provide notice of rights under this policy to students, employees, parents or guardians, school advisory committees, and other interested parties. Upon request, a copy of this policy shall be made available free of charge and is also accessible on the Sunshine Charter School website.

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are disruptive behaviors that interfere with students' ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. Accordingly, Sunshine Charter School ("SCS" or the "Charter School") strictly prohibits all acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

This policy applies to misconduct that occurs on any area of the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities regardless of location, through school-owned or school-controlled technology, and through other electronic means. This policy supersedes any prior policies addressing discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or sexual harassment.

As used in this policy, discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment, intimidation, and bullying include intentional conduct, whether verbal, physical, written, visual, or electronic, including cyberbullying and cyber sexual bullying, that is based on actual or perceived characteristics including, but not limited to, disability, pregnancy, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, race or ethnicity, immigration or citizenship status, religion or religious affiliation, sexual orientation, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, age, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation. Bullying also includes conduct described in the definitions set forth elsewhere in this policy. Such actions are referred to collectively as "misconduct prohibited by this Policy."

To the extent possible, Sunshine Charter School shall take reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying and shall take timely and appropriate action to investigate, respond to, address, and report such behaviors. School staff who witness misconduct prohibited by this policy shall take immediate steps to intervene when it is safe to do so.

Sunshine Charter School does not condone or tolerate misconduct prohibited by this policy by any employee, independent contractor, volunteer, student, or any other individual associated with or doing business with the Charter School. This policy applies to all students, employees, volunteers, and school-related relationships, regardless of position or gender.

Sunshine Charter School shall promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints of misconduct prohibited by this policy and shall take appropriate corrective action when warranted, in accordance with applicable Title IX regulations, state law, and the Charter School's grievance procedures.

Investigator

The Title IX Coordinator may serve as the investigator for complaints of sex discrimination under Title IX. Alternatively, at the Title IX Coordinator's discretion, the investigator role may be assigned to another qualified individual. In all cases, the investigator shall be free from any conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally, or any individual complainant or respondent. The role of the investigator is to act as a neutral fact-finder and to gather relevant evidence.

Decisionmaker

The Title IX Coordinator may also serve as the decisionmaker for complaints of sex discrimination under Title IX. Alternatively, at the Title IX Coordinator's discretion, the decision maker role may be assigned to another qualified individual. In all cases, the decisionmaker shall be free from any conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally, or any individual complainant or respondent. The role of the decisionmaker is to evaluate the evidence and issue a written determination regarding the formal complaint, including findings of fact and conclusions.

Complainants

The following individuals have the right to make a complaint of sex discrimination, including complaints of sex-based harassment, and to request that Sunshine Charter School investigate and make a determination under Title IX:

1. The complainant
2. A parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of the complainant, and
3. The Title IX Coordinator.

If the complaint involves sex discrimination other than sex-based harassment, a complaint may be made by any student or employee, or by any individual other than a student or employee who was participating in or attempting to participate in Sunshine Charter School's education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

Definitions

Prohibited Unlawful Harassment

Prohibited unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following conduct based on sex, race, or any other protected classification:

- Verbal conduct, such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, or slurs.
- Physical conduct, including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement, or interfering with an individual's ability to participate in school activities.
- Retaliation against an individual for reporting or threatening to report harassment.
- Preferential or differential treatment based on any protected classification.

Prohibited Unlawful Harassment Under Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.; 34 C.F.R. § 106.1 et seq.), together with California state law, prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex in educational institutions. Discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities is unlawful. All individuals, regardless of sex, are entitled to equal rights, opportunities, and freedom from unlawful discrimination in education programs or activities conducted by Sunshine Charter School.

Sunshine Charter School is committed to providing an educational environment free from sexual harassment and considers such conduct to be a serious violation of school policy, which may result in disciplinary action.

Sexual harassment consists of sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any of the following conditions exist:

- A. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment, education, academic status, or progress;
- B. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as the basis for employment, educational, or academic decisions affecting the individual;

- C. The conduct has the purpose or effect of negatively impacting the individual's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; and/or
- D. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting benefits, services, honors, programs, or activities available through the educational institution.

It is also unlawful to retaliate against an individual who, in good faith, reports or raises a concern about sexual harassment involving themselves or another individual.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Physical conduct of a sexual nature, including:
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation, or attempts to commit such acts.
 - Intentional physical contact of a sexual nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another person's body, or poking another person's body.

Unwanted sexual advances, propositions, or comments, including:

- Sexually oriented gestures, notices, remarks, jokes, or comments about an individual's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment, or promises of preferential treatment, in exchange for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit an individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation, reward, or favorable treatment, or retaliating against an individual for rejecting sexual conduct.
- Subjecting, or threatening to subject, a student to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct, or intentionally making a student's academic performance more difficult because of the student's sex.

Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications within the educational environment, including:

- Displaying or possessing pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional materials, reading materials, or other items that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, or pornographic.
- Publicly reading, displaying, or otherwise disseminating materials that are sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning, or pornographic.
- Displaying signs or materials intended to segregate individuals by sex in any area of the educational environment, except where permitted by law (such as restrooms or similar facilities).

The examples listed above are intended to illustrate prohibited conduct and shall not be interpreted as an exhaustive or exclusive list of behaviors that may constitute harassment or sexual harassment under this policy.

Prohibited Bullying

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

- A. Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
- B. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
- C. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
- D. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by Sunshine Charter School.

"Reasonable pupil" means a pupil, including but not limited to a pupil with exceptional needs, who exercises care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of the pupil's age, or for a person of the pupil's age with the pupil's exceptional needs.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images by means of the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or other wireless communication device.

Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity for the purpose of damaging that person's reputation.

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

1. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
2. A post on a social network Internet website, including but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a "burn page." A burn page is an Internet website created for the purpose of producing one or more of the effects listed in the definition of bullying above.
 - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of producing one or more of the effects listed in the definition of bullying above. "Credible impersonation" means knowingly and without consent impersonating a pupil such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the impersonated pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
 - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of producing one or more of the effects listed in the definition of bullying above. A "false profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
3. An act of **cyber sexual bullying**, including but not limited to:
 - a. The dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in the definition of bullying above. Such photographs or visual recordings include depictions of a nude, seminude, or sexually explicit image of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the image, recording, or other electronic act.
 - b. **Cyber sexual bullying** does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value, or that involves athletic events or other school-sanctioned activities.
4. Notwithstanding the definitions of "bullying" and "electronic act" above, an electronic act shall not be considered pervasive conduct solely because it has been transmitted on the Internet or remains posted on the Internet.

Education

Because Sunshine Charter School employees cannot always be present when bullying incidents occur, educating students about bullying is a key prevention strategy to reduce and prevent bullying behavior. Sunshine Charter School advises students that hateful and/or demeaning behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable in society and within the school community, and encourages students to practice compassion and respect toward one another.

Sunshine Charter School educates students to accept all peers regardless of protected characteristics, including but not limited to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or cognitive disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration status. Students are also taught about the harmful and negative impact of bullying others based on protected characteristics.

The school's bullying prevention education addresses the differences between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and includes sample situations to help students learn, practice appropriate responses, and develop strategies to respond to bullying behaviors in a nonaggressive manner. Through this instruction, students develop confidence, learn how to advocate for themselves and others, and understand when and how to seek assistance from a trusted adult.

Sunshine Charter School informs employees, students, and parents or guardians of this policy and encourages parents or guardians to discuss the policy with their children to ensure understanding and compliance.

Professional Development

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

Sunshine Charter School informs certificated employees about common signs that a student may be the target of bullying, including but not limited to the following:

- Physical cuts or injuries
- Lost or broken personal items
- Fear of going to school, practices, or games
- Loss of interest in school, activities, or friendships
- Trouble sleeping or eating

- Anxious, sick, nervous behavior, or a distracted appearance
- Self-destructive behavior or displays of unusual or concerning behavior
- Decreased self-esteem

Title IX Coordinator Responsibilities

When notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations, the Title IX Coordinator shall take the following actions:

- Treat the complainant and the respondent equitably;
- Offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the complainant. If the grievance procedures identified herein are initiated, or if an informal resolution process has been offered to the respondent, offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the respondent as well;
- Notify the complainant, or if the complainant is unknown, the individual who reported the conduct, of the applicable grievance procedures and any available informal resolution process, when appropriate;
- Monitor Sunshine Charter School's education program or activity for barriers to reporting conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations, and take steps reasonably calculated to address such barriers;
- If a complaint is filed, notify the respondent of the grievance procedures and any available informal resolution process, when appropriate.

Reporting Allegations of Sex Discrimination

All employees of Sunshine Charter School who are not designated as confidential employees are required to notify the Title IX Coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations. Employees, students, and/or their parent, guardian, or caregiver may report sex discrimination to the Charter School's Title IX Coordinator or to any other Charter School employee, who shall promptly inform the Title IX Coordinator of the report. Complaints may be made in writing or orally, including via email, telephone, or by any other means reasonably calculated to result in the complaint reaching the Charter School's Title IX Coordinator.

Procedures

Sunshine Charter School's Title IX grievance and complaint procedures apply only to conduct that falls within the definition of sex discrimination under Title IX and its implementing regulations. Other allegedly offensive conduct may not fall within the Title IX process but may be investigated and addressed through other applicable school complaint procedures. To determine which complaint procedures apply, the Title IX Coordinator shall review the complaint to assess whether the alleged conduct falls within the definition of sex discrimination under Title IX and its implementing regulations. If a complaint falls within both the scope of Title IX and the scope of a complaint subject to the Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP), both processes may be followed, as appropriate. Parents, students, and employees may contact the School Principal to obtain additional information regarding the School's available complaint process options.

Response to an Informal Complaint

Upon receipt of a report of sex discrimination that does not include a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall offer and coordinate supportive measures for the complainant and explain to the complainant, or the individual reporting the conduct, the right to file a formal complaint and the process for doing so. If no formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator shall determine whether to initiate a complaint of sex discrimination that complies with the grievance procedures identified herein. This determination is not required if the Title IX Coordinator reasonably determines that the alleged conduct could not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations.

In making this determination, the Title IX Coordinator shall consider the following factors within twenty (20) days of receiving the informal report:

- A. The complainant's request not to proceed with the initiation of a complaint.
- B. The complainant's reasonable safety concerns regarding initiation of a complaint.
- C. The risk that additional acts of sex discrimination may occur if a complaint is not initiated.
- D. The severity of the alleged sex discrimination, including whether the conduct, if established, would require the removal of the respondent from campus or the imposition of other disciplinary sanctions to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence.
- E. The age and relationship of the parties, including whether the respondent is an employee of the Charter School.

- F. The scope of the alleged sex discrimination, including information suggesting a pattern of conduct, ongoing discrimination, or discrimination impacting multiple individuals.
- G. The availability of evidence to assist a decisionmaker in determining whether sex discrimination occurred, and
- H. Whether the Charter School can end the alleged sex discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating the formal complaint procedures.

After considering these factors, if the Title IX Coordinator determines that the alleged conduct presents an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the complainant or others, or that the conduct prevents the Charter School from ensuring equal access to its education program or activity on the basis of sex, the Title IX Coordinator may initiate a complaint.

Regardless of whether a formal complaint is initiated, the Charter School shall take prompt and effective steps, as appropriate, to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the Charter School's education program or activity.

A formal complaint is an oral or written request to the Charter School that can reasonably be understood as a request for the Charter School to investigate and make a determination regarding alleged sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations. The Title IX Coordinator may request that the complainant complete a formal complaint form to initiate the process; however, completion of such a form is not required.

Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive and shall be made available as appropriate at any time during a Title IX process, including before or without the filing of a formal complaint. Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, campus escort services, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, restrictions on contact applied to one or more parties, leaves of absence, changes in class, work, extracurricular, or other school-related activities, regardless of whether a comparable alternative is available, and training or educational programs related to sex-based harassment.

The complainant and respondent shall be provided a timely opportunity to seek, from an appropriate and impartial employee, modification or reversal of the Charter School's decision to provide, deny, modify, or terminate supportive measures applicable to them. A party may also request additional modifications or termination of a supportive measure if circumstances materially change.

The Charter School shall not disclose information about any supportive measures to individuals other than the person to whom the measures apply, unless such disclosure is necessary to provide the supportive measures, to restore or preserve a party's access to the education program or activity, or as otherwise required or permitted by law.

If the complainant or respondent is a student with a disability, the Title IX Coordinator shall consult, as appropriate, with one or more members of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team, if applicable, or with one or more members of the group responsible for the student's placement decisions, in order to ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act throughout the implementation of supportive measures.

Response to a Formal Complaint

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall confirm, in writing, receipt of the complaint and determine whether the allegations fall within the definition of sex discrimination under Title IX and its implementing regulations. If the allegations fall within Title IX, the Title IX Coordinator shall follow the grievance procedures set forth in this policy to resolve the complaint. If the allegations do not fall within the scope of Title IX, the Title IX Coordinator shall either dismiss the complaint or refer the complaint to the appropriate process within the Charter School, such as the Uniform Complaint Procedures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall initiate an investigation by designating an investigator and/or a decisionmaker, as appropriate. A written determination regarding responsibility shall be issued within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the formal complaint, unless extended for good cause with written notice to the parties.

If the complainant or respondent is a student with a disability, the Title IX Coordinator shall consult, as appropriate, with one or more members of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team, if applicable, or with one or more members of the group responsible for the student's placement decisions, in order to ensure compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act throughout the Charter School's implementation of the grievance procedures.

Emergency Removal

The Charter School may remove a respondent from its education program or activity on an emergency basis, provided that the Charter School first conducts an individualized safety and risk analysis and determines that an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of any student or other individual justifies the removal. The respondent shall be provided with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

If the respondent is an employee, the employee may be placed on administrative leave during the pendency of the formal investigative process. If the respondent is a student, state and federal law may impose additional procedural requirements prior to or during removal.

Written Notice of the Formal Complaint

Within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide written notice of the formal complaint to all known parties. The notice shall include the following:

- A copy of this Title IX Policy.
- The identities of the parties involved in the alleged incident, if known.
- A description of the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination under Title IX and its implementing regulations.
- The date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s), if known.
- A statement that the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, or an accurate description of such evidence, and that upon request by any party, the parties shall be provided equal access to the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, and
- A statement that retaliation is prohibited.

During the Grievance Process: Investigation

The investigator shall review the complaint and any submitted evidence, gather additional evidence as necessary, and interview relevant witnesses and parties. The investigator may also offer, modify, or terminate supportive measures as appropriate. The investigation shall be adequate, reliable, and impartial.

To ensure a fair investigation, the Charter School shall:

- A. Place the burden on the Charter School to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred;
- B. Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present fact witnesses and other relevant inculpatory or exculpatory evidence that is not otherwise impermissible; and
- C. Review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine which evidence is relevant and which evidence is impermissible, regardless of relevance, consistent with applicable regulations.

The investigator shall provide the parties with an opportunity to review the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, or an accurate description of such evidence, that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint. If an accurate description of the evidence is provided, the Charter School shall also provide the parties with an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence upon the request of any party.

The parties shall have seven (7) calendar days to review the evidence or evidence description, respond in writing, ask the investigator additional questions, and provide or suggest additional evidence for the investigator's consideration.

The Charter School shall take steps to prevent and address the unauthorized disclosure of information and evidence obtained solely through the grievance procedures.

The investigator and/or decisionmaker shall question the parties and witnesses initially and may conduct follow-up questioning as necessary. Questioning may occur in person or remotely, provided that the process allows for an adequate assessment of a party's or witness's credibility when credibility is both relevant and in dispute.

If, during the investigation, the Charter School determines that additional allegations of sex discrimination by the respondent toward the complainant should be investigated and those allegations were not included in the initial notice or complaint, the Charter School shall provide written notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

Presumption of Non-Responsibility

There shall be a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

Extension of Timeframes

While the Charter School strives to complete the grievance process within the timelines outlined in this policy, the Charter School may extend timeframes on a case-by-case basis for good cause. The parties shall be notified in writing of any extension and the reasons for the extension. Requests for reasonable extensions made by either party shall be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Privacy

The Charter School shall take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the parties and witnesses during the grievance process, while still allowing the parties to obtain and present evidence, consult with advisors or family members, speak with witnesses, and otherwise prepare for and participate meaningfully in the process.

Evaluation of Evidence

The investigator or decisionmaker shall evaluate all relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. Credibility determinations shall not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

The following evidence, and questions designed to elicit such evidence, are impermissible:

- Evidence protected by a legally recognized privilege under federal or state law, or evidence provided to a confidential employee, unless the privilege or confidentiality has been voluntarily waived;

- Medical, psychological, or similar treatment records made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other licensed professional or paraprofessional, unless the party provides voluntary written consent for their use;
- Evidence relating to a complainant's sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless such evidence is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct, or relates to specific incidents of prior sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent offered to prove consent.

The existence of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not, by itself, demonstrate consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude a determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

Standard of Evidence

For all formal complaints of sex discrimination, the Charter School shall apply the preponderance of the evidence standard. The decisionmaker shall assess whether the evidence is more likely than not to support a finding that sex discrimination occurred. If the decisionmaker is not persuaded under this standard, a determination that sex discrimination occurred shall not be made.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint

The Charter School shall investigate the allegations contained in a formal complaint. The Charter School may dismiss a formal complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX for any of the following reasons:

The Charter School is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;

The respondent is not participating in the Charter School's education program or activity and is not employed by the Charter School;

The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator declines to initiate a complaint, and the Charter School determines that, without the withdrawn allegations, the remaining conduct alleged, if any, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations, even if proven; or

The Charter School determines that the conduct alleged in the complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations.

Prior to dismissing a complaint, the Charter School shall make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the complainant.

Upon dismissal of a formal complaint, the Charter School shall promptly notify the complainant in writing of the basis for the dismissal. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, the Charter School shall also promptly notify the respondent of the dismissal and the basis for the dismissal, either simultaneously or as soon as practicable after notifying the complainant.

Consolidation of Formal Complaints

The Charter School may consolidate formal complaints involving allegations of sex discrimination when the allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances. Consolidation may include complaints:

- Against more than one respondent;
- By more than one complainant against one or more respondents; or
- By one party against another party.

Where a grievance process involves more than one complainant or more than one respondent, references in this policy to the singular “party,” “complainant,” or “respondent” shall be interpreted to include the plural, as applicable.

Determination Whether Sex Discrimination Occurred

Following the completion of the investigation and the evaluation of all relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence, the Charter School shall notify the parties simultaneously, in writing, of the determination regarding whether sex discrimination occurred under Title IX or its implementing regulations. The written determination shall include the rationale for the determination and the procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal, if applicable.

The determination regarding responsibility shall become final on the date that the Charter School provides the parties with the written determination of the result of any appeal, if an appeal is filed, or, if no appeal is filed, on the date when an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

If there is a determination that sex discrimination occurred, the Title IX Coordinator shall be responsible for coordinating the provision and implementation of remedies for the complainant and for any other persons the Charter School identifies as having had their equal access to the Charter School's education program or activity limited or denied by sex discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator shall also coordinate the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions on a respondent, including providing notice to the complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions, and shall take other prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the Charter School's education program or activity.

The Charter School shall not discipline a party, witness, or other individual participating in the grievance procedures for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct solely on the basis of the Charter School's determination regarding whether sex discrimination occurred.

If the Charter School dismisses the complaint, the Charter School shall offer supportive measures to the complainant, as appropriate, and, if the respondent has been notified of the allegations, shall also offer supportive measures to the respondent, as appropriate.

Appeals

Upon dismissal of a complaint, the Charter School shall notify the complainant that the dismissal may be appealed and shall provide the complainant with an opportunity to appeal the dismissal on the bases set forth below. If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, the Charter School shall also notify the respondent that the dismissal may be appealed.

If a dismissal is appealed, the Charter School shall: notify the parties of the appeal, including notice of the allegations if such notice was not previously provided to the respondent; implement appeal procedures equally for both parties; ensure that the decision-maker for the appeal did not participate in the investigation of the allegations or the dismissal of the complaint; ensure that the decision-maker has received appropriate training; provide the parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; and notify the parties in writing of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

The Charter School shall offer both parties the right to appeal a determination regarding whether sex discrimination occurred, as well as the Charter School's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

A procedural irregularity that would have affected the outcome of the matter;

New evidence that would have affected the outcome and that was not reasonably available at the time the determination or dismissal was made; and

A conflict of interest or bias by the Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) for or against a complainant or respondent generally, or the individual complainant or respondent, that would have affected the outcome of the matter.

The Charter School may offer appeals on additional bases, provided such bases are offered equally to both parties.

For all appeals, the Charter School shall: notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties; ensure that the appeal decision-maker(s) is not the same individual(s) who served as the investigator(s), Title IX Coordinator, or decision-maker(s) for the original determination or dismissal; ensure that the appeal decision-maker(s) complies with the conflict of interest and bias standards set forth in this policy; provide both parties a reasonable and equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome; issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result; and provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

Informal Resolution

At any time prior to a determination regarding whether sex discrimination occurred, the Charter School may offer the complainant and respondent the opportunity to participate in a voluntary informal resolution process, unless the complaint includes allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of a student, or if the informal resolution process would conflict with federal, state, or local law. The Charter School may decline to offer informal resolution if it determines that the alleged conduct would present a future risk of harm to others.

The Charter School has discretion to determine whether it is appropriate to offer an informal resolution process when it receives information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations, or when a formal complaint of sex discrimination is made. The Charter School may decline to offer informal resolution even if one or more parties request it, including where the Charter School determines that the alleged conduct presents a future risk of harm to others.

The Charter School shall not require or pressure any party to participate in an informal resolution process. Participation in informal resolution is entirely voluntary.

If an informal resolution process is initiated, the Title IX Coordinator shall, as appropriate, take other prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within the Charter School's education program or activity. The specific steps taken will depend on the facts and circumstances of each case.

Before initiating an informal resolution process, the Charter School shall provide written notice to the parties that includes the following:

A description of the allegations;

An explanation of the requirements and procedures of the informal resolution process;

Notice that any party may withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution and may initiate or resume the formal complaint procedures;

Notice that an agreement reached through informal resolution will preclude the parties from initiating or resuming complaint procedures arising from the same allegations;

A description of the potential terms that may be requested or offered in an informal resolution agreement, including notice that the agreement is binding only on the parties; and (6) an explanation of what information the Charter School will maintain and whether, and how, such information may be disclosed if formal complaint procedures are initiated or resumed.

The facilitator of the informal resolution process shall not be the same individual as the investigator or decision-maker in the Charter School's grievance process and shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or any individual complainant or respondent.

Recordkeeping

The Charter School shall maintain records for a period of seven (7) years as required by law, including the following:

- For each sex discrimination complaint, records documenting any informal resolution process or grievance procedures conducted, and, if applicable, the resulting outcome.

- For each notification received by the Title IX Coordinator of information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX or its implementing regulations, records documenting the notification and the actions taken by the Charter School to meet its legal obligations.
- All materials used to provide required Title IX training.

The Charter School shall make training materials available for public inspection upon request, as required by law.

Student Wellness Policy



Purpose and Vision

Sunshine Charter School (SCS) is committed to creating a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment that promotes the physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being of every student. We believe that student wellness is directly connected to academic success, positive behavior, strong relationships, and lifelong healthy habits. This Wellness Policy reflects our holistic approach to educating the whole child's mind, body, heart, and character.

Our wellness approach is grounded in the belief that children thrive when they feel safe, supported, respected, culturally valued, and emotionally connected to their school community.

Core Wellness Goals

SCS promotes student wellness through the following core goals:

- Supporting physical health through nutrition education, movement, and healthy lifestyle habits
- Supporting mental and emotional health through social-emotional learning, counselling supports, and positive school culture
- Supporting social well-being through inclusion, belonging, respect, and positive relationships
- Creating a safe and nurturing school environment where every child feels valued and protected

- Building strong school–family partnerships to support student well–being

Physical Wellness

Healthy Nutrition

Sunshine Charter School is committed to promoting healthy eating habits and nutrition education.

SCS will:

- Encourage balanced meals and healthy food choices
- Promote nutrition education in age–appropriate ways
- Support healthy celebrations and classroom practices
- Encourage water consumption and hydration
- Please Follow all applicable federal, state, and local nutrition standards for school meal programs

Families are encouraged to support healthy nutrition at home and send nutritious meals and snacks when applicable.

Physical Activity & Movement

SCS recognizes the importance of daily physical activity for student health, learning, and emotional regulation.

SCS will:

- Provide regular opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity
- Integrate movement into classroom learning
- Support age–appropriate physical education
- Encourage active play and outdoor activities
- Promote healthy lifestyle habits

Movement is viewed as an essential part of learning, not a distraction from it.

Mental & Emotional Wellness

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Sunshine Charter School integrates social-emotional learning into daily instruction and school culture.

SEL focuses on:

- Self-awareness
- Emotional regulation
- Empathy and compassion
- Responsible decision-making
- Conflict resolution
- Relationship-building
- Resilience and perseverance

Students are taught skills that help them manage emotions, build positive relationships, and navigate challenges in healthy ways.

Counseling and Student Support Services

SCS is committed to supporting students' mental and emotional health through school-based supports and referrals when needed.

Support services may include:

- School counseling supports
- Student wellness check-ins
- Small group support

- Individual student support planning
- Collaboration with families
- Referrals to community-based services when appropriate

All student support services are delivered with confidentiality, cultural sensitivity, and respect for family values.

Safe, Supportive, and Inclusive Environment

School Climate and Culture

Sunshine Charter School is committed to maintaining a school climate that is:

- Safe
- Respectful
- Inclusive
- Culturally responsive
- Trauma-informed
- Free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying

SCS promotes kindness, empathy, accountability, and mutual respect among students, staff, and families.

Bullying Prevention and Emotional Safety

SCS takes bullying prevention and emotional safety seriously.

The school:

- Prohibits bullying, harassment, intimidation, and discrimination
- Provides education on respectful behavior
- Encourages reporting of concerns

- Responds promptly and appropriately to incidents
- Supports both affected students and families

Every child has the right to feel safe, respected, and protected at school.

Family Partnership and Community Wellness

Parent and Family Engagement

Families are essential partners in student wellness.

SCS works collaboratively with families to:

- Support student well-being
- Promote healthy habits
- Strengthen emotional resilience
- Build strong home-school connections
- Provide wellness education opportunities for families

The school values parent voice, cultural traditions, and family strengths as part of the wellness model.

Cultural Wellness and Identity

Sunshine Charter School recognizes that cultural identity, language, and belonging are essential components of wellness.

SCS supports:

- Cultural pride and identity development
- Multilingualism and bilingualism
- Respect for diverse backgrounds
- Heritage language development
- Cultural celebrations and traditions

Students are encouraged to feel proud of who they are, where they come from, and the languages they speak.

Wellness Implementation and Continuous Improvement

Sunshine Charter School commits to:

- Regular review of wellness practices
- Ongoing staff training in student wellness
- Continuous improvement of support systems
- Family input and feedback
- Alignment with best practices in child development and education

Wellness is viewed as a continuous commitment, not a one-time policy.

Statement of Commitment

Sunshine Charter School believes that student success begins with student wellness. By nurturing the whole child academically, physically, emotionally, socially, and culturally SCS is building a foundation for lifelong learning, well-being, and success.

This Wellness Policy reflects our deep commitment to educating healthy, confident, compassionate, and resilient learners.

SUNSHINE CHARTER SCHOOL

2026 - 2027 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

AUGUST 2026

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SEPTEMBER 2026

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

OCTOBER 2026

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

NOVEMBER 2026

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

DECEMBER 2026

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 |

JANUARY 2027

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

FEBRUARY 2027

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

MARCH 2027

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 28 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

APRIL 2027

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 |

MAY 2027

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 25 | 25 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

JUNE 2027

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

| |
|---------------------|
| WEEK END - HOLIDAY |
| NO SCHOOL - HOLIDAY |
| BREAK - NO SCHOOL |
| FIRST & LAST DAY |

10 August, 2026 ■ First Day of School 18 June, 2027 ■ Last Day of School

Non Instructional days

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 07 Sep ■ Labor Day | 21 Dec - 8 Jan ■ Winter Break | 22 - 26 March ■ Spring Break |
| 11 Nov ■ Veterans' Day | 18 Jan ■ Martin Luther King Jr. Day | 17, 18 May ■ Eid - UI Adha |
| 23 - 27 Nov ■ Thanksgiving Break | 15, 16 Feb ■ Presidents' Days | 31 May ■ Memorial Day |
| 26 Nov ■ Thanksgiving Day | 10, 11 March ■ Eid - UI Fitr | |