

**2018-2019**



# **Family Handbook**

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# AACA Organization Directory

## **Board of Trustees**

Samer Mohamed	President
Justin Perino	Treasurer
Chris Barber	Secretary
Donald Goldammer	Member
Elizabeth Gutierrez	Member

## **Administration**

Robert Bourgault (Mr. B)	Executive Director
Amy Baker	Program Director
Eileen Higgins	Support Services Director
Sylvia Archibald	Administrative Assistant
Jennie Doherty	Business Manager

## **Certificated Teaching Staff**

Kindergarten	Amy Brabenec & Jeffrey Smith
First Grade	Megan Moerman & Wendy Woodard
Second Grade	Kathy Hanson & Cory Houdyshell
Third Grade	Rena Spooner & Dena Vertrees
Fourth Grade	Lisa Leopard & Joanna Lisonbee
Fifth Grade	Melissa Mudgett
Sixth Grade	
Seventh Grade	Joe Peckham
Eighth Grade	Lisa Fegley
Recreation/Athletics	Sean Sommerville
Teacher on Special Assignment <i>Service Project Based Learning</i>	Jeanne Serge
Teacher on Special Assignment <i>Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment</i>	Carrie Fiel
Resource Teacher	Neille Sybert
Resource Teacher	Michele Miller

## **Office Personnel & Support Staff**

Erin Colegrove	Receptionist
Noemi Bayer	Receptionist
Yolanda Goldammer	Campus Supervisor / Food Service
Shellie Silveira	Campus Aide
Sean Doran	Campus Safety
Constantino Delgado	Recreation Instructional Aide
Francisco Campoverde	Para Educator
Ashley Dritsas	Para Educator
Shannon Heer	Para Educator
April McGill	Para Educator

## **Program Site Council**

Jennifer Barber	President
Brandi Norico	Vice President
Jeanna Akey	Secretary
Keri Border	Fundraising
Erin Westmoreland	Gala
Noemi Bayer	Participation
Jessica Peckham	Enrichment Officer 1
Jill Ogorsolka	Enrichment Officer 2
Advocacy	Melinda Ribnek

## Welcome Letter from Mr. B.

To Students and Families of Almond Acres Charter Academy,

Welcome to another wonderful school year at Almond Acres Charter Academy. Our first five years of operation have proved to be very fruitful and positive. We are transforming public education using innovative instructional practices with a sincere respect for the unique capacities of every child. Our students are thriving in heart, mind, body, and soul. We are very excited about our best school year yet! Our theme statement for this school year is ***Growing Great Kids!*** Working together to fertilize our children's heart, mind, body, and soul we will help them to be and become the very best versions of themselves.

We have formed the infrastructure for a successful school and developed positive relationships between our families, school, and community. In order to become the great school our children deserve, we will maximize our effort to achieve the following targets:

- Affirm the strengths and struggles of TeRRiFiC (trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, and caring) citizens.
- Stretch positive and productive Habits of Mind.
  - Celebrate the awakening of creativity.

Three initiatives for the 2018.19 school year include:

1. Improve leadership and citizenship behaviors of all students by integrating ***The Leader In Me*** systems and activities into all academic and extracurricular lessons. (AACA Focus: Heart & Soul)
2. Improve academic achievement by enhancing the integration of core academic standards into ***Service Project Based Learning (SPBL)*** experiences in all grade levels. (AACA Focus: Mind & Soul)
3. Improve **21st century learning** skills in all grades. (AACA Focus: Mind & Body)

Each of these targets will be measured using a variety of assessment strategies and results will be made public to all stakeholders on a regular basis. A comprehensive Local Control Accountability Plan is available on our website. Efforts and achievements for these goals will be celebrated often at our daily ***Shared Start*** program, on the walls of our classrooms and office, and announced in our online publications.

The 2018-19 school year is about to convene and we are increasing enrollment and adding additional team members.

I encourage every student, family member, community partner, and friend of AACA to share your gifts and talents. Our collective effort and enthusiasm is creating an outstanding school experience for all of our children. I am passionate and confident about our future and look forward to a very successful year.

Let's work together to Grow Great Kids!

Bob Bourgault  
Executive Director

## AACA Mission Statement



*Growing Great Kids!*

**Affirm** the strengths and struggles of TeRRiFiC Citizens!  
**Stretch** positive and productive Habits of Mind  
**Celebrate** the awakening of Creative Thinking

*Almond Acres Charter Academy is dedicated to providing all kindergarten through eighth grade students with an academically challenging and creative educational environment, rich in authentic experiences emphasizing core curriculum, the arts, and character development to ensure students receive the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a dynamic society.*

### Philosophy

At the core of Almond Acres Charter Academy is the belief that the purpose of education is to nurture the unique personality and intelligences of each child; heart, mind, body, and soul. All children have an intrinsic motivation and ability to learn and succeed in and out of the classroom. AACA believes a love of learning comes naturally in an environment that centers on empowering students to be active participants in their own education through service project based learning experiences. This is achieved by providing students with the skills necessary to identify their strengths and struggles as learners, their individual learning styles, and the settings in which they are most capable of excelling. AACA creates cooperative partnerships between teachers, students, parents, and the community that allows students to realize their own unique interests, talents, and abilities. AACA considers successful members of the 21st Century to be those individuals who are intrinsically motivated to learn, have diverse yet well-developed interests, and use positive and productive habits of mind to learn and achieve.

## Family / Parent Participation Policy

The Board of Almond Acres Charter Academy strongly believes that a coordinated between the school and the home in an effort to support learning is essential for student success. All family members are encouraged to support school activities. Therefore, it is the intent of the Board to encourage maximum participation without requiring families to provide a set amount of time, talents, or treasures to the school. We do not require mandatory service from families, and under no circumstances shall any learner suffer any adverse consequences including and without limitation, denial of enrollment or re-enrollment based upon a family's level of service or other contribution to the school.

The value of "participation" as defined by the school is above all, the parent concern and home support of the school's effort to *Grow Great Kids; heart, mind, body, and soul.*

### Family Participation Guidelines

The following activities provide powerful ways for the family and the school to Grow Great Kids!

- **Essentials**

- Attend monthly *Growing Great Kids* parent meetings.
- Assure 95% or better attendance and punctuality by the student.
- Attend parent conferences (two per year).
- Review weekly student academic progress by examining school and homework.
- Read and respond to the weekly messages sent by administration and teachers.
- Communication with the Program Site Council
- Two-way communication with the teacher and administration using the Parent Square.

- **Encouraged**

- Participate as an officer on the Program Site Council.
- Help supervise students during lunch and recess times.
- Attend monthly School Board meetings.
- Support the classroom teacher within the classroom during the school day.
- Assist with school beautification projects on Saturday Family Participation Days.
- Attend class field trips to help chaperone students.
- Support annual fundraising events including; Read & Run Relay, Theater Production, and the Gala.
- Provide enrichment experiences on Wednesday early release days.
- Coach a Destination Imagination team.
- Share personal and or professional skills.

- **General**

- Commitment and willingness to adhere and support the policies and procedures of Almond Acres Charter Academy.
- Consistent and frequent communication between the school and home regarding the well-being and achievement of the student.
- Commitment and willingness to fulfill the family compact.

## AACA Family/School Compact

A compact is a commitment to work together to achieve important goals. A shared responsibility of the school and home to nurture the heart, mind, body, and soul of each student will dramatically improve a my child's success. I understand that my child will spend the most important years of his/her life in school, and I want to support Almond Acres Charter Academy in every way I can to provide the most positive and productive school experience possible..

Therefore, We promise and agree;

- To see that my child comes to school every day, on time and is prepared to learn.
- To call the school in advance and notify the school as soon as possible if my child will be absent.
- To see that my child is dressed according the school uniform policy.
- To make sure that my child has ample time and space to complete homework and projects without distractions from media.
- To speak with my child each day about what was learned at school and how he/she felt about their experiences.
- To ensure that my child reads every night according to the grade level expectation.
- To develop positive and productive citizenship traits including; trust, respect, responsibility, fairness, and caring.
- To maintain a patient, persistent, and positive disposition toward my child's learning efforts and achievements.
- To communicate regularly with my child's teachers to get information related positive and productive learning behaviors.
- To read and reply to all electronic or hardcopy communications from the school.
- To attend all parent-teacher conferences, other functions and appointments related to my child's education.
- To assure that my child does not bring inappropriate items such as toys and electronic games, etc. to school that can distract learning.
- To familiarize myself with the practices and principles of the school's citizenship and habits of mind programs and implement these teachings at home.
- To always act in a professional manner when speaking with someone at Almond Acres Charter Academy.
- To attend most of school-wide activities each year.
- To allow my child to attend class field trips and enrichment events and programs.

I understand that we are responsible for supporting our child's success by participating collaboratively with the school and community.

# Family & School Communications

## Visitors

In order to provide a secure school environment, it is important that AACA knows who is on the campus at all times. **Therefore, ALL parents, guardians, and other guests must enter through the main entrance of the school, enter the facility at the Lillian Larsen administration office, and then proceed to the AACA administration office to check in with the AACA school receptionist.** AACA welcomes and expects parent/guardian participation and your presence on campus. Please respect the learning environment by speaking with the teacher or administration in advance to arrange your visit.

**\*Please ensure that all cellular phones are turned to SILENT while visiting/participating in the classroom.**

The education and safety of your children are our primary goals. All students must be signed out from the AACA office, should early checkout be necessary. The students will then be called in their classrooms to come to the office. Dental and medical appointments should be made after school whenever possible. To help ensure that only those with official school business are on school grounds, participants are required to have a visitor pass while on campus.

## Communication

### General

- **Parent Square:** AACA utilizes a social media style platform, called Parent Square, to keep parents/guardians informed about curriculum as well as all school happenings, from fundraisers to picture day. Parents/guardians can tailor when and how they receive notification that something new has been posted to Parent Square. Each student is assigned to their teacher's "group" which enables the teacher to post class specific information and share photos of students, while still preserving other's rights to privacy. Due to the fact that Parent Square is created to specifically fit our school, **anything posted within Parent Square is NOT to be shared** in any manner on other social media platforms.
- **Email:** On occasion, AACA may utilize an email system to keep parents/guardians involved in school news and programs. In order to protect the privacy of our families, all email communications that are sent out on behalf of AACA will employ the blind carbon copy (BCC) feature. There are computers available on campus, and in public libraries, for families who do not have internet access at home. Parents/guardians who would prefer to receive hard copies of the information included in the emails should let the front office know as soon as possible.
- **The Executive Director's Weekly Message:** The Executive Director will post a weekly message to Parent Square summarizing the *Habit of the Week*, current events and alerting families to other important information. Upcoming events are also highlighted in the weekly Parent Square notification.
- **Website:** The AACA website is a dynamically generated website based upon user input and is regularly updated. It is an excellent resource for current events and AACA documents. Included is a master calendar, as well as information about enrollment and participation. Community members and potential AACA families should be directed to the website for information about the school.
- **Friday Folders:** Each student will have a *Friday Folder* that will be sent home each Friday. This folder will include school wide information, as well as specific class information. There are two sides to the folders, one labeled "keep at home" and the other labeled "bring back to school".

### Teacher

- **Meet The Teacher Picnic:** A school-wide picnic is held the Friday evening prior to school opening. This event allows children to meet their teacher and be introduced to the entire Almond Acres staff, and provides an opportunity for new families, as well as returning families, to connect with one another.
- **Back-to-School Night:** This is a night for families to receive general information about the school and specific information about their child's classroom program. Teachers share their philosophy, academic

expectations, curriculum, routines, preferred communication method, and parent/guardian involvement opportunities. This is an appropriate time for general questions but not for individual conferencing about concerns for your child.

- **Conferences:** Teachers run a bit differently based on the developmental stages of the children at their grade level. However, for all grades, your child is an important part of the conference, so please make sure your child attends with you. In some grades, the teacher will ask your child to do some reflection before the conference and be a very active participant during the conference. While there will be scheduled conferences, you may request a meeting with your child's teacher at any time during the year.
- **Regular Curriculum Communication:** All classroom teachers send out bi-weekly curriculum and class activity updates to the parents/guardians in their classrooms via Parent Square. Teachers may also communicate with families via email, written notes, and phone calls. Classroom teachers will discuss mode, frequency, and other expectations (their role and the families') for effective communication during Back-to-School Night.
- **Communications about your Child:** Teachers generate progress reports and report cards three times a year (once/trimester). Report cards are standards-based according to grade level. Teachers will also send home graded assignments, projects, and assessments throughout the trimester to keep parents/guardians aware of their child's progress. Teachers are willing to have face-to-face or phone conferences when necessary. Many teachers find email the most efficient method of communication for parent/guardian questions, issues, and concerns. Teachers are committed to responding to messages and emails within a reasonable amount of time.

**Please understand that staff are not expected to respond to phone messages or emails after hours or on the weekends (or non-working days for part-time staff).**

## **Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Teacher directed conferences may be held whenever a teacher feels that a student's academic and/or social progress needs to be discussed with the parent/guardian. It is important for the student to be present during this conference, so everyone has a clear picture of the goals that have been created, interventions that will be put into place, and any next steps for success.

At AACA, two types of conferences may occur:

1. student led/teacher assisted
2. parent requested

**Student Led and Teacher Assisted** conferences are a time for students to take an active role in sharing about their progress in school. It allows the students to act as the leaders and the teacher and parent/guardian to act as the supporters. Students are able to share what they have learned, their reflections on themselves as learners, and discuss which goals they have accomplished. During this time, students will assist in goal setting and share their Personalized Learning Portfolios (PLP), which will include their work samples. Teachers will be there to support the students during this time and to then share grades, and address any concerns that they may have regarding the student's progress. Parents and guardians are there to support their child, and then to ask any questions that they have. Together, new goals are created for the upcoming trimester and further steps are discussed. These conferences allow students to feel empowered and can be highly effective in helping students be more successful learners.

**Parent/guardian requested** conferences can be scheduled as needed. They may take place when there is a question or concern that needs to be addressed. It is important that you contact your child's teacher in order to schedule a conference that is convenient for both of you.

Conferences are one of many avenues for teachers and parents/guardians to communicate about students' progress. It is extremely important that parents/guardians are present for conferences. If a conflict arises, and a conference needs to be rescheduled, please contact your child's teacher before the appointment day.

## **Grades and Evaluation of Student Achievement**

Students and parents/guardians have the right to receive grades that represent an accurate evaluation of a student's achievement. Teachers shall evaluate a student's work in relation to standards that apply to all students at his/her grade level, not in relation to the work of other students in one particular class.

Grades are based on impartial, consistent observation of the quality of the student's work and his/her mastery of content through classroom participation, assignments, projects, and assessments. The student's behavior and effort shall be reported in separate evaluations, not in his/her academic grade. The scoring guide used for assignments and report cards is as follows:

- 4 – exceeds grade level expectations
- 3 – meets grade level expectations
- 2 – approaches grade level expectations
- 1 – below grade level expectations

## **Report Cards**

Standards Based Report Cards are given at the student-parent-teacher conference time in December. Then, in March and June, your child's report card will be sent home with your child, unless a conference is scheduled.

## **Parent/Guardian Surveys**

During the school year, parents/guardians may be asked to complete a School Effectiveness Survey about all aspects of our programs. The results of these surveys are reviewed by the Administration and Board of Directors and serve as important feedback for the School's continuous improvement process.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are an important part of your child's educational experience here at AACA. Field trips will be as frequent as possible and based on the current curricula and projects. The students acquire an incredible amount of knowledge by going on these trips. Permission slips are required for each field trip and your child's teacher will request donations to offset the costs. All parents/guardians who would like to attend field trips as chaperones or guests must have their TB test, complete the Volunteer Handbook and Live Scan results on file.

## **School Food Services and Cafeteria Meals**

Hot lunch services will be provided through the San Miguel Joint Union School District on the Lillian Larsen campus. Hot lunch will be delivered to the AACA dining area on a daily basis. The cost for lunch is \$2.50 and the monthly menu will be distributed through Friday Folders and posted on both Parent Square and the AACA website.

AACA participates in the National School Lunch Program through San Miguel Joint Union School District. Applications for the free or reduced price lunch program are distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year. Eligibility is determined by family size and income per USDA guidelines. Parents who wish to apply during the school year or did not receive an application may obtain one in the office and online. You must reapply each year when school begins to receive these services.

Parents/guardians should add money to their child's account through Yolanda in the AACA office. If you send money with your child, it needs to be in an envelope or Ziploc baggie with your child's name on it. Checks need to be made out to Lillian Larsen Elementary. Any check that is returned by the bank is subject to service charges

and if not repaid within the time limit will be forwarded to the San Luis Obispo County District Attorney's office for collection.

## **Money and Valuable Articles**

Students should not bring large amounts of money or other valuable items to school. **Students should not leave any valuables in their backpacks, as they may be left unattended during the school day.** The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **Theft, Vandalism, and Damage Report**

All incidents involving theft, damage, vandalism, or any other unusual circumstances are to be reported to the AACA office immediately.

## **Lost and Found**

Articles found will be placed in the Lost and Found for children and parents to check. To ensure recovery of lost items, we request the child's name be printed on any item brought to school. Items remaining in the Lost and Found for an extended period of time may be subject to donation. We ask that children do not bring toys, cameras, radios, CD players, etc. to school unless it is requested by the teacher for sharing or a project and then we ask that it be labeled, bagged, and kept in the student's classroom.

## Student Attendance

It is the legal responsibility of parents/guardians to see that children ages six to eighteen years old attend school. Research shows that students with excessive absences fall behind academically, perform at a lower level, and actually impact school services (attendance personnel, teachers' time, and discipline personnel) significantly more than their peers who attend regularly, regardless of whether or not their work is made up. **Regular attendance is essential to a student's success!**

School funding is negatively impacted by excessive absences as follows: residents pay property and other taxes, a portion of which goes to the State of California for public education. The state then sends this money back to the schools based on a complicated formula using the number of students enrolled and their average daily attendance (ADA) for a specific period of time. If attendance drops, so does funding. This ultimately affects the services that can be provided to our students, as well as the programming, staffing, and supplies that will be offered on campus.

## Attendance Requirements

Recognizing the importance of attendance, we are asking that, as parents and guardians, you make every attempt to minimize absences due to personal business and vacations when school is in session. We encourage families to plan their vacations during school vacation time, using the school calendar, and miss only those times that are necessary, returning for the remainder of the day.

All absences will be classified as Excused or Unexcused as defined below:

- **Excused absences** are those absences due to illness, immediate family bereavement, or doctor appointments that cannot be scheduled during non-school hours. When a student is absent more than 3 consecutive days during the school year for illness, the school will require verification by a physician. Excessive excused absences (more than eight per trimester) may result in a referral to the Executive Director and enrollment eligibility review.
- **Unexcused absences** include all other absences not considered excused. This includes personal business and family emergencies. Students with excessive unexcused absences (more than three per trimester) are considered truant and may be referred to the Executive Director for an enrollment eligibility review.

## Student Attendance Accountability System (SAAS)

**Step 1-** Letter Notification: In October, all students' attendance is reviewed. If a student has missed 10% of school, a letter will be sent home.

**Step 2-** Parent/School Conference: Students' progress will be reviewed each month. If there is no improvement in attendance, a parent meeting will be scheduled.

**Step 3-** Contact Law Enforcement: If there continues to be no improvement with attendance after the parent conference, the School Resource Officer will conduct a home visit, and the District Attorney's office will be notified.

- ❖ At anytime during the school year that a student's attendance exceeds 10% of the year, the SAAS process will occur.

### Parents / Students should:

- Schedule vacations and other non-school activities during school vacations.

- Know the school schedule and try to make appointments during non-school hours. Post the school calendar in an obvious place for reference.
- Be sure to come to school for at least part of the day if an appointment must be scheduled during school hours. In other words, miss only those classes absolutely necessary.
- Know that excellent attendance is important to their future and personal growth.
- Inquire with your child's teacher about a temporary independent study plan at least a week in advance if your child needs to be out of school for an extended period of time.

## Absence Verifications

According to **the Student Attendance Accountability System (SAAS) requirements**, absences from school must be verified by the student's parent or legal guardian in person, by written note, or by telephone. An answering machine is available to record absences twenty-four hours a day. Please call the AACA office to record absence verification.

When calling or sending a note, please state:

- student's name
- teacher's name
- date(s) of absence
- reason for absence
- your name and relationship to the student

When sending a note, please include your signature.

## Tardiness

Any absence after 8:00 a.m. is considered tardiness. Students who are late to school in the morning must report directly to the office for a tardy slip. A student is considered truant when the student has an unexcused absence of more than 30 minutes on three or more days. If a student has been to a medical appointment, please bring a doctor's note to school to verify the tardiness. Parents of students with significant attendance or tardy problems will be referred to school administration to discuss the concern.

3 tardies = 1 truancy and 3 truanies = 1 absence (these absences count towards the 10% of the SAAS process)

## Perfect Attendance

Perfect Attendance awards will be given at the end of the school year for any child who does not have any absences and has fewer than 3 tardies.

## Release of Students to Parents

There may be occasions during the year when it is necessary for parents to take their children from school for part of the day. If such an occasion arises, please follow these procedures:

1. The parent should **first** go to the AACA office and indicate the name of the child, the room or teacher, and the reason for being taken from school.
2. So there may be a minimum of disturbance to the educational program, the office staff will call the teacher on the phone and have the child sent to the office.
3. The child must report to the office before leaving school.
4. The parent is then requested to fill out and sign the checkout sheet located in the office.

5. A child will not be released to anyone except the parent or the parent's designee as indicated on the emergency card. **Please be sure you fill out this information every year.** In addition, a change in any of the following should be reported to the school immediately:
- Parent/Guardian's home, work, and/or cell phone number.
  - Physician's name and phone number.
  - Name, address, and phone number of friend/relative to be contacted when the parent is not available. This is **VERY IMPORTANT**. We recommend at least three back-up numbers.
  - Daycare provider's name and phone number (when applicable).

## **Make Up Work**

The teacher of any class from which a student has an excused absence shall determine, pursuant to regulations of the governing board, what assignments the student shall make up and the time period in which the student shall complete such assignments. Make-up tests and assignments may be the same as those missed or shall be a reasonable equivalent as set forth in the Education Code.

When requesting homework for your child, please do so when leaving your absence message on the answering machine or by calling the office before lunchtime. Homework assignments will be available in your child's classroom at the end of the school day.

## **Health Services**

### **Medications at School**

If your child needs to take any medication at school, you must complete a medical authorization form. These forms are available in the office. Medication includes prescription drugs as well as inhalers and over the counter preparations such as Tylenol, pain medication, cough syrup, and cold medications. If your child uses an inhaler, please contact the school office for updated information which may allow your child to carry an inhaler if authorized by the child's physician. All medications must be in their original containers. If your child must take a prescription drug three times a day, it can be administered in the morning before school, immediately after school, and again at bedtime. This schedule should be used to avoid giving medication at school unnecessarily.

In most instances the parent is urged, with the help of a family physician, to work out a schedule of giving medication outside of school hours. Any student who is required to take medication during the school day (either medication prescribed for him/her by a physician or over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol, cough syrup, etc.) may be assisted by designated school personnel. However, the school must receive:

- A written statement from such physician detailing the method, amount, and the time schedules by which such medication is to be taken.
- A written statement from the parent or guardian of the pupil indicating the desire that the school district assist the pupil in the matters set forth in the physician's statement. This authorization must be renewed each year. All medication must be in the original container with instructions that correspond with the physicians' orders. Medication must be kept in the office and delivered to the office by an adult. Sample inhalers cannot be administered at school. Specific forms are available in the office if your child must take medication at school. (E.C. Section 49423)

**A parent/guardian may come to the school and administer medication should they choose not to complete the medication release form.**

In the case of preventive medication (for bee stings, allergy, asthma attack, etc.), the prescribed medication will be kept in the school office. Students can only carry emergency medications if the physician and parent specifically order it. As outlined above, a written statement must be provided by the parent and physician detailing

such a request. Please notify the office if your child will require medication on a field trip. The school will prepare the medication for the teacher to administer.

## Immunization Records

All students must show proof of having received required immunizations before school entry is permitted. These records are checked and maintained by the office staff. Students found to be out of compliance will be excluded until requirements are met.

## Health Screenings

Certain health screenings at school will be performed as directed by the State of California. If you want your child to be exempt from examinations or any of the screenings listed below, file a written statement yearly with the school refusing such an exam. However, when there is good reason to believe that your child is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, he/she may be sent home and shall not be permitted to return to school until the period of contagion or infection has passed.

- Vision Appraisal (E.C. Section 49451): Your child's vision will be checked in grades one through eight (by an authorized professional) at least every third year, unless you present to the school a certificate from a physician or optometrist verifying prior testing or a note stating that it violates your personal beliefs.
- Hearing Tests (E.C. Section 49455): The school district is required to provide for periodic testing of hearing of each student enrolled unless you submit a written denial of consent. (E.C. Section 49452)
- Dental Screening (E.C. Section 49452): Dental screening may be performed on students in grades kindergarten through five by a volunteer dentist. This screening is not mandated.

## Emergencies

In case of a serious injury or other health situation, 911 will be called. AACA will attempt to contact you immediately.

**Please make sure you provide the school with current telephone numbers where you or other designated adults can be reached in an emergency.**

## Procedures for Sick Children at School

AACA does not have facilities or adequate staff to care for sick children. Any student not well enough to participate in the classroom will be sent home. This is not only in the best interest of the child, but serves as protection for the other children as well. AACA understands that, in working families, business often prevents the swift retrieval of ill children. This creates a situation that endangers the health of other students and staff, and can be emotionally unsettling for the student who is waiting to be picked up. Parents/guardians are asked to make prior arrangements for someone to transport and care for their child if such a situation should arise.

- **Fever with or without other symptoms** - before returning to school, the child must be fever free for at least 24 hours (including low-grade) without the assistance of medication. Your child is still contagious when running a fever.
- **Common Cold** - exclusion from class may be necessary when there is continued coughing and/or nasal discharge. Children are considered contagious at this time.
- **Vomiting** - the child must be kept home until they have gone 24 hours without vomiting. If a child vomits at school they will be sent home immediately.

## Guidelines for Exclusion from School

Certain symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children who have the symptoms listed below should be excluded from school until:

- A physician has certified that the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent or that they are no longer a threat to the health of other children at school
- The symptoms have substantially subsided.

#### Exclusion Symptoms

- FEVER- 100°F or higher within the previous 24 hours.
- VOMITING- One or more times.
- RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS- Difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing, high-pitched, croup-like, or whooping sound after coughing.
- DIARRHEA
- SORE THROAT OR SWOLLEN NECK GLANDS
- SKIN PROBLEMS- Rashes and sores, especially if infected.
- PINK EYE (Conjunctivitis) - Watering, irritation, and redness of the white part of the eye and/or the lining of the eyelids, and/or pus-like discharge. Pink Eye is extremely contagious. The child is contagious from the onset of signs and symptoms and while the eye is still red and/or draining. Signs of any symptoms must be “gone” for at least 24 hours before the child returns to school. Careful hand washing after contact with discharge from the eyes or articles soiled with the discharge is necessary. This must be treated with medication from a physician.
- HEAD LICE

## Student Dress and Grooming

### **Guidelines for Student Dress and Grooming at School / School Activities**

AACA has adopted a Dress Code Policy that includes the requirement of uniforms. It is our belief, and research based, that this uniform requirement creates an environment of equality that allows students to more easily focus on the learning process. We want to minimize distractions in the classroom. AACA students are expected to follow standards of cleanliness, neatness and modesty in everything they wear. We rely on parents to support the school's dress code policy by making sure their children leave home properly groomed and dressed for school.

Parents may purchase the embroidered uniform polo shirts, short or long sleeve, from the online retailer Epluno through the school's website. The AACA logo, white lettering and silver inner shaded circle, must be embroidered on all student polo shirts. During cold weather, a long-sleeved white, gray, or navy shirt may be worn underneath. Shirts must be tucked into pants, shorts, etc.

Parents may purchase navy or khaki uniform pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, or jumpers from a uniform retailer of their choice. Denim and cargo style are NOT acceptable. Boys' shorts must be at or above the knee. Girls' skirts, skorts, jumpers, or shorts must be no more than 3½ inches above the top of the knee when standing. (Hint: use a credit card lengthwise to measure.) White, gray, or navy leggings or tights maybe underneath.

Belts are encouraged to be worn and need to be plain brown, black, or navy. Fake nails, make-up, and large pieces of jewelry are not appropriate for school. Girls may wear up to two earrings per ear. The earrings must be post/stud type for safety reasons. Boys may not wear earrings. Hair needs to be natural color. Temporary tattoos of any kind are not allowed.

Navy or white sweatshirts or sweaters, either plain or with the AACA logo, may be worn over polo shirts during the cooler months. Jackets may be any color, but may not be worn in the classroom.

Hats are allowed as long as they have an AACA identification. During cooler months, beanies are allowed as long as they are navy and have the AACA identification. Hats and beanies may not be worn indoors and are available for purchase through the school's website.

Students are required to wear closed-toed shoes in a neutral color (white, navy, black, gray, or dark brown). They must be good for running and playing. Flat-heeled boots are acceptable, but they may not be UGG style. All boots, including rain boots, must be a neutral color. Socks must be worn at all times and must also be white, navy, black or gray.

All clothing must be clean, neat, in good condition and appropriately sized. Any item that is extremely loose or tight is unacceptable. Students who are not in proper AACA uniform will be sent to the office.

**Parents/guardians will be called** and/or a written warning that details the uniform infraction will require a parent signature. Parent/guardians will be expected to bring appropriate clothing to their child, or they may be outfitted in borrowed AACA uniform clothing. All borrowed items must be washed and returned within 3 days. If there are no appropriately sized clothes available to borrow, parents/guardians will be expected to bring appropriate clothing.

The Program Site Council will set-up a Uniform Exchange System. The details of this will be available at the end of the school year, so families can prepare for the following year.

# **Student Behavior and Responsibilities**

## **Citizenship Traits**

AACA will use the **Character Counts** framework founded by the Josephson Institute. Character Counts is based on six pillars of citizenship:

### **Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, and caring.**

Our goal is to foster safe, comfortable, and productive classroom / school environments, and to enable and encourage students to develop responsibility, healthy self-concepts, independence, and self-reliance. AACA expects:

- Students to be polite and cooperative, to play safely, and to take their school-work seriously.
- Students to treat everyone with respect and kindness and follow the school rules and dress code. This creates a positive learning environment. Honesty, respect, and compassion are expected at all times; dishonest, cruel, or disrespectful behavior is unacceptable.
- Students must know what is expected of them and what they can expect at school. When students accept the following general guidelines as routine, they can focus on their most important task—**LEARNING**.

## **Conduct Rules**

*In order to safeguard the rights and well being of everyone, all students are expected to follow these rules. Staff members enforce the rules at school, and AACA asks that parents/guardians support these expectations both at home and school.*

### **RESPECT YOURSELF**

- I will arrive on time and attend school every day that I am able.
- I will bring my materials and come ready to learn.
- I will follow the dress code.
- I will eat healthy snacks and leave candy, gum, and soda at home.
- I will be cooperative in class and contribute in a positive way to the classroom.
- I will only turn in school work that is my own; I will not copy the work of others. I will not cheat on tests, either by giving or receiving answers.
- I will use the computer and internet responsibly.
- I agree to resolve my anger in a civilized way. I will keep my hands and feet to myself.

### **RESPECT OTHERS**

- I will treat others with respect. I will speak courteously to teachers, staff, parents/guardians, visitors, and other students.
- I will not tease, name-call, swear, curse, or harass another individual.
- I will not use words or body language that is offensive to others.
- I will not fight, and I will not play fight.
- I will resolve a disagreement peacefully and ask an adult for help, if needed.
- I will respect the learning environment by speaking quietly in the classroom and other areas of school. I will avoid creating problems for others and myself.
- I will walk and not run in the halls and on the blacktop.
- I will follow directions of all school personnel promptly and politely; I will not disrupt learning or teaching.
- I will not make degrading, racist, or humiliating jokes. I will not make unwelcome or offensive remarks or gestures.
- I will leave electronic devices, skateboards, scooters, and roller blades at home. I will not use a cell phone at school unless approved by my teacher.

### **RESPECT PROPERTY**

- I will respect school property and not damage trees, landscaping, objects, buildings, or materials belonging to the school or others. I will throw garbage in a trashcan and NOT on school grounds.
- I will keep my hands to myself and respect the property of others.
- I will take care of my books and classroom property.

AACA will also use productive Habits of Mind that promote critical thinking, self-regulation and creative thinking. Students will learn and practice the Habits of Mind throughout the year. They will be assessed on them on their report cards.

Numerous personal items are inappropriate for school. Children should not bring toys, money, valuables, electronic games, or other items that are not essential to learning. Students may NEVER bring matches, toy guns, weapons, combat toys, or any object that could injure or threaten another person in the school. Students are also forbidden from bringing to school items intended for sale or trade and may not conduct any personal business.

Consequences for ignoring the rules will result in progressive disciplinary procedures in compliance with Education Code section 48900 and Board Policy, which discuss suspension/expulsion guidelines for Almond Acres Charter Academy.

**School rules apply:**

- While on school grounds;
- While going to or coming from school;
- During the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus;
- Going to, during, or coming from a school-sponsored activity (e.g., field trip).

## Student Conduct and Discipline

***Discipline:** (v) training to act in accordance with principles and rules*

The approach to discipline used at AACA is to train our children to consider the best options when challenges arise and to **“do the next right thing”**. When mistakes are made students retrace their steps to the cause/origin of the behavior, reconcile the issue with logical and natural consequences, practice the appropriate behavior, and make a plan for how they will handle the situation in the future.

## Progressive Discipline Framework

### Tier 1 – Relate & Redirect (minor incidents)

This effort is proactive and preventative and is built into the school program for all students. These school-wide efforts should be effective for 90% of incidents and addressed by a teacher or staff member. Parents may be contacted.

**Goal:** Listen and redirect the student to the class/school Social Compact of positive behaviors - Respect, Reflect, Responsible, & Act

**Offenses** include: disruption, non-compliance, misuse of property, dress code, mild physical contact, inappropriate language, tardiness, lying, cheating, littering, etc...

**Strategies include:**

- Fix-it ticket
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact
- Office referral

### Tier 2 – Confront and Contract (unresolved minor incidents)

For behaviors that are not being corrected at the Tier 1 level:

**Goal:** Target the skill/proper behavior, increase support, and monitor progress.

**Offenses** include: continued behaviors from Tier 1, moderate physical contact, computer violation, theft, profanity, harassment, threat, etc.

**Strategies may include:**

- Parent-Teacher conference
- Written goals and progress monitoring
- Possible suspension (at home or in-school) from school day or school activities
- Additional interventions: behavior progress log, short term counseling, intentional student/staff interactions, increased feedback, peaceful playground assignment, citizenship activity

### **Tier 3 – Intensive Interventions (CA education code violations)**

For behaviors violating CA Education Codes (see handbook for descriptions) and warrant an immediate suspension from school:

**Goal:** Immediately stop the behavior, provide time to investigate the incident, report to proper authorities, and meet with the student and parents to address the behavior.

**Offenses** include: possession of drugs or alcohol, fighting/physical violence, vandalism, sexual harassment, possession of weapons, etc.

**Strategies may include:**

- Investigation of the incident (may include law enforcement & Educational Psychologist)
- Suspension 1-5 days
- Conference with the student, parents, teacher, and principal to identify, define, and contract targeted behaviors, skill development areas, approval of a citizenship activity, and method to monitor progress.
- Disposition from administration regarding attendance or expulsion from AACA.

❖ ***Special Education codes require a meeting with the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team to address the incident and make recommendations.***

### **Cause for Suspension or Expulsion**

Discipline, including suspension or expulsion, may be imposed in accordance with Education Code 48900, Board policy and regulations when it is determined that the student has:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person, or
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another except in self defense<sup>2</sup>; or
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm<sup>1</sup>, knife<sup>2</sup>, explosive<sup>2</sup>, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any such object, the student had obtained written permission from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the Principal or the designee of the Principal; or
- Possessed<sup>2</sup>, used<sup>2</sup>, sold<sup>1</sup>, or otherwise furnished or was under the influence<sup>2</sup> of any controlled substance; or offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind and then sold, delivered, or furnished any other liquid or substance represented to be the controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant<sup>2</sup>; or
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion<sup>2</sup>; or
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school or private property; or
- Stole or attempted to steal school or private property; or
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products; or
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity; or
- Possessed, offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia<sup>2</sup>; or
- Disrupted school activities or willfully defied the valid authority of school personnel, including cheating; or
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, including electronic data/files; or
- Possessed an imitation firearm; or

- N. Committed or attempted to commit sexual assault or sexual battery<sup>1</sup>; or
- O. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary hearing; or
- P. Sexual harassment<sup>2</sup>; or
- Q. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence<sup>2</sup>; or
- R. Harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against a student or group of students.<sup>2</sup>
  - ❖ Mandatory recommendation for expulsion<sup>2</sup> Possible recommendation for expulsion
  - ❖ Depending on individual circumstances and the student's previous discipline record, any of the above offenses may result in a recommendation for expulsion.
  - ❖ Please note that law enforcement will be contacted as appropriate according to Board policy.

## Care of School Buildings and Grounds and Personal Property

A school building is not a school until students occupy it. When a building becomes a school, it takes on a character and meaning directly related to the respect it is given by the students. Its appearance and daily care reflect this. This character and meaning are expressed to students and visitors on a daily basis. We feel it is a matter of personal and school pride that the appearance of our school and grounds express a positive message to everyone. It is important that each and every student make a commitment to do everything possible to express and maintain this positive message. This commitment uses the common sense approach that trash belongs in trash cans, food is to be eaten only in designated areas, graffiti has no place on the floor or walls, gum is not allowed on campus, and the furniture and equipment in our school are for use and not abuse. In addition, students are responsible for the proper care of all materials supplied by the school. Students who cause damage to school or personal property will be required to either pay for the damage that is done or replace the item. The school is not responsible for unnecessary items brought to school that are lost, stolen, or damaged.

### Complaint Process

If a person has a grievance, the first step in attempt to resolve the dispute is to engage in a good faith effort with Almond Acres Charter Academy's administrative staff. The good faith effort will include problem identification, selection of a goal, identifying obstacles, selection of strategies, and a timeline for implementation and evaluation. If the good faith effort is unsuccessful, the person may submit a written complaint to the President of the Board of Directors of Almond Acres Charter Academy. The President will schedule a hearing of the Board at a mutually convenient time and place for discussion of the complaint with all parties involved, but in no event later than thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the written complaint and after notification to the person. Board members who are interested parties will exclude themselves from grievance procedures if such members have a conflict of interest in the subject of the proceedings. A decision as established by a majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors hearing the grievance will be rendered within ten working days of completion of the hearing. In the event that additional information, investigation, or hearings are necessary after the initial hearing, the hearing may be continued and the final decision will be made within ten working days after the last hearing. The decision of the Board of Directors of Almond Acres Charter Academy will be final.

### Technology Use Policy

To AACA Families,

*Technologies such as iPads and Chromebook computers have been purchased for all classrooms. These devices are wonderful tools for our instructional practices and provide students with contemporary tools for learning. **They are extremely valuable to our school and must be used with care and respect.** The Computer Use Policy found in our Family Handbook is written below to remind students and families of our obligations to use instructional equipment properly and with great care. Many hours and financial resources have been put into acquiring these devices and it is important to remind our students to be good stewards of them. **Please review this policy with your son/daughter and send it back to school with all signatures. Devices will not be issued to students until this document is signed and returned to the teacher.** Middle School students are provided with their own personal device. See separate policy for details.*

*Respectfully,*

*Mr. B*

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

***Students must***

1. Respect all computer devices and related equipment.
  - Handle all equipment with due regard for its value to our school. This includes all peripheral devices, cases, and chargers.
  - Maintain cleanliness and organization of devices.
  - System preferences/settings may only be altered by school personnel.
2. Respect and protect the privacy of others.
  - Use only assigned accounts.
  - Not view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
  - Not distribute private information about others or themselves.
3. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.
  - Observe all network security practices, as posted.
  - Report security risks or violations to a teacher or network administrator.
  - Not destroy or damage data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission of the owner.
  - Students are not permitted use of personal "hot spots".
  - Conserve, protect, and share these resources with other students and Internet users.
4. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
  - Not infringe copyrights (no making illegal copies of music, games, or movies!).
  - Not plagiarize.
5. Respect and practice the principles of community.
  - Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
  - Report threatening or discomfoting materials to a teacher.
  - Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
  - Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
  - Not use the resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct.
  - Not send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
  - Not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business, unless approved as a school project.

Students may, if in accord with the policy above

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

4. Use the resources for any educational purpose.

### ***Consequences for Violation***

Violations of these rules will result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's information technology resources and restitution for any damages or replacement cost of the equipment. [AACA Policy X.B(f) & CA Education Code 48900(f)]

### ***Supervision and Monitoring***

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

## Computer Use Agreement

*The term "computer" refers to all electronic devices including cell phones used to access network systems.*

- I will use the computer for school work and to learn.
- I will be a good digital citizen: use good manners, use appropriate language, and not open or use anyone else's work without permission.
- I will be careful with all hardware and software that I use.
- I will keep my passwords private.
- I will share the computer and the network.
- I will ask for help if I do not know how to use any or part of the computer system.
- I will not share personal information about myself or anyone else on the Internet. This includes address, phone number, work or photograph, etc.
- I understand that anyone can read the messages I send and that my work on the computer is not private.
- I will not write bad words on the computer.
- I will not use or send anything from the computer or Internet or send anything over the Internet that belongs to someone else without their permission.
- I will only use the computer and/or internet for appropriate learning activities.
- I / my parents will be responsible for replacing and equipment that I deliberately damage.

## **Charter Enrollment Policy**

As a non-sectarian, tuition-free public school, Almond Acres Charter Academy will admit all grade-level eligible pupils who wish to attend up to the school's capacity, in accordance with California Education Code § 47605 (d)(2)(A). Almond Acres Charter Academy will be a school of choice, and in compliance with Education Code § 47605 (f), no student will be required to attend AACCA over the objections of his/her legal guardian. Admission shall not be determined based on the place of residence of the pupil or of his/her parent or guardian.

AACA shall abide by California Education Code § 47605 (d)(1) and shall not charge tuition, nor discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, disability, scholastic aptitude, or prior academic performance.

There shall be no admission testing or other evaluation required of any applicant.

In accordance with California Education Code § 48000, children must meet minimum age requirements for enrollment. Kindergarten students must have their fifth birthday on or before September 1 of the school year. The Board of Directors may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis to admit a student who attains the age of five years at any time during the school year if they determine it would be in the best interest of the child and the parents of the child are informed about the advantages and disadvantages of this early admittance. Proof of the child's age must be presented at the time of enrollment as described in California Education Code § 48002.

AACA will abide by California Education Code 47612(b) and will not enroll students over 19 years of age who have not been continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward graduation.

## **Admission and Enrollment Process**

### ***Admission Preferences***

If the number of students who wish to attend the charter school exceeds the school's capacity, enrollment shall be determined by a public random drawing. Admission preference or exemption will be given in the following sequence of priority:

1. Existing pupils of charter school. Students in this category have been exempted from the lottery.
2. Siblings of students already admitted to or attending the charter school. Students in this category are exempt from the lottery.
3. Children of founders and/or teachers and/or staff. The number of students granted exemption as children of faculty or founders shall not exceed 10% of the school's enrollment.
4. Students who reside in district in which the charter school is located. Because preference is required in accordance with state law, the charter school will employ a single lottery with a higher weighting (10% weight factor) for students in this category.
5. Students for whom special consideration is required to comply with Title VI of the civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution. Because preference is required in accordance with state law, the charter school will employ a single lottery with a higher weighting (10% weight factor) for students in this category.
6. Students seeking to change schools under the public school choice provisions of ESEA Title I. Because preference may be granted to these students under federal law, the charter school will employ a single lottery with a higher weighting (5% weight factor) for students in this category.
7. All other students.

**Enrollment Forms**

AACA enrollment forms will be made available in Spanish and English. AACA will begin accepting enrollment forms on January 15 of each calendar year, or on the first business day following January 15 if that date falls on a weekend. Enrollment forms will be accepted until 4:00pm on March 15, or the first business day following March 15.

If, by the enrollment deadline, the number of forms received is less than the number of seats available, all applicants will be accepted and enrolled in the school. Subsequent enrollment forms will be accepted on a first come, first served basis until our enrollment capacity is reached. Once capacity is reached, subsequent applicants will be placed on a waiting list.

**Public Random Drawing**

In the event that AACA receives more enrollment forms than the number of seats open for a particular grade by the application deadline, an annual public random drawing will be conducted to determine admission. The drawing will occur 7-10 business days following the enrollment deadline in a public space large enough to accommodate all interested families. The date, time, and location of the drawing will be printed on the enrollment form.

The drawing will be conducted by an uninterested party, preferably a respected public figure from the community. All proceedings will be conducted bilingually in Spanish and English. The names of each prospective student will be put on a card. The cards shall be of equal size and shape. The cards will also indicate if the applying student has any sibling(s) applying for admission the same year. The name on each card will be read as it is placed into a container or drawing device that will randomly mix the cards. The person officiating the drawing will draw the cards one at a time and read the name on the card. As each card is pulled it will be posted visibly on a display in the order it was drawn. Names will be given a numerical ranking based on the order they were drawn. The drawing will continue until all cards have been drawn and all names have been assigned a numerical ranking. These rankings will be recorded in an electronic database that will be verified by the drawing official.

Potential students who have drawing preference as stated above will be assigned numerical rankings before names of children without preference are drawn.

Drawings will be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than students interested in attending. All drawings shall take place consecutively on the same day in a single location. During the course of the drawing, if a card is drawn that indicates a sibling (of any grade) is also applying, the sibling will also be assigned the next available numerical ranking for the appropriate grade-level. If there is not a vacancy in the appropriate grade for the sibling, he/she will go to the top of the waiting list for that grade, after any other siblings of current students who are already on the list.

While the drawing will be open to the public and families will be encouraged to attend, families are not required to be present at the time of the drawing to be eligible for admission. Results will be published in Spanish and English and will be posted online and in hard copy in public locations. Results will also be mailed to all applicants and follow-up phone calls will be made.

Enrollment in the school will be offered to students according to their numerical ranking until capacity is reached. All remaining names will be placed on a waiting list in order according to their numerical rank. Families of students who are offered admission will have two weeks to confirm in writing their intent to enroll and submit an enrollment packet including proof of age, proof of address, and immunization records. Any families who decline admission or who fail to confirm will lose their position to the next name on the waiting list. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure that up-to-date contact information is on file with the school and no exceptions to the two-week deadline will be made for families that fail to respond within the two-week period due to incorrect contact information. We will make phone calls and conduct home visits to ensure families receive clear instructions and the information needed to complete and return the enrollment packet.

Children of newly-hired faculty will be added to the waiting list after any siblings of current students, but ahead of children with no preference ranking, unless over 10% of the school's enrollment is comprised of children of faculty or founders, in which case children of newly-hired faculty will be added at the end of the waiting list.

The waiting list will be kept on file at the school and will be valid for the duration of the school year. If a student withdraws or is expelled from the school, that seat will be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

Enrollment forms received after 4:00 pm on the enrollment deadline date will be marked with the date and time of receipt and will be added after the last name on the waiting list on a first come, first served basis.

AACA may refine the drawing policies and procedures following the first year of operations in accordance with written policy adopted by the AACA Board of Directors.

### ***Efforts to Recruit Low-achieving and Economically Disadvantaged Students***

AACA is committed to serving academically low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students. The school will aggressively recruit students from our proposed school community, including academically low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students. Based on the demographics of the public elementary schools in the Northern San Luis Obispo County as described earlier, it is expected that approximately 35-50% of the students in the school population will qualify for free or reduced-price lunch according to federal guidelines.

### ***Records the School Will Keep on File Documenting Public Lottery Procedures***

The school shall keep on file in the main office the following documents:

- Documentation of drawing procedures as defined in the school's charter and any subsequent policy or policies approved by the Board of Directors.
- Results of the public drawing, indicating ranking.
- The most up to date waiting list, including names that were added after the drawing, including contact information for each student.

## **Governance**

### **AACA School Board**

The Almond Acres Charter Academy is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall be ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of the school. The primary methods for executing their responsibilities are to create, adopt, and monitor a long-term strategic plan and associated budget, and to employ and evaluate the Executive Director of AACA.

The Board of Directors consists of at least five, but not more than nine members. Board of Director nomination, selection, and election shall follow the Bylaws. Each member will serve a three-year term.. Board members are not subject to a limit on the numbers of terms they may serve.

The parent members who wish to be elected to the Board of Directors shall be nominated and elected by the Program Site Council (PSC). The community members of the Board will be nominated by a Nomination Committee created by the Board of Directors. After nomination, the Board of Directors will interview the potential members and then appoint the chosen community members to the Board.

### **Parent/Family Participation**

Parents/guardians are a vital and important resource to AACA. Their participation as instructional partners in the program and their support of the AACA mission are critical. To this end, AACA will establish the AACA Program Site Council to facilitate communication between all members of the organization, to bring needed human and financial resources, and to help meet the goals and objectives of the school. There are a variety of on-site and at-home, short-term and ongoing, daytime and evening opportunities to meet the varying schedules of parents/guardians.

## Program Site Council

The Program Site Council's (PSC) primary function is to support the various school programs the Executive Director and the teachers have adopted to supplement the classroom curriculum, enrich school life, and enhance the AACA community. The PSC is a family participation organization run by parents/guardians and teachers.

The Program Site Council will be led by a President, Vice President, Secretary, Fundraising Officer, Participation Officer, Enrichment Officer, Destination Imagination Officer, Advocacy Officer and the Executive Director. All AACA parents and teachers are welcome to attend and participate in PSC meetings, held on a monthly basis to discuss school activities. The Program Site Council is not a decision-making organization and reports to the Executive Director. The AACA families elect PSC Officers.

The Program Site Council:

- Serves as a forum for the discussion of matters of interest and concern to the parents/guardians and teachers of AACA in regard to school programs and community.
- Acts as a communication channel between parents, other individuals, and groups both within and outside of the school community, by means such as: Family Handbook school newsletter, and the school wide website.
- Works as an advisory body to the Executive Director to assess school community support and interests by conducting annual parent/guardian and student surveys.
- Monitors parent/guardian-led programs.
- Reports directly to the Executive Director and implements approved changes on behalf of the Executive Director.
- Sponsors activities that enhance the intrinsic value of the school, contributes to the fulfillment of the school's mission, and builds community through activities such as summer events, festivals, and campouts.
- Raises and manages funds to support student enrichment programs.

## Description of Program Site Council Officer Positions

*These are the jobs we have identified as necessary on or off the AACA campus. We reserve the right to change, amend, and add to these as seen fit by the Executive Director and AACA Board of Directors. All Parent/Guardian support jobs will be coordinated through the Program Site Council. Team leaders will be provided with contact information of families that have volunteered for their teams.*

### President:

- Oversee the PSC to ensure all areas/positions are maintaining assigned responsibilities and duties.
- Oversee subcommittees.
- Act as the liaison to the School Board and coordinate PSC Officer reports.
- Report directly to the Executive Director and implement approved changes on behalf of the Executive Director.
- Maintain weekly communication with the Executive Director and PSC Officers.
- Create and post meeting reminders with attached agendas the Tuesday before the officer and general PSC meetings to gain attendance at the meetings.
- Work with school staff to create calendar of events by the beginning of the school year.
- Help school staff to complete Facility Request Forms, Work Orders, and Certificate of Insurance for all PSC related events.
- Work with school staff to create monthly Parent Square posts about upcoming events.

### Vice President:

- Help school staff plan, coordinate, and promote parent education nights (including Meet the Teacher, Back-to-School, and Open House) and new parent meetings.

- Create and oversee the Parade Planning Committee. The Parade Planning Committee is a team who plans, coordinates, decorates, and executes the Pioneer Day Parade, the Paso Robles Christmas Light Parade, and the San Miguel Christmas Parade. Members will help solicit donations for decorating items and volunteers to construct the float as well as aide in the participation of the actual parade.
- Provide direct support to the PSC President and act as PSC President in the absence of the PSC President.
- Plan and coordinate Volunteer Appreciation Day in May.
- Plan and coordinate Staff Appreciation Week in May.

**Secretary:**

- Record and share meeting minutes for officer and general PSC meetings through Google Drive.
- Post general PSC minutes to Parent Square by Tuesday of the following week.
- Work with school staff to track PSC funds.
- Keep and up-to-date inventory and coordinate Uniform Swap two times throughout the school year.
- Act as the Yearbook Adviser. Work with Enrichment Officer to create a Yearbook Committee made up of students, parents, and a lead teacher who will work with the yearbook adviser to help create a yearbook from start to finish. They will take high-resolution photos of any/all school events, field trips, fundraisers, and create the yearbook page by page.

**Fundraising Officer:**

- Lead all passive fundraising opportunities including Amazon, Box Tops, eScrip, Funding Factory, Good Search/Shop, and Shoparoo. Create publications and provide incentives for participation for each opportunity throughout the school year.
- Coordinate active fundraising opportunities including the main PSC fundraiser during summer, Chipotle/Panda Express, Jamba Juice, and Family Business Expo.
- Work with the Drama, Read and Run Relay, and Gala leads to determine donation and volunteer needs for each fundraiser. Work directly with the Participation Officer to fill the needs.
- Provide updates regarding all fundraising events to PSC officers and during general PSC meetings.
- Work with school staff to create monthly Parent Square posts about upcoming fundraising events.

**Participation Officer:**

- Work with school staff to create monthly Parent Square posts about participation opportunities.
- Create and oversee family ambassador program. Recruit an ambassador team that will provide support and encouragement for new families during their first year. Work with the school staff to receive a list of new families throughout the school year and pair them up with the ambassador team. Send updates through Parent Square to encourage continued communication between ambassadors and new families.
- Determine needs from other PSC Officers and event leads to coordinate parents for all volunteer opportunities throughout the school year.
- Plan and coordinate at least one Family Fun Night each trimester.
- Prepare and coordinate PSC Officer and Parent Board Member Elections in April.
- Plan and coordinate Muffins for Moms, Donuts for Dads, and Family Campout.

**Enrichment Officer:**

- Prior to the start of school, develop and implement a Plan that offers a wide variety of classes to suit student interest for the upcoming school year.
- Recruit teachers and coaches for classes focusing on one particular area of study or activity. Examples could include: chess, chorus, drama, Lego League, gardening, sewing, etc.
- Secure locations for all enrichment opportunities.
- Develop schedule for all classes with input from the enrichment teachers.
- Promote classes to the families and student body via Parent Square, classroom visits, Friday folder flyers, or Shared Start announcements to help fill classes.
- Develop and lead an enrichment team, which will be comprised of volunteers who will help lead, organize,

and coordinate the efforts to produce an all-school performance/presentation/art show. This all-school performance/presentation/art show will be coordinated in league with both the Faculty leads and the Admin leads. Tasks would include:

- Determining production for the year with Program/Curriculum Director and enrichment class teachers
- Coordinate additional action from other PSC teams such as Participation, Fundraising, and Yearbook as necessary (volunteers, concessions, pictures, etc.).
- Costuming (if necessary)
- Set production with Destination Imagination Officer (if necessary)
- Scheduling and supervising rehearsals
- Publicity
- Ticket sales
- Sound and lighting
- Etc.

This job requires ability to work cooperatively with everyone who wants to be involved and willingness to give the students a voice. Previous production experience is definitely a plus but is in no way a prerequisite.

#### **Destination Imagination Officer:**

- Prior to the start of school, work closely with Enrichment Officer to develop and implement an Enrichment Plan that offers a wide variety of classes to suit student interest for the upcoming school year.
- Help develop an Enrichment Team with Enrichment Officer.
- Coordinate AACA Destination Imagination Program, which includes, but is not limited to the following:
  - Coordinate the number and type of teams appropriate for student grade levels
  - Purchase correct number of team numbers for participation once teams have been determined
  - Make sure all teams have a team manager in place
  - Sign-up all teams for the regional and state tournaments, as necessary
  - Coordinate with team managers that all necessary school paperwork is to the office in a timely fashion for field trips and transportation
  - Coordinate hotel rooms as needed
  - Work with the Gala Team to coordinate the Fund-A-Need live auction to guarantee future funding for the program
- Organize and coordinate the Maker Space on campus. Work With Faculty and Admin Leads to:
  - Stock Maker Space with tools and consumables
  - Ensure faculty is aware of what is in the makerspace for their use
  - Schedule class time as necessary with teachers
  - Schedule after-school enrichment activities in the Makerspace
  - Other things as necessary
- Organize and host Maker Faire:
  - Work with Faculty Lead to plan and execute annual AACA maker Faire in the last weeks of school

Follow plan set forth by Maker Faire International for school maker faires (information located in the AACA PSC Drive)

#### **Advocacy Officer:**

- The PSC Advocacy Officer would be responsible for keeping the Almond Acres Charter Academy families informed of charter school issues that affect our school.
- Sign up with the California Charter School Association's Advocacy group in order to be kept up-to-date with bills being presented to the California legislative branch that both negatively and positively affect charter schools.
- Post any "Calls to Action" from the CCSA in Parent Square and forward to the social media team to post on Facebook.
- Make our school's voice heard by sending emails to particular legislators.
- Work with Admin to get updated on particular strengths and struggles within our authorizing district and the county office of education.
- Keeping the PSC updated on these issues and any calls to action that may be necessary.

- Coordinate, with the PSC and Admin on School Choice Week. This is a nationwide event that occurs annually in the last part of January. It ties in perfectly with our Open Enrollment Period and is a great opportunity to spread the word on charter schools and school choice. Coordinate at least one event on campus during school choice week that may or may not coincide with a school tour. This includes handing out the bright yellow scarves that we get in our school choice supply box each year, hanging school choice posters, and working with the social media team to spread the word.

Time commitment varies. Keeping up-to-date with the advocacy emails and as needed posting, can all be done from home and your computer, attending monthly PSC meetings, attending Parent Meetings in order to inform families of any issues and calls to action, occasional meetings with Admin as necessary, time during school choice week, and attending the California Charter School Associations Advocacy Day in Sacramento or coordinating AACA representation at event.