



**2024-2025**



**STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**

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Welcome! Heading into our eleventh year of operation, Method Schools is poised to continue to build, grow, and improve upon a strong foundation of community, culture, and student success.

We are excited to bring an effective online program that offers both flexibility and rigor. We hope to continue to grow our Method Schools community in dynamic ways through more in-person opportunities, student social and leadership activities, and a focus on growth and improvement.

As always, we thank you for choosing Method Schools, and we are excited for another year to grow and learn from each other.

## Philosophy and Vision

Method Schools' mission is to aggressively advance K-12 education through continuously developing models that promote targeted student growth and a culture of inclusivity and equality.

We aim to do this in the following ways:

- Develop breakthrough practices and tools for students
- Facilitate growth within a diverse student population
- Cultivate a student focused program
- Promote a professional and staff driven culture.

With a vision that now focuses on growth in all facets of the organization, Method Schools seeks to accomplish this by developing superior tools and practices to effectively serve every student, enhancing internal synchronization to collectively build premium tools and practices, and creating a culture worthy of talent and dedication.

## Method Schools Expected Outcomes

Method Schools partners with students of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds to develop skills that closely align to deeper learning and beyond. The school is committed to a collaborative approach with students to create and provide meaningful educational experiences that not only reflect the real world in which they live, but challenge their ability to creatively problem solve and apply skill sets from one discipline to another. Students are provided with the supportive space to become self-directed learners and develop the skills to master academic core content, critically think, problem solve, collaborate, and effectively communicate to ultimately prepare them for a meaningful college experience and career. Through an emphasis on highly personalized instruction, students participate in activities that promote self-discovery of personal and academic knowledge and interests, which will refine their path to college and beyond.

Method Schools is committed to educating the entire child and appealing to all learning styles and modalities. Method Schools believes that each student should develop the following traits and skills by the time of graduation.

**READ CRITICALLY**

I can make meaning from diverse media to better understand the world around me.

**LEARN INDEPENDENTLY**

I can develop a plan, monitor my progress, and persevere through challenges to achieve my goal.

**EXPRESS IDEAS**

I can communicate through diverse formats for a range of purposes and audiences.

**NAVIGATE CONFLICT**

I can develop skills, strategies, and emotional awareness while navigating conflict with others.

**INVESTIGATE THROUGH INQUIRY**

I can explore questions and build knowledge through inquiry.

**SEEK AND APPLY FEEDBACK**

I can accept feedback from others and ask questions when I need more guidance or input.

**REASON QUANTITATIVELY**

I can work with numerical data, solve problems, and construct mathematical solutions.

**BUILD NETWORKS**

I can initiate relationships with diverse individuals and networks for a purpose, and sustain relationships with authenticity and care.

**USE SOURCES**

I can assess the credibility of sources and synthesize my new learning to build knowledge.

**SUSTAIN WELLNESS**

I can support my own physical, emotional, and social health to live a healthy and productive life.

**DESIGN SOLUTIONS**

I can engage in a systematic design process to develop data-informed solutions to authentic design challenges.

**ENGAGE AS A CITIZEN**

I can participate in my community, build my civic knowledge, and take action to improve my community.

Method Schools 2024

Method Schools works with a shared goal of educating its students to their fullest potential and is built on a foundation of collaboration between the parents, students, and our highly-qualified staff.

## Calendar

Method Schools' calendar is posted on its website and can be found at [www.methodschoools.org/school-calendar](http://www.methodschoools.org/school-calendar).

## Enrollment

Method Schools are public schools of choice.

There is no discrimination in the admission of students to the school on the basis of race, creed, color, handicapping condition, or gender. Method Schools provides a free and appropriate public

education (FAPE) to all of its students. All students; however, need to be able to meet the enrollment requirements.

Method Schools will enroll students in grades Kindergarten – 12th Grade for the 2023-24 school year. Student registration is always online at [www.methodschoools.org](http://www.methodschoools.org). The enrollment process must be completed in full and submitted with all the required documentation prior to being accepted.

Questions regarding the status of your enrollment should be directed to the front offices. Students who have received services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) must provide this information at the time of enrollment. A Method Schools staff member will contact you to ensure proper placement of your student into our program.

It is understood that no student who qualifies for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education (IDEA) shall participate in independent study unless it is specifically authorized under his/her IEP.

Concurrent enrollment in another public or private school is prohibited at Method Schools and will cause the student to be withdrawn immediately. This does not include college-level coursework. Please refer to our enrollment requirements.

## **Fees**

Method Schools does not charge fees for our programs or services provided to our families. Enrollment with Method is always tuition-free; however, as with many school programs, certain expenses do fall within the responsibility of enrolled families: Ink for printers, the cost of transportation to and from school, Method Schools sponsored events, and the cost for providing paper are a few examples.

## **Enrollment Requirements**

### **Age Requirement**

A student will be admitted to Kindergarten at the beginning of a school year if the child will have his/her fifth birthday on or before September 1st of the school year.

### **Immunizations**

All of the following are required for enrollment into Method Schools.

- Diphtheria
- Measles
- Mumps (except for children who have reached the age of 7 years old)
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Poliomyelitis

- Rubella
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox) – persons already admitted into California public or private schools at the Kindergarten level or about, before July 1, 2001, shall be exempt from Varicella immunization requirement for school entry.
- TDAP (pertussis) – the TDAP must be administered after a student’s seventh birthday but before entering the 7th grade.

The schools’ verification of immunization is through written medical records from your doctor or immunization clinic. Pupils who fail to complete the series of required immunizations within the specified time will be denied enrollment until the series has been completed. Exceptions are allowed under the following conditions:

- o The parent provides a signed doctor’s statement verifying that the child is to be exempted from immunizations for medical reasons. This statement must contain identifying the specific nature of probable duration of the medical condition.
- o As of January 1, 2016, due to Senate Bill 277, a parent may no longer request exemption of their child from immunization for personal or religious beliefs for students. The bill does exempt pupils enrolled in an independent study program, who do not receive classroom-based instruction. Any child leaving the United States for a short vacation, to any country considered by Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to have increased risk of TB exposure, such as, Mexico, Philippines, India or Southeast Asia must call the County of Tuberculosis clinic for TB screening upon return.

### *Mid-Year Enrollment*

Students will be provided with a pacing guide based on their date of enrollment. Students may be expected to complete assignments from earlier modules in order to meet the minimum requirements for passing the course with full credits. Students will be given up to 2 weeks to catch up to the current pacing of their peers.

***“Failure to meet the requirements listed above may indicate that an independent study program is not the appropriate placement for your student and may result in your student’s withdrawal from Method Schools. If a student is withdrawn for failing to meet the enrollment requirements, the student will not be able to re-enroll for the remainder of the current academic year and one academic year following.”***

### *Withdrawals*

If you decide to withdraw a student from Method Schools, please communicate your decision through your Homeroom Teacher. Your teacher will schedule a final virtual conference to ensure that your student receives the appropriate academic and attendance credit. During this meeting, you will be required to submit work samples that your student has completed since your last



conference and sign learning journals. Shipping labels required for the return of the loaned teaching materials, including laptops, will arrive within 2-3 weeks from the date you notified your teacher of your withdrawal.

## Change of Contact Information

Please notify our enrollment specialists should your contact information change and provide any updated proof of residency for your new address. Our staff will update the records accordingly. Correct contact information ensures that curriculum materials and important school notices are mailed to the correct student address. Parents are requested to update their account information in the online curriculum should their email address change. Communication is often sent via email to the email address listed in the online curriculum. Thus, we would like to keep all records up-to-date.

## Unable to Contact

In any school, but especially in a virtual school, regular communication with your Method Schools teacher is essential for your student's success in our program. If you are planning to be out of state, on vacation, or otherwise unable to communicate with your teacher for a period of time please notify your teacher so that proper arrangements to monitor your student's progress and attendance can be made.

Due to the enrollment requirements of our school, if your teacher is unable to contact you for 2 days, Method will attempt contact via phone and email requesting contact. If after these procedures have been followed and contact has not been made within 24 hours, it will be assumed that your child is enrolled in another educational program, and your child will be withdrawn.

## Attendance

Method Schools offers students a Personalized Learning Education through an online, independent study model. Independent study is substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction thereby ensuring that a student is assigned a full day's worth of work equivalent to that which he/she would be assigned in a classroom setting. Independent study students have the same access to existing services and resources as other students in the school in which the independent study student is enrolled.

## Daily Engagement

Using the following resources, Method Schools students are expected to **engage daily** with their learning.

- Login to the required curriculum platform (Smartfox)
- Usage of iReady
- Learning materials as assigned by the Homeroom Teacher (teacher of record)

Students enjoy freedom and flexibility, while parents appreciate the accountability that the school provides them as the primary educator of their student.

## Synchronous Instruction and Live Interaction

The following plan shall be in place in accordance with Education Code Section 51747(e) for synchronous (live) instruction:

1. For pupils in kindergarten through grade 3, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:
  - a. Daily instructional classes via videoconferencing provided by the supervising teacher
  - b. Weekly 1:1 meetings via videoconferencing provided by the supervising teacher
  - c. (3rd grade) Assigned Supplemental Support Instruction/Classes via videoconferencing for individualized instructional needs.
2. For pupils in grades 4-8, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily live synchronous instruction between the pupil and a certificated or non-certificated employee of the Charter School and weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned supervising teacher shall be as follows:
  - a. Weekly 1:1 meeting with the supervising teacher
  - b. Weekly homeroom instructional session
  - c. Daily instruction subject specific classes, Supplemental Support Instruction/Classes (as assigned), Study Hall, and teacher office hours via videoconferencing
3. For pupils in grades 9-12, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's assigned HRT shall be as follows:
  - a. Weekly 1:1, 30 min meeting with HRT
  - b. Weekly homeroom instructional session
  - c. Optional Office Hours with content teacher
  - d. Supplemental, Support Instruction/Classes (as assigned)

## ISMA - Independent Study Master Agreement

Method Schools' Independent Study Master Agreement is filled out each semester for each student enrolled in the program. Our practice is to meet with students at least every 20 days to review outcomes and to collect work samples.

A current Independent Study Master Agreement shall be maintained on file for each independent study pupil, including but not limited to, all of the following:

- The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil's assignments, for reporting the pupil's academic progress, and for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a 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, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the pupil. These resources shall include confirming or providing access to all pupils to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.
- A statement of the policies adopted pursuant to Education Code Section 51747, subdivisions (a) and (b) regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
- The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the pupil's participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one school year.
- A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the pupil upon completion.
- 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 need support in other areas, such as English learners, individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the pupil's individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), pupils in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and pupils requiring mental health supports.
- The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate. In the case of a pupil who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Section 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

## Uniform Complaint Procedures

State regulations require Method Schools to address allegations of unlawful discrimination and complaints alleging violation of federal or state regulations in programs and activities receiving state funds: adult basic education, SIP, EIA/LEP, Title 1, Title 6, vocational education, special education, child development, child nutrition, Miller-Unruh special reading, tenth grade

counseling, and school-based coordinated programs. Details on [Method Schools' Policy and Procedures and Uniform Complaint Form](#) are linked or can be found on the school website.

## Learning Periods

Learning periods, or LPs, last approximately one month with 5 in fall semester and 5 falling in spring semester.

## Work Samples

Work samples are collected at the beginning of every Learning Period throughout the school year. Teachers collect 2 samples per subject area each learning period for a minimum of 8 per LP.

Two work samples per enrolled course must be completed in order to maintain satisfactory minimum requirements for attendance. *\*Students may still tier if submitted work or lack of work does not meet academic engagement progress.*

## Daily Educational Activity Record - Learning Journals

Each student at Method Schools must log activity every school day. Method Schools asks that this "daily engagement" be documented on a daily basis.

Student activity may include work in curriculum, work assigned in educational platforms, one to one meetings with homeroom teachers, or participation in course or tutoring sessions. Daily activity must be logged by the student or parent in the following format:

- "Participated in live (name/type) class"
- " School event or field trip"
- "Completed assignments in (educational platform)"
- "Offline assignment"

An uploaded file of the activity or assignment must accompany the submission.

Activity records must be signed by the student, parent, and teacher of record at the end of each month.

Method Schools recognize that families may not evenly distribute student's work assignments over weekdays. However, due to strict state law requirements for charter school attendance, **Method Schools expects each student to be engaged in an educational activity on each weekday that Method Schools is in session.** This should not be read as Method Schools asks that a

parent/guardian refrain from documenting “daily engagement” on a day where a student did not engage in any educational activity required of them by the assignments. By law, work done on weekends or other days when school is not in session cannot be used to “make-up” weekdays where no “daily engagement” occurred.

## Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Method Schools has adopted a multi-tiered systems of support model in line with the California Department of Education’s guidelines for MTSS.



CA MTSS is built on the premise that universal support must be provided for all students while recognizing that some may need supplemental support at **various times** and a few students may require more intensified support **some of the time** to be successful in the most inclusive and equitable learning environment of their grade level peers.

CA MTSS is broken down by: Universal, Supplemental, and Intensified supports in three areas: 1) academics, 2) SEL, 3) Behavioral and for the Virtual Independent Study space we also have 4) Attendance

One of these supports is a tiered re-engagement policy for all pupils who are in violation of the written agreement pursuant to [Education Code Section 51747\(g\)](#). These procedures are as follows:

1. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled pupil;
2. Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation;
3. Outreach from the Charter School to determine pupil needs including connection with health and social services as necessary;
4. When the evaluation described above under paragraph 2.b.iv. is triggered to consider whether remaining in independent study is in the best interest of the pupil, a pupil-parent-education conference shall be required to review a pupil’s written agreement and reconsider the independent study program’s impact on the pupil’s achievement and well-being. This conference shall be a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the pupil’s written independent study agreement.

Tiered re-engagement strategies are added layers of support to provide academic resources for 1 or more of the triggers and eliminate the continued movement through tiers.

*\*Please note that students who end the school year in a tier will begin the following school year on a support plan.*

The Homeroom Teacher and the Grade Level Lead under the guidance of the Tiered Re-engagement Strategy will conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain in independent study upon the following triggers:

1. When any pupil fails to complete the minimum of two (2) work samples per subject per learning period in which they are enrolled.
2. In the event student's educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by the Charter School's Tiered Re-engagement Policy which considers ALL of the following indicators:
  - a. The pupil's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the pupil's performance on applicable pupil-level measures of pupil achievement and pupil engagement set forth in Education Code Section 52060(d) paragraphs (4) and (5).
  - b. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.
  - c. When the student fails to attend a 10% minimum instructional time over four continuous weeks.
  - d. When the student fails to participate in 50% of assigned live instructional sessions over the course of a month.
  - e. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
  - f. Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. The record shall be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation and, if the pupil transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

## Academic Policy

### Commitment to Growth

Method Schools is committed to providing an exceptional academic program based on an ongoing use of data and well-researched best instructional practices. With that, Method closely monitors students and their academic growth using rigorous curriculum, advanced instructional methods, and internal diagnostic and benchmark assessments that closely align to state assessments. Students are expected to test as part of their overall academic program.

We, at Method, hold a high expectation of all students to participate in all elements of our academic program including annual state testing. If you have any concerns about the full participation in Method's educational model, please discuss this with a Method staff member.

## Learning Coach

The Learning Coach is identified as the parent(s) or guardian on record. The learning coach can specify and give permission for another point of contact to be included in communication between LC and Elementary

The learning coach is responsible for communicating and supporting their enrolled student in their curriculum, attendance, technology, and academic scheduling. They are the main support in the independent learning environment.

### Learning Coach Expectations

**The Learning Coach is the person primarily responsible for supervising the student(s) during regular school hours (8:30am – 3pm). In terms of attendance, Learning Coaches have two major responsibilities:**

1. Meet with their Homeroom Teacher and Student NO LESS than one time per Learning Period for approximately 30 minutes.
2. Sign, with their Student's and Homeroom Teacher, their student's Learning Journal once per Learning Period and/or month.

**In addition to maintaining attendance with Method Schools, the Learning Coach also:**

- Ensures that the student is participating appropriately in the instructional program. This can include but is NOT limited to:
  - Completing assigned lessons
  - Completing assessments
  - Participating in a weekly virtual session with the homeroom teacher (may include supplemental instruction)
  - Participating in a weekly homeroom group session with the homeroom teacher and other homeroom students (may include supplemental instruction)
  - Having the student available and actively participating in the meetings and in person assessments or instructional assistance as assigned by Method.
- Ensures that the student participates in interventions as deemed necessary by our staff.
- Can read and understand the curriculum and instructional materials provided by Method Schools.
- With help from Method staff, identifies and supports the student with any academic issues.
- Supports the student in attending state-mandated testing.
- Has a working phone number, email account, and internet access at the time of enrollment, and knows that email is the primary means of communication.
- Monitors email and phone messages daily and responds to all calls and emails from Method staff within 48 hours.
- Maintains the student's enrollment by meeting attendance requirements as laid out by Method Schools.

- Informs Method staff within 48 hours of any changes to contact information (i.e., address, phone number, and email address).
- Submits work samples as requested by Method staff in a timely manner.
- Treats teachers and staff with respect and professionalism. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Not using rude language (including profanity, yelling, badgering) on the phone, email or in person.
  - Not threaten teachers and/or staff on the phone, email or in person.
- Is available to meet with teachers and/or staff with reasonable accommodation.

### Parent/Guardian and/or Learning Coach: No Communication

Regular communication with your Method Schools Homeroom Teacher is a requirement of our program. If you are planning to be out of state, on vacation, or otherwise unable to communicate with your teacher for a period of time please notify your teacher so that proper arrangements to monitor your student's progress and attendance can be made.

Due to the enrollment requirements of our school, if your teacher is unable to contact you for 2 days, Method will attempt contact via phone requesting contact. If after these procedures have been followed and contact has not been made within 24 hours, it will be assumed that your child is enrolled in another educational program and your child will be withdrawn.

## State Standardized Tests

As members of a public charter school, our students participate in all state-mandated tests. Participation rates are critical to the success of our school. According to recent regulations, a public school is required to achieve a participation rate of 95% on any state testing. If a school has less than 95% of its students participate in any assessment, the school runs the risk of receiving a serious penalty by the state of California.

A testing schedule will be distributed to all families. Individual student performance results on statewide achievement testing will be distributed to both parents and teachers in a timely manner.

## Promotion/Retention

Method Schools approach to learning is highly individualized to student's needs based on data-driven instructional practices and a Multi-Tiered System of Supports that targets each student's individual needs.

Method Schools make every effort to meet students where they are by providing ample support and interventions in order to allow students to matriculate from one grade to the next. Retaining a student is a practice that is rarely, if ever, considered based on Method's philosophy and approach of personalizing learning to a student's abilities rather than reassigning grade level. To determine eligibility for a grade retention or promotion, we must allow ample time for interventions to be put



in place, data to be gathered, and documentation of student response to interventions to meet the student's learning concern.

### Process to Determine Promotion/Retention

1. Identification of Learning Concern
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student, parent, or homeroom teacher expresses a learning concern.</li> <li>• Homeroom teachers, parents, and students work collaboratively to implement general interventions.</li> <li>• Homeroom teacher documents students' responses to general interventions. If there is no response to intervention, student is elevated to Student Success Team Meeting</li> </ul>
2. Student, parent, or homeroom teacher expresses a learning concern.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homeroom teachers, parents, and students work collaboratively to implement general interventions.</li> <li>• Homeroom teacher documents students' responses to general interventions. If there is no response to intervention, student is elevated to Student Success Team Meeting</li> </ul>
3. Student Success Team #1 (SST-1) Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning concerns documented</li> <li>• Targeted interventions agreed upon</li> <li>• Date for follow up agreed upon at the meeting. Timeline for follow up is dependent on severity of learning concern. If no response to interventions at SST-1, student elevated to Student Success Team #2 (SST-2) meeting</li> </ul>
4. Student Success Team #2 (SST-2) Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning concerns documented</li> <li>• Interventions adjusted based on students response to interventions in SST-1</li> <li>• Date for follow up agreed upon at the meeting. Timeline for follow up is dependent on severity of learning concern. If no response to interventions at SST-2, students are elevated to assessment meetings.</li> </ul>
5. Assessment Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the need for Special Education assessment</li> <li>• Records review for appropriate grade placement</li> <li>• Determine appropriate placement in independent study model</li> </ul>

If it is determined, a special education assessment is appropriate, the Special Education department will arrange for an assessment plan to determine special education eligibility.

Although extremely rare, any recommendations for a student's retention or promotions are taken to Method's Board for final approval. Method cannot guarantee the recommendation or denial of retention or promotion as each request is taken on a case by case basis. Please refer to the [board policy](#) for more details on student promotion or retention

## Student Success Team Meetings

Pupils who are not making sufficient progress and/or have excessive absences within one learning period, and have not corrected behavior despite enrollment in MTSS shall be required to attend a Student Success Team meeting, along with their learning coach, to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study. This conference shall be held as soon as possible, and the pupil will receive written notice of the Student Success Team Meeting. The pupil

may request one postponement, not to exceed five (5) school days, of the conference for good cause.

At the meeting, the parent/guardian or adult student shall be informed of the reason for the meeting and the evidence supporting the concerns for the student's academic health. The student and/or representative shall be given the opportunity to present information and share their concerns/obstacles during the meeting. Method staff will take any information presented by the parent or learning coach and student into consideration when determining mandatory interventions for the student for continued enrollment. Additional factors will be considered including, but not limited to, the following:

- Student's grades at the time of the evaluation
- Student's progress in the independent study curriculum
- Student's attendance at required live sessions
- Teacher observation and feedback
- Student's participation in their assigned MTSS

Staff decisions shall be provided in writing to the parent/guardian within three days of the evaluation. Method Schools staff may:

- Find independent study still in the student's best interest
- Place the student on attendance probation to be evaluated again at the next attendance period if the student continues to fail to engage in daily activities
- Use other alternatives to improve attendance and engagement
- Find that it is not in the student's best interest to remain in independent study.

If Method staff finds that it is not in the best interest to remain in independent study, then the student shall be withdrawn from enrollment at Method Schools and the parent/guardian will immediately enroll in a site-based program through the local school district or other appropriate educational program. Method Schools' decisions are final.

## Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy

Academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism are any attempt to obtain credit through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas or work as one's own. This constitutes fraud or theft. Plagiarism or any form of academic dishonesty is a grave offense and will not be tolerated.

If a teacher or administrator determines there is sufficient evidence of academic dishonesty on the part of a student, the teacher may exercise one or more of the options listed below, depending on the severity of the offense.

Some examples of academic dishonesty are (but are not limited to):

- Using another's work and claiming it as your own.
- Copying other students' work or allowing your work to be copied.
- Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- Copying from text, websites, or other course materials.
- Purchasing a paper or project.
- "Recycling" an assignment – submitting an assignment to more than one course.
- Asking for answers in any social media forum, discussion, or chatroom.
- Manipulating online assessments to achieve a passing score without mastering the content.
- AI assistance will be considered plagiarism if students copy and paste AI responses and claim them as their own work. Students should use AI assistance as a support, scaffold and tool, not as a replacement for their own thoughts and work.

### ***Consequences for academic dishonesty***

**First Offense**–Content teacher will remove credit for any assignment related to the offense and communicate to the HR teacher. HR Teacher will contact and conference with parents and students regarding the offense and discuss the repercussions of additional offenses. Teacher will provide required resources to help students succeed while maintaining academic integrity. The student will be required to resubmit assignment(s) to receive credit.

**Second Offense**– Content teacher will remove credit for any assignment related to the offense and communicate to the HR teacher. Administrators/ department lead will conference with the teacher, parent, and student regarding the seriousness of academic integrity. The student may be required additional supervision (example: complete assessments in the online classroom) to help support the student to be successful in the future. The student can redo the assignment but will only receive ½ credit.

**Third Offense**– Content teacher will remove credit for any assignment related to the offense. Administrators/ department leads will conference with the teacher, parent, and student regarding the seriousness of academic integrity. The student may be withdrawn from Method Schools and placed back in their school of residence. A letter will be placed in the student's file. The repeat incidents will be noted in the student's permanent file. Plagiarized assignments will not be allowed to be resubmitted for credit.

### **Avoiding Plagiarism**

Students must give credit for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge. If a student borrows ideas or information from another author, he/she must acknowledge the author in the body of the text and on the reference page. If a student borrows the words of another author, he/she must be careful to use the author's exact words, enclose them in quotation marks, and cite the source in the body of the text and on the reference page. If

students are unsure whether he/she should cite, he/she is encouraged to cite. Students are also encouraged to ask instructors for guidance on this issue. Students might also consult writing handbooks such as the Essential Little Brown Handbook and for formatting questions refer to manuals such as The MLA Handbook for the Humanities, The Publication Manual of the APA for social sciences and business and The CBE Style Manual for natural and applied sciences. Failure to abide by these standards will be reported to the appropriate administrative authorities and may result in loss of credit and revoked access to course(s). The use of current and relevant technology is encouraged at Method Schools as we know that business leaders want a tech-literate workforce. Students are encouraged to work with their teachers to determine how to use AI platforms like Grammarly, ChatGPT, and other AI tools as thought-partners, not thought-replacers.

***“Failure to meet the requirements listed above may indicate that an independent study program is not the appropriate placement for your student and may result in your student’s withdrawal from Method Schools. If a student is withdrawn for failing to meet the enrollment requirements, the student will not be able to re – enroll for the remainder of the current academic year and one academic year following.”***

## Method Schools Sponsored Fitness and Athletic Training Policy

Method Schools believes that physical fitness, athletic training and sports participation can be part of a well-rounded curriculum and educational experience. Method supports student participation in fitness and athletic training upon request to ensure students are offered a holistic experience. Method-sponsored athletic participation is a privilege that requires satisfactory academic achievement and attendance as outlined in Method’s MTSS.

Tiering could impact the sponsored fitness training. Affected students are placed on academic probation and their athletic training would not be the responsibility of Method Schools while on academic probation.

Students who participate in Method Schools’ sponsored fitness or athletic training are expected to meet the requirements of attendance and engagement as set forth by their grade level for live instruction classes, weekly 1-to-1 meetings, and daily login to the provided curriculum.

## Grade Appeal Policy

The official transcript is a complete representation of a student’s academic record. It is of utmost importance that accurate record keeping and grade reporting is timely.

A petition or request for transcript review can be submitted to Method Schools to review records and coursework.

In the event of inaccuracies, any changes to official transcripts are made only after a thorough review of the transcript by counselors and course teachers. Gradebooks, master agreements, and report cards are reviewed to support the changes to ensure its accuracy. No changes are made without the approval of the course teacher and Method administration.

## Extra Credit Policy

Extra credit is an opportunity to

- deepen or extend learning and develop mastery of the learning outcomes
- reinforce their understanding of concepts taught in class

Extra credit is not:

- a way for students to make up incomplete or unsubmitted assignments or to provide a last-minute effort for the student

### Summary & Guidelines

1. Extra credit points may not exceed 5% of course points. ex. 800 course pts.= 40pts EC
2. Extra credit beyond the approved opportunities listed in course modules must be approved by administrators, defined as the Principal, Assistant Principal, and or Director under the conditions that will provide an opportunity without compromising the academic needs, requirements, or expectations of the student.
3. Extra credit points should not exceed more than 10 points in a semester for parent participation in webinars within a semester.

## Special Education

### *An Overview*

#### *What is Special Education?*

The Education for All Handicapped Children was enacted by Congress in 1975 creating special education. This law has been revised several times since its original passage and is now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Children must be identified, tested, and have a qualifying disability that negatively impacts their education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states that each child who has a disability, needs special education and related services will receive FAPE (free appropriate public education).

#### *What are the 13 disabilities recognized by IDEA and California?*

IDEA specifies 13 classifications of disabilities; however, a child's school performance must be "adversely affected" by a disability to qualify for the special education program.

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). ASD is a developmental disability that significantly affects verbal, nonverbal communication, social interaction, and sometimes impacts behavior. It is generally evident before the age of three. Common characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities, stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or changes in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.
- Deafblindness is a concomitant (simultaneous) hearing and visual impairment, the combination of which causes severe communication, developmental, and educational problems. In this category, a student's needs cannot be met with just deaf or blind services only.
- Deafness is a hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which impairs the processing of linguistic information through hearing, even with amplification. If any equipment can correct a hearing problem, then the student does not qualify under the definition of deafness.
- Emotional Disturbance (ED) is an inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. It typically manifests as an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances; a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; and a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears asocial with personal or school problems. Common examples may include anxiety disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and depression.
- Hard of Hearing or Hearing Impairment may be permanent or fluctuating, which impairs the processing of linguistic information through hearing, even with amplification, and which adversely affects educational performance. Processing linguistic information includes speech and language reception and speech and language discrimination.
- Intellectual disability (ID) is a student who has significantly below average general intellectual abilities existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior. These students typically have poor communication, self-care, and social skills. Most of these students are on a modified curriculum. Common examples include down syndrome or mental retardation.
- Multiple disabilities (MD) include concomitant impairments of at least two disabilities or more, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated by special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

- Orthopedic Impairment (OI) is a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects the student's educational performance due to the lack of ability to move their bodies. One common example is cerebral palsy.
- Other Health Impairment (OHI) is an umbrella term that covers any other condition or illness that limits a child's strength, energy, or alertness. One common example is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which impacts attention and executive function.
- Speech or language impairment (SLI). Students with this disability may demonstrate difficulty understanding or using spoken language to such an extent that it adversely affects his or her educational performance and cannot be corrected without special education and related services. Common speech disorders may include articulation (reduced intelligibility) and/or stuttering.
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD) is the most common category and is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken, or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. This disability must result in a severe discrepancy between his/her intellectual ability and achievement in one or more academic areas.
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI). This is a brain injury caused by an accident or some kind of physical force. Services and needs must be on a case-by-case basis based on the severity of the injury.
- Visual impairment (VI) includes both partial sight and blindness impacting educational performance. If eyewear can correct a vision problem, then the student does not qualify under the definition of visual impairment.

### *What is an IEP?*

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written to annually provide a child with a disability with a specially designed education. It will include eligibility status, present levels, accommodations, modifications, and goals. IEP goals are written to show “meaningful educational benefit” for students based on their ability level. The IEP is written, updated, reviewed, and agreed upon every year. Initial tests are conducted to determine eligibility and every three years testing must be conducted to determine ongoing eligibility. Students with an IEP are not exempted from the attendance requirements of Independent Study including live attendance and are subject to the tiered re-engagement policy as required.

### *What is a modified curriculum?*

A modified curriculum is a change in what is being taught to or expected from the student to adjust for a reduced comprehension level and may entail changing some or all of the curriculum. The curriculum is adjusted to the child's instructional level which may be one grade level below or several and should be agreed upon between parents & teachers. Students on a modified curriculum may not be eligible for a high school diploma but may receive a certificate of completion upon completing high school.

### *What is a 504 plan?*

Students who do not qualify for an IEP may sometimes be offered a 504 plan. A 504 Plan is a blueprint for how the school will provide support and remove barriers for a student with a disability. It may provide accommodations, services, supports, and any other agreed-upon reasonable changes to the learning environment to enable students to learn alongside their peers. Unlike an IEP, there is no standard 504 Plan; however, a school site may have a structured form. These plans may vary from student to student as it is based on individual needs. The plan is reviewed yearly and every three years for continued eligibility. Students with a 504 are not exempted from the attendance requirements of Independent Study and are subject to the tiered re-engagement policy as required.

### *What are adaptations?*

Adaptations are frequently used by teachers. They are quick and easy changes to the classroom environment such as moving an easily distracted child away from the window, providing blockades, noise reduction headphones or seating the student closer to the front. Adaptations provide access for a student with a disability to participate in a course, standard, or test but does not alter or lower the course standards. Some adaptations may be found on 504 Plans or IEPs.

### *What are accommodations?*

Accommodations are frequently used by teachers and are methods used to assist with student learning without changing the academic content nor standards assessed. These are often found on 504 Plans or IEPs and are based on student needs and/or disabilities. The following types are listed below:

*Presentation* - the way information is presented.

*Response* - the way a student completes an assignment.

*Setting* - the environment of the student

*Time/schedule* - dates, days, hours, minutes, and other time issues

*Organizational* - the ability to keep a student organized and focused.

*Study* - methods to teach students to retain information and self-study, which may be called accommodations or simply strategies.

### *Students enrolling with an IEP*



Method Schools is a charter school that facilitates admissions for a student with an IEP in the same manner as for a student without an IEP per federal and state laws. Students will provide the same enrollment information as non-IEP students such as proof of residency, a legal form of identification for the child, and vaccination records, etc. Typically, students enroll and then provide the IEP. For students transferring from a traditional in-person campus within the same school district, the IEP will usually stay in place with possible minor word changes to reflect an online at-home setting instead of in-classroom instruction. For example, an IEP may state that the student will go to a specific classroom for instruction and testing; however, the IEP language should be changed to state learning and assessments will be achieved through Method Schools' online framework, and parents acknowledge this fact and may choose to enroll their child with the stated understanding. If the student relocates from another school district, we provide comparable services and maintain the original IEP as much as reasonably possible, disclosing adaptations and accommodations to Method's virtual instruction format. An initial 30-day IEP meeting is scheduled as soon as possible after official enrollment to review the existing IEP, and parental input is highly encouraged. A copy of parental rights is always provided to the parents and included with the proposed IEP draft that will be discussed at the 30-day IEP meeting.

In cases where a student enrolls from another state, the procedures are slightly different. We still have the initial 30-day IEP meeting, provide a copy of parental rights, and offer temporary comparable services and/or accommodations, but we also explain that the state of California requires us to assess the student to ensure that he/she meets the state's qualifications for special education in California. Parents are requested to sign a testing consent form and another meeting is scheduled after assessment for IEP qualification has been completed by a state-approved professional who is authorized to assess students for special education services. The current timeline for this phase is within 60 days to allow sufficient time for student assessments but we will seek a timelier testing period to allow the subsequent IEP determination meeting to occur as soon as possible. We follow this protocol in compliance with EDC 5604(c), which states, "Once a child has been referred for an initial assessment to determine whether the child is an individual with exceptional needs and to determine the educational needs of the child, these determinations shall be made, and an individualized education program team meeting shall occur within 60 days of receiving parental consent for the assessment, pursuant to the subdivision." In the event a student does not qualify for the special education program under California's criteria, we inform parents their children might qualify for appropriate accommodations and/or services as provided by a 504 Plan pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The parameters of inclusion in such a plan are discussed with parents for their approval, or should parents decide to decline the 504 Plan option, the child is retained at Method Schools as a general education student.

## Child Find

Method Schools participates in a comprehensive "child find" protocol to identify students who have or may have exceptional needs. All instructional, support and administrative staff seek to participate in the "child find" protocol of the special education local plan area (SELPA). These systems include a variety policies and practices that are not limited to the following:

- Comprehensive post-enrollment practices that aim to identify students with exceptional needs in order to ensure that all instructional, support and administrative staff is aware of all students who have identified special needs
- Continuous efforts to maintaining and nurturing relationships with all feeder local education agencies to request and obtain cumulative files and other documents in a timely fashion
- Ongoing professional development and training for all instructional, support and administrative staff, to ensure proper identification of special needs within all students
- As part of the Multi-tiered Support System, continuously review and monitor all student assessment data, including state mandated testing and all internal assessments in order to identify students who may be falling behind expectations in their academic progress and are in need of additional support or services

## School Policies

### Confidentiality

Please notify our enrollment specialists should your contact information change and provide any updated proof of residency for your new address. Our staff will update the records accordingly. Correct contact information ensures that curriculum materials and important school notices are mailed to the correct student address. Parents are requested to update their account information in the online curriculum should their email address change. Communication is often sent via email to the email address listed in the online curriculum. Thus, we would like to keep all records up-to-date.

### Code of Conduct

Freedom of speech and expression is valued not only throughout society but also, and particularly, in the academic setting. No more is this so than in the classroom.

At Method Schools, a classroom is defined as many different locations. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Online classroom sessions.
- Any Method Schools event
- Any Method Schools community area.

As a diverse community of learners, students must strive to work together in a setting of civility, tolerance, and respect for each other in an environment that does not distract from the mutual commitment to academic inquiry and reflection. To that end, the following code of classroom etiquette has been established.

- When participating in class dialogue, no one monopolizes discussions to the exclusion of others, either in terms of time or opinions expressed.
- Conflicting opinions among members of a class are respected and responded to in a professional manner.
- No side conversations or other distracting behaviors are engaged in during class discussions or presentations.
- No offensive comments, language, or gestures are part of the classroom environment.
- Posting anonymous messages is not permitted unless authorized by the course's online teacher.  
Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited.
- Use only your own username and password, and do not share these with anyone.
- Do not post personal information (any social media, YouTube, Facebook, email address, etc.)
- Do not interfere with other users' ability to access Method Schools or disclose anyone's password to others or allow them to use another user's account. **You** are responsible for all activity that is associated with your user name and password.
- Do not download, transmit or post material that is intended for personal gain or profit, non- Method Schools commercial activities, non-Method Schools product advertising, or political lobbying on a Method Schools owned instructional computing resource.
- Do not use Method Schools instructional computing resources to sell or purchase any illegal items or substances.
- Do not upload or post any software on Method Schools instructional computing resources that are not specifically required and approved for your assignments.
- Do not post any MP3 files, compressed video, or other non-instructional files to any Method Schools server.
- Posting material that is obscene or defamatory or which is intended to annoy, harass or intimidate another person. This includes distributing "spam" mail, chain email, viruses, or other intentionally destructive content.

Adherence to this code of conduct will enable students to receive the most from their academic endeavors and should be seen as a regular and voluntary compact among faculty and students. Any infraction of this code, however, that is deemed to be materially or substantially disruptive of the learning environment is cause for removal of a student from a class or for student disciplinary proceedings.

### *Bullying and Intimidation*

Method Schools believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. To that end, the schools and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance. Method Schools will not tolerate any act of intimidation including direct physical contact, gestures, comments, threats or actions, either written, verbal or physical, which cause, threaten to cause or are likely to cause bodily harm, social isolation, manipulation, or personal

degradation at any school site, at any school activity whether on or off campus, while traveling to and from school or a school sponsored activity, or during the lunch period, whether on or off the school site.

## Discipline

In order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students, Method Schools adheres to the Suspension and Expulsion guidelines established by California Education Code Section 48900. When a student interferes with the learning, safety, and well-being of students, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, and the use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion. Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA") 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. The School will follow Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and all federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

## Dress Code

It is important to require a standard of dress for when students attend a school-related event. These instances include (but are not limited to) online web conferences, outings, testing, community day, etc. Clothing worn should promote the learning process and appropriate behavior. It is expected that students will wear clothing that is consistent with their health, safety, and welfare.

The following standard of dress must be observed in these instances:

- Clothing and shoes must be suitable from all scheduled classroom activities including physical education, science labs, and other activities where unique hazards exist.

- Clothing, shoes, and accessories must not pose a threat to the safety of any student or staff.
- Hats, hoodies, and other headwear must allow the face and ears to be visible and not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff (religious headwear excluded).
- Clothing, jewelry, and accessories that contain images and/or writing that refer to alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or racist epithets may not be worn.
- Clothing, jewelry, and accessories that contain images and/or writing with messages of hostility toward race, ethnicity, culture, and religion.
- Students must wear a top/shirt with pants/shorts/skirt, or a dress.
- Clothing must cover undergarments.

## Student Records

Your student's records may be viewed at any time pursuant to the Notification of Rights under FERPA. Please provide our office with five (5) days' notice so that the record may be pulled. The record must be viewed in the presence of a Method Schools administrative staff member.

Method Schools' Registrar will send a Release of Student Records form to your student's previous school upon enrollment in order to obtain your student's records. It is the responsibility of your previous school to mail the records to Method Schools at that time.

Should you decide to withdraw from Method Schools and transfer to a new school, your new school will contact Method Schools to request your student's records, and we will mail the records to them.

Should you decide to withdraw from Method Schools and teach in the home, please contact our school offices and we will mail a copy of your student records to you.

## Work Permits

Students requesting a work permit need to speak with their Method teacher, complete the required paperwork, and submit it to their Method Schools teacher. Work permits are only issued to students who meet the following guidelines the following guidelines after enrollment for a full quarter:

### Attendance & Grades

- All students are expected to attend their scheduled classes during the designated class times. Regular attendance enables active participation, course material engagement, and teacher and peer interaction.
- Maintain at least a 2.0 GPA.

- Are not deficient in attendance or academic progress as indicated by placement in tiered re-engagement

#### **Communication with Employers**

- Student must inform their employer about the required high school class times. Communicate availability, ensuring the employer understands the commitment to the student's education.

#### **Protected Class Time**

To provide an optimal learning environment, we have set aside specific hours that are protected for required class time.

- High School; every Mon-Friday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, students are expected to attend their scheduled classes without conflicting work obligations.

#### **Smartfox Online Platform**

- Log into Smartfox every scheduled school day before 3:00 pm.

## Digital Citizenship and Policy

**Method Schools will provide users with the privilege of email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Email accounts are hosted on and availability and use is restricted based on school policies.** If users are provided with email accounts the account should be used with care. Users should not send personal information or attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origins. Users should use appropriate language and only communicate with other people as allowed by the school policy. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage is monitored and archived.

### *Method Schools Position on Cyber Bullying and Digital Citizenship*

- Cyberbullying will not be tolerated and is strictly forbidden.
- Engaging in cyberbullying to harm (physically or emotionally) another person will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges.
- In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime.
- Users should remember that digital activities are monitored and retained.
- Students shall receive age-appropriate education including, but not limited to appropriate online behaviors in social networking sites, chat rooms, electronic communications etc.; the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information; and, consequences of unlawful activities, including cyberbullying awareness and response, and other unlawful or inappropriate online activities by students.

### *Social Media*

Students cannot use their school email account to open social media accounts or for any other use than for school communication.

### *Hacking*

There are both state and federal laws in place to protect the privacy of both email and social media. Hacking of either of these types of accounts is an illegal action by the student. Students need to be reminded that accessing another student's Method email, Google drive, or social media accounts is considered an illegal act but also a serious offense and will not be tolerated by Method Schools. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken.

Student Users should never share personal information including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information over the internet without permission from an adult. Users recognize that communicating over the internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet in real life someone they meet online without parental permission. If users see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they should immediately bring it to the attention of an adult.

### *Zoom Nettiquette*

Disruptions in zoom meetings are considered a disciplinary offense and are taken seriously. Dropping into zoom meetings that are not a student's assigned meeting with the intent to disrupt will result in immediate disciplinary action.

Disruptive behavior includes but not limited to:

- Yelling
- Using obscene or profane language including racial slurs
- Making gestures
- Appearing in an undressed manner
- Showing visuals or sharing audio that is sexual or political in nature outside of the curriculum

Disciplinary action may include but not limited and dependent upon the seriousness of the offense:

- Meeting with HRT, Director of Dept, and or Senior Director of Schools
- Temporary hold on live sessions that will result in lost points for specific zoom classes and/or attendance
- Possible suspension from school

### *Cyberbullying*

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated and can take on many forms. Understanding the different ways technology can be used to hurt others can help prevent it from happening.

- **Flaming**- Online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar language.
- **Harassment**- Repeatedly sending nasty, mean, and insulting messages.
- **Denigration**- "Dissing" someone online. Sending or posting gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships.

- **Impersonation**- Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material to get that person in trouble or damage their reputation.
- **Outing**- Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online.
- **Trickery**- Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information and then sharing it online.
- **Exclusion**- Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone.
- **Cyberstalking**- Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

## Loaner Laptops

Method Schools loans school laptops to students for academic purposes. It is the student's responsibility to care for the equipment and ensure it is maintained in a safe environment. If the computer is lost, stolen, or damaged, parents/guardians and the student need to notify the school immediately.

The laptop and all accessories are the property of Method Schools and is loaned to the student for educational purposes and only for the academic term. Students may not deface or destroy this property in any way. Inappropriate material on the machine may result in the student losing the use of this computer. The equipment will be returned to the school on a date to be requested or sooner if the student is discharged from school prior to the end of the school year.

If the laptop equipment is lost, stolen, or damaged while in the borrower's possession, the borrower is responsible for the replacement or repair thereof of the device the student was loaned. Method Schools issues different loaner devices for students ranging from \$179-799 based on their needs. Borrower will be given a loaner receipt that includes items assigned and their replacement cost at the time of receiving their loaner equipment. The borrower may use laptop equipment only for non-commercial and Method Schools purposes.

### *Student Responsibilities*

Your laptop is an important learning tool and is for educational purposes only. The student must be willing to accept the following responsibilities.

- I know this computer is on loan to me. All school policies, procedures, applicable laws, and the Network and Internet Policy must be followed. I understand that any violation could result in the loss of the computer for my use.
- I will treat the laptop with care and will be responsible for using the laptop.
- I will not load or delete any software from the laptop and I will comply with all copyright laws.
- I will not give personal information when using the internet.
- I will not attempt to make any repairs to the laptop.
- I understand that misuse or inappropriate use as determined by school personnel may result in any and/or all of the following:
  - Student conference



- Parent conference
- Cancellation of access privileges and/or loss of computer privileges
- School disciplinary actions

## Consumable/Non-Consumable Policy

- All materials ordered with state funding, including consumable items, such as workbooks, pencils, paper, clay, and any other materials consumable in nature, are the property of the school.
- Materials are loaned to enrolled students for their educational usage only. The items must be returned to the school via the assigned Enrollment Specialist when the student is done using that item, or when the student leaves the school.
- If an item has been "consumed" by the student—used up and no longer usable by any other student—then it can be "archived" by the Enrollment Specialist.
- If a student disenrolls or is dropped by the school prior to the end of the school year for any reason, all materials must be returned to the school within two business days. Families will be billed for any items not returned, including those that are consumable in nature. Student transcripts will not be released until all materials are returned. This includes Method Chrome books and charging cords.

## Instructional Funding Policy

- The instructional funds (IF) are set up in the SF parent portal and parents can request for approved service vendors, request online managed licenses (OMLs), or choose to participate in school provided supplemental services and products.
- Instructional fund rates are subject to change each year.
- Instructional funding is prorated by day for late enrollment.
- All materials purchased with IFs is the property of the school and must be returned upon leaving our school; including consumables. Parents will be responsible to pay for materials lost, stolen, damaged, or not returned to the school.
- Method Schools has ultimate oversight of instructional funding expenditures.
- Students enrolled in Method Schools sponsored athletic programs use IF for their athletic training and do not receive a balance on their dashboard.
  - Students who withdraw from a Method Schools' athletic program will not receive further funds for the school year unless a prorated unused balance remains.
- Students who withdraw from Method Schools during the active school year and return within the same school year will not receive a new pro-rated balance but will have their prior balance reinstated unless they were actively enrolled in a Method Schools athletic program or the prior balanced was consumed.
- Student balances do not roll over school year to school year
- Balances are not paid out to families
- OMLs and vendor subscriptions are limited to specific deadline requests.

- Vendors who have students enrolled in Method Schools cannot invoice for services for their own child

## Elementary School Policies

### Attendance

#### *Absence Defined*

No login recorded in the curriculum platform and no work submitted for a school day.

#### *Missed Engagement*

Students who miss live instructional classes will lose 1-2 points from the live engagement course assignment weekly. Students who miss more than 2 live instructional engagements will be contacted to determine if academic interventions are needed to assist with supporting engagement.

#### *Vacation/ Illness/ Family Emergency*

Families must inform the Homeroom teacher by email and/or call the school line to inform them their student(s) will be out of school due to illness, vacation, or family emergency. Students who have appointments are not excused and are required to still log into their courses and submit work. Due to the independent online learning format, students can log into the platform and submit course work at any point during the day and evening to maintain good attendance standing.

Students going on vacation will need to work with their Homeroom teacher regarding work progress and plan. Parents need to provide 1 week or more notice if they will be on vacation and agree to the offline work plan. Parents are responsible for inputting the offline work into the learning journal for days “absent” and they should attempt to log into any required Live Instructional classes/1-1 meetings to meet the attendance requirements and avoid Tiering. The department lead and homeroom teacher will work together with the parent to support learning and a plan for the student to make up missed work.

#### *Weekly Homeroom Meetings (1 on 1)*

Students/ parents are required to email their homeroom teacher as soon as possible if they will miss their weekly meeting. The teacher will reach out with an alternative makeup day and time. Families are to make every effort to meet the rescheduling meetings.

- Students who miss 1 or more weekly meetings without rescheduling may be referred for tiered re-engagement under MTSS.

- 3 or more missed weekly meetings including continuous rescheduled meetings will be flagged for a Student Success Team Meeting.

## *Engagement*

Students are required to log into the assigned curriculum platform daily to work on lessons, quizzes, and assignments. It is recommended that students spend a minimum of 4 hrs daily engaging in curriculum.

### *Morning Meetings*

Morning meetings daily by grade level are required.

### *Pacing Guides*

The weekly pacing guide will be broken down into daily chunks and students will receive daily goals aligned with the weekly pacing. Unless specified otherwise by the student's homeroom teacher.

### *5th Grade*

Students will be assigned a grade level Math, Language Arts, and Science (5th grade only) live instruction class. Attendance is mandatory for live instruction classes. Class attendance is 5 points in that subject class course. Missed classes impact a student's grade.

### *iReady Diagnostic Testing*

iReady diagnostics conducted during regular intervals assess and determine a student's need for Supplemental Supports under MTSS. Students whose scores determine supplemental supports are needed are required to attend the assigned Supplemental Math and/or Language Arts class during the week. Students will remain in supplemental support classes until they have shown adequate progress toward grade level growth.

### *Weekly 1 to 1 Meeting*

Weekly meetings with a Homeroom teacher are required. This is a 30-minute meeting with the Homeroom teacher assigned to the student. Students will discuss course progress, work on assignments, receive personal academic support from their homeroom teacher. It is also a requirement for attendance.

## Live Instruction

### Class Behavior & Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate respect during live instruction classes, 1 to 1 meetings, supplemental support classes, and with communication to all Method Staff. Come prepared to class with the necessary materials. Computer charged, paper, and pencil

#### **Student expectations during live instruction:**

- Muting during instruction
- Raising hand
- Positive attitude
- Respectful chat with staff and students
- Cameras on
- First & Last name on Zoom
- Dress in appropriate attire
- No distracting behavior
- Response to teacher's instructions/questions/ and participation

Students who cause disruptions or disrespectful behavior/ communication in class will be warned and parents/guardians notified.

#### **Disruptive behavior as described but not limited to:**

- Inappropriate comments involving threats
- demeaning comments aimed at a student(s) or teacher
- Inappropriate in a sexual content
- Distractive and off topic
- Camera filters/ or actions behind the camera

Continued issues will result in a behavior contract created by the Homeroom teachers, department lead and signed by parent and student. Behavior contract may include:

- restriction(s) to class
- breakout room for time-out of no more than 5 min.
- Positive reinforcement for behavior
- Time limit on the behavior contract

## Curriculum

Students in 2-5 will be provided with log in access to the Smartfox curriculum platform. Students in Kindergarten through first grade will be provided login information for the K12 curriculum platform.

- Each student will also work within the iReady program daily equaling 45 minutes in Math and 45 minutes in Reading.

\* Changes to curriculum or assignments will be approved by the homeroom teacher and Director of K8 or with the direction of the Special Education Director where applicable.

8 work samples are required each learning period, though more assignments are required to make adequate progress in each class.

## Grading Policy

### Grades 3-5 Grading Scale

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

### Grades K-2 Grading Scale

E	Exceeds Expectations
M	Meets Expectations
P	Partially Meets Expectations
I	Incomplete

## Report Cards

Report cards are issued at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. Homeroom teachers will conference with students and parents the week after report cards are sent out for Semester 1. Parents will be invited to their student's scheduled 1 to 1 for a remote call or zoom.

## Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent out quarterly. These are mid-point progress grades between semester grades. Homeroom teachers may give more frequent reports at that discretion and that of a SSM and department lead. Greater frequency of progress reports will occur with Academic and Attendance Action Plan.

## Middle School Policies

### Middle School Academic Policy

#### Progress in Curriculum

Method Schools offer students the opportunity to work in a self-paced learning environment where academic course levels are tailored to meet the student at his/her point of need. With this being said;

- Progress is logged daily. Students must make continuous progress (actively engaged and completing assignments) in the curriculum.
- Students are required to complete diagnostic testing (done typically three times in the school year) per their homeroom teacher to determine progression.

Students are required to attend daily live subject session courses that will be assigned by their homeroom teacher. Students must attend a live session for each of their assigned courses and Targeted Direct Instruction if assigned to the student. Students may receive additional support via study halls.

#### Lack of Progress

Teachers will send parents/students an email reminder if there has been no academic engagement documented in SF by 3:00 pm. It is expected that students will login to SF to either work in their courses or record other academic activities into their Learning Journals by 11:00 pm.

If there is no recorded activity in SF or SF learning journal, it is considered an unexcused absence and will be handled according to the response below:

#### Grade Level Promotion

Method Schools start with the expectation that most of our students who regularly attend school will be promoted to the next grade level by the end of the school year. Grade-level promotion is not based solely on percentages, numbers of lessons completed, or test scores. Rather, grade-level promotion is based on a more comprehensive view that includes satisfactory progress in skill development, acceptable attendance, prior school experience, and achievement on lesson assessments and teacher assessment of student ability. As would be the case in a traditional classroom, students at Method will exhibit a significant range of achievement in a certain grade and most students in this range will move to the next grade.

#### Report Cards

Method Schools will provide a written report card or progress report for each student:

- At the end of each QUARTER (Progress report)
- At the end of each SEMESTER (Report card)

The report card will include an indicator of the student's progress as well as a short narrative report provided by the child's teacher.

## Grades 6-8 Grading Scale

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Each report of progress is a “snapshot,” an important indicator of where a student is in his or her lesson schedule in a particular grade. Progress and achievement will vary according to lesson planning, teaching schedules, the date when a student enrolls, the student's learning style, and aptitude.

Students beginning after the start of school will receive a progress report based on the completion of lessons in accordance with the amount of time they have been enrolled.

### Late Work

The belief and expectation of our faculty and school governance structure is that our students will work to exceed their goals and personal expectations. Method Schools Faculty strives to support all students in this endeavor. The course instructor and/or homeroom teacher will work to support students with missing or late assignments. Grading and content penalties may apply to assignments once submitted.

## Middle School Attendance Policy

### Independent Study Master Agreement (ISMA)

California Independent Study regulations require that any student enrolled in Method Schools has signed an Independent Study Master Agreement on file for each year they are enrolled. The student, the parent/guardian and our teachers must sign the agreement. Additionally, should a learning coach other than the parent/guardian be responsible for instruction, he/she must also sign the Master Agreement. Please work with your teacher to ensure that your child's ISMA is signed in a timely manner. ISMAs **without** all signatures will not be considered enrolled until all signatures are collected.

***“Failure to provide a signed Independent Study Master Agreement prior to each year will result in your child’s withdrawal from our program due to this state requirement.”***

## Attendance

### *Absence Defined*

No login recorded in the curriculum platform and no work submitted for a school day.

### *Missed Engagement*

Students can make up missed classes by completing the missed assignment and turning it in within 1 week from the missed class for 3 of the 5 points.

Make-up work must be completed within 1 week of missed class for credit. Unless special circumstances and the Homeroom teacher agrees with department’s lead’s approval.

Any further absences will result in a Student Success Team meeting for academic intervention.

### *Vacation/ Illness/ Family Emergency*

Families must inform the Homeroom teacher by email and/or call the school line to inform them their student(s) will be out of school due to illness, vacation, or family emergency. Students who have appointments are not excused and are required to still log into their courses and submit work. Due to the independent online learning format, students can log into the platform and submit course work at any point during the day and evening to maintain good attendance standing.

Students going on vacation will need to work with their Homeroom teacher regarding work progress and plan. Parents need to provide 1 week or more notice if they will be on vacation and agree to the offline work plan. Parents are responsible for inputting the offline work into the learning journal for days “absent” and they should attempt to log into any required Live Instructional classes/1-1 meetings to meet the attendance requirements and avoid tiering. Vacation days are not considered “excused” due the nature of independent study program.

### *Weekly Homeroom Meetings (1 on 1)*

Students/ parents are required to email their homeroom teacher as soon as possible if they will miss their weekly meeting. The teacher will reach out with an alternative makeup day and time. Families are to make every effort to meet the rescheduling meetings.

- Students who miss 1 or more weekly meetings without rescheduling may be referred for tiered re-engagement.



- 3 or more missed weekly meetings including continuous rescheduled meetings may result in referral for a Student Success Team Meeting.

## *Engagement*

Students are required to log into the assigned curriculum platform daily to work on lessons, quizzes, and assignments. It is recommended that students spend a minimum of 4 hrs daily engaging in curriculum.

### *Live Content Sessions*

Live content session meetings daily by grade level and subject are required. Attendance is mandatory for live instruction classes. Class attendance is 5 points in that subject class course. Missed classes impact a student's grade.

### *Pacing Guides*

The weekly pacing guide will be broken down into daily chunks and students will receive daily goals aligned with the weekly pacing. Unless specified otherwise by the student's homeroom teacher.

### *iReady Diagnostic Testing*

iReady diagnostics conducted during regular intervals assess and determine a student's need for Supplemental Supports under MTSS. Students whose scores determine supplemental supports are needed are required to attend the assigned Supplemental Math and/or Language Arts class during the week. Students will remain in supplemental support classes until they have shown adequate progress toward grade level growth.

### *Weekly 1 on 1 Meeting*

Weekly meetings with a Homeroom teacher are required. This is a 30 minute meeting with the student's Homeroom teacher. Students will discuss course progress, work on assignments, receive personal academic support from their homeroom teacher. It is also a requirement for attendance.

## *Live Instruction*

### *Class Behavior & Expectations*

Students are expected to demonstrate respect during live instruction classes, 1 on 1 meetings, and with communication to all Method Staff. Come prepared to class with the necessary materials. Computer charged, paper, and pencil

**Student expectations during live instruction:**

- Muting during instruction
- Raising hand
- Positive attitude
- Respectful chat with staff and students
- Cameras on
- First & Last name on Zoom
- Dress in appropriate attire
- No distracting behavior
- Response to teacher's instructions/questions/ and participation

Students who cause disruptions or disrespectful behavior/ communication in class will be warned and parents/guardians notified.

**Disruptive behavior as described but not limited to:**

- Inappropriate comments involving threats
- demeaning comments aimed at a student(s) or teacher
- Inappropriate in a sexual content
- Distractive and off topic
- Camera filters/ or actions behind the camera

Continued issues will result in a behavior contract created by the Homeroom teachers, department lead and signed by parent and student. Behavior contract may include:

- restriction(s) to class
- breakout room for time-out of no more than 5 min.
- Positive reinforcement for behavior
- Time limit on the behavior contract

## High School Policies

### *Daily Academic Engagement*

Students must engage in academic activity each scheduled school day, Monday through Friday. Examples of academic activities include viewing lessons, completing quizzes, submitting assignments, and meeting with teachers. Meetings with teachers and attending study halls are also considered academic activities. If students do not login to Smartfox while completing academic activities (for instance, reading or writing assignments outside of Smartfox, academic project participation, meetings with teachers, etc.), **students must record those activities into their Learning Journals via the Smartfox Student Dashboard Missing Activity Report.**

### *3:00 PM Attendance Letter*

If there has been no academic engagement documented in Smartfox by 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday, teachers will send parents and students an email reminder. Communication to the parent/guardian number on file will also be sent notifying of the “absence”. It is expected that students will log in to Smartfox to work in their courses or record other academic activities into their SmartFox Learning Journals that evening.

If there is no recorded activity in Smartfox or the student’s Smartfox Learning Journal, it is considered an **unexcused absence**.

## Meeting Participation

**1 on 1 Meetings** - Students must attend weekly or 2x weekly 1 on 1 HRT meetings. If a student is unable to attend their scheduled meeting, they must provide a 24 hour notice to the HRT. Missing a 1 on 1 meeting with no 24 hour notice will result in an unexcused participation absence and a letter of notification will be issued to parent, student, and Student Success Manager.

Missing 2 consecutive 1 on 1 meetings will result in a mandatory Parent/Student/Teacher Conference. Students who miss more than four 1 on 1 meetings in any one semester will be recommended for an SST (Student Success Team Meeting) and are at risk of withdrawal.

**Office Hours** - Office Hour participation is voluntary for students who are academically on track. HRTs may require students to attend Office Hours as an academic support intervention any time a student's grade drops below a 60% based on low scoring graded items or falling behind the assigned pacing guide.

After the grade is above 60%, attendance is again voluntary. Once an Office Hour is assigned by the HRT and a student fails to attend, it is considered a participation absence and falls under the same policy as missed 1:1 meetings. Missing 2 consecutive assigned Office Hours, either excused or unexcused, will result in a mandatory Parent/Student/Teacher Conference. Students who miss more than 4 assigned Office Hours in any one semester will be recommended for an SST and are at risk of withdrawal.

## Academics

### *Course Placement*

After initial enrollment, students will take the NWEA placement diagnostic assessment, and a counselor will review transcript and/or withdrawal grades from previous high school. Students will be enrolled into 6 courses equalling 30 credits unless there are extenuating circumstances.

### *Personalized Pacing*

Based upon results of initial NWEA placement diagnostic exam and review of past academic performance, each course will have personalized pacing options available to best fit the student's needs.

#### *Accelerated Pacing*

To qualify for accelerated pace Math and English courses (6 week completion pace), students must score at or above grade level on their NWEA Reading and Math Placement diagnostic assessment. All students, including those that placed at or above grade level on their placement assessment, may participate in full semester Math and English courses.

#### *Satisfactory Progress*

Students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress in all assigned courses and complete assigned work **daily**, Monday through Friday. We recommend that students spend between 4-6 hours per day participating in academic activities. Progress reports are sent to parents frequently each semester.

HRTs will work with students to make sure the weekly assigned work is challenging and feasible. Any failed course will need to be repeated to replace the failing grade.

#### *Supplemental Supports*

Additionally, to ensure that all students attain proficiency in Math and Language Arts, 9th-11th grade students are required to meet proficiency on the annual NWEA assessment and additional diagnostics. Students not performing at grade level will be referred to supplemental support under MTSS and will be required to attend weekly math or ELA supplemental live sessions until they can show adequate progress toward grade level standards.

#### *Year Round Option*

Students who do not maintain satisfactory progress in credit completion will be encouraged to attend year-round to remain on track for graduation. All high school students may attend Method year round to meet their graduation timeline goals.

## Grading Scale (9-12)

Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.0 Scale
A	90-100	4.0
B	80-89	3.0
C	70-79	2.0

D	60-69	1.0
F	Below 60	0.0

## Graduation Requirements (BP 5130)

To prepare students for a rigorous post-secondary education, Method Schools offers a course catalog that includes courses with a-g and NCAA approval. All core courses align with the state's current academic standards and frameworks.

Any student wishing to attend Method Schools at the beginning of any school year, but coming in with previously failed core classes will be required to begin school on the first day of the new school year.

The following guidelines refer to graduation requirements for students seeking a diploma or Certificate of Educational Achievement from Method Schools:

1. Students shall maintain a satisfactory citizenship record.
2. Five credits will be given for each semester course satisfactorily completed; the full number of credits may be granted to a student who satisfactorily completes the requirements for each course in less than the prescribed time. Fewer than five credits may be earned in variable credit courses. Any variation from this must be done on an individual basis and have prior approval of the high school principal.
3. A student who has not fulfilled the requirements of either the high school diploma or the Certificate of Educational Achievement shall not participate in the graduation ceremony. A student with or without a disability may be awarded a Certificate of Educational Achievement if the student has met at least one of the following requirements:
  - a. Satisfactory completion of all coursework required by the course of study approved by the Governing Board.
  - b. Satisfactory completion of the goals and objectives or an alternative course of study as defined on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Although such students do not receive a high school diploma, students earning a Certificate of Educational Achievement may participate in all graduation ceremonies and activities with no distinction from those who receive diplomas. (CA Ed Code § 56390 - 56392). *Pursuant to AB 181 section 51225.31, some students with significant cognitive disabilities may qualify for California's Alternative Pathway to a Diploma.*

4. Students graduating with the classes of 2028 and beyond shall complete a minimum of 220 credits including the requirements outlined below. Students may begin earning credits toward high school graduation upon the completion of the eighth grade.

Students will meet the graduation requirements for their class at the time their original (entering) class graduates. (Under normal circumstances the original class is defined as that ninth-grade class that the student was (or would have been) a part of when they entered high school.)

Our goal at Method Schools is to prepare every high school student for their post-secondary aspirations. While all students are encouraged to complete the minimum requirements for college admission regardless of their post-secondary plans, students who graduate with a Method Schools diploma are required to take a rigorous course of study that includes at least the following minimum requirements:

Students shall obtain a minimum of 220 credits as follows\*:

English	40 credits
Math	30 credits (algebra, geometry required)
Science	30 credits (physical, biological/life science w lab)
Social Studies	30 credits (world history, US history, government/economics)
Health	5 credits (CHYA requirements are met in this course)
PE	20 credits** (10 credits must be obtained during freshman year) ** <i>unless the student has been otherwise exempted pursuant to other sections of the Education Code (Education Code 51225.3)</i>
Fine Arts or World Language or CTE	10 credits
Ethnic Studies	5 credits ( <i>beginning with the class of 2030 per CA AB 101</i> )
Electives	55 credits ( <i>50 additional elective credits beginning with the class of 2030</i> )
<p><i>*Per AB 167, students in foster care who transfer to a new school while in grades eleven or twelve may be able to graduate from high school without meeting the local graduation requirements that exceed the state minimum course requirements. In these cases, the district [or school] would need to conclude that the student would not reasonably be able to complete the additional local graduation requirements during the student's remaining time in high school.</i></p>	

### A-G Eligibility

In order to be a-g eligible, students are required to earn an additional 10-20 credits and are required to take specific courses in addition to graduation requirements. Students will be advised by their counselor regarding required courses to meet the a-g requirements.

Subject	Credits
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Area A: English	Same as grad rqmts
Area B: Mathematics (Algebra req.)	10 addl credits recommended
Area C: Social Science	Same as grad rqmts
Area D: Science (Including Biology w/Lab and a Physical Science w/Lab)	Same as grad rqmts
Area E: World Languages*	20 in same language
Area F: Visual/Performing Arts	10 in same course
College-Prep Elective (chosen from A-F categories, or another approved UC course)	10

**Additional Requirements for College-Bound Students:**

- GPA 3.0 (3.4 for non-residents) in all A-G courses with no grade below a C

- \*Waiver of World Language requirement:

*If you can demonstrate competency in a language other than English that is equivalent to or higher than that expected of students who have completed two years of a language other than English study, you may be allowed a waiver for this language requirement. For further information, contact the campuses to which you are applying.*

**NCAA eligibility = 220-230 Credits required to graduate**

To meet eligibility requirements for NCAA, students must complete an additional 10 credits and are required to take specific courses in addition to graduation requirements.

Subject	Credits
English	Same as grad rqmts
Math (Algebra req.)	+10**
Social Science	+ 10**
Science (Including Biology w/Lab and a Physical Science w/Lab)	+10*

World Languages (Suggested 2 years of the same language)	+20**
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#### **Additional Requirements for NCAA Student-Athletes:**

- Register on the NCAA Eligibility Center in grade 10
- \*English, math, or natural/physical science: One additional year of any (10 credits)
- \*\*English, math, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy - 4 additional years (40 credits)
- Complete 10 core courses, including seven in English, math, or natural/physical science, before your seventh semester. Once you begin your seventh semester, you may not repeat or replace any of those 10 courses to improve your core-course GPA.
- Earn at least a 2.3 GPA in your core courses.

#### **Additional Requirements for Students Interested in Joining the Military:**

- Review the specific requirements for each branch of the military before contacting a recruiter. *Do your homework.*
- Speak with a recruiter regarding taking the ASVAB exam.

### **Course Transfer Policy**

Students enrolled late and transferring in from a prior school will have their transcripts reviewed. Every effort will be made to place the students in corresponding courses to complete for full semester credit.

Counselors and administrators will review the courses and standards to ensure that the courses match standard alignment.

- UC/CSU approved
- Counselor/ Principal verification

Transferring credits from a school using a different credit system, Method School will evaluate the course and transfer the course and credits into the appropriate format. (i.e., quarter to semester, trimester to semester).

#### **Additional Requirements for Students Interested in Joining the Military:**

Community college courses must be taken under concurrent enrollment to be transferable for dual credit. Non-remedial academic courses taken at a community college can be credited as dual college and high school credit.

Counselors and administrators will review the courses and standards to assess that the courses match high school credit categories and will approve the enrollment with the community college.



### Transfer Credits Withdrawn Students

Students transferring out before the end of a semester will receive partial credit if they have completed paced work with a transfer grade. Students missing a significant amount of paced work at the time of withdrawal with a failing grade of an F will have noted “in progress” and no credit transferred.

## Changes in Class Schedule

Students may drop with a W no later than the drop dates established by Method Schools calendar, 2 weeks after the semester starts.

Drops after the deadline shall receive an F grade on the transcript unless otherwise decided by the school director or designee because of extenuating circumstances.

Attendance for students marked with a W will also be marked as “No Activity” (Red) if they drop both classes or did no work in general. Students will be marked drop on the day of the drop, not the day of last work.

## Requirements for Concurrent Enrollment in Community College

High school students actively enrolled at Method Schools are expected to complete the majority, if not all, of their high school-earned credits in Method Schools-approved high school courses. Students may earn dual high school credit from a California community college, based on review and approval of the course or courses by Method Schools. Students must complete the college’s Concurrent Enrollment form and submit it to Method Schools for approval. Students must submit the form and be granted approval prior to beginning the course. Method Schools will approve or not approve the submitted course, based on demonstrated rigor, alignment to the standards, need, student status in their Method Schools courses, and Method Schools’ Board approved graduation requirements. Approved courses may or may not be eligible for UC A-G approval.

Method high school students wishing to enroll in a community college must submit all forms to their Method College Counselor prior to enrollment in each semester. Students are free to select courses they’re interested in, but the counselor may suggest courses that meet their educational needs. **Not all courses students take at a community college will be granted high school credit and all courses must be pre-approved by the student’s Method Schools counselor.** Students will only be permitted to register for classes that their counselor approves. Each form needs to be signed by the student’s Method Schools Counselor. Students must also have the signature of a parent or guardian authorizing the student’s participation in the program on their Concurrent Enrollment form.

**Students are limited to six units, or two classes, per semester if they are in good academic standing with Method Schools.**

All coursework taken will appear on the student's community college transcript. If the coursework is pre-approved the student will receive credit from Method Schools on their high school transcript. Method Schools accepts no financial responsibility for students taking community college courses and students must be aware that there are possible book, lab, and other costs associated with attendance at the community college.

The community college is not responsible for the supervision of minor students anywhere on campus outside of the classroom setting. College faculty are not expected to wait with students until their ride arrives. At times, classes may be dismissed early. A student's college course attendance requirement may not supercede any synchronous requirements for Method Schools.

Students must adhere to all college policies on course requirements, attendance, dates and deadlines, and any other applicable policies and procedures including the Student Code of Conduct. See the college catalog or schedule of classes for policies.

#### Steps for High School Concurrent Enrollment

1. Select a College, read the class schedule, and choose a course you would like to take.
2. Meet with your Method Schools Counselor to discuss course choice.
3. Get your parent's approval for attending a college class.
4. Complete an admissions application from the community college as a Concurrent Enrollment student.
5. Submit the high school [concurrent enrollment form](#) to the Method Schools Counselor to obtain their signature and discuss your selection. Some colleges submit these documents to counselors digitally so be sure you have your Method Schools counselor's correct email address.
6. Students may be required to take assessments if enrolled in English, Math, or ESL courses and must adhere to any prerequisite requirements.
7. In order for students to receive their concurrent enrollment credit, Method Schools must receive the final transcript with the class taken from the community college.

## 2023-2024 Student Services Annual Notices

### Animal Dissections

Method Schools utilizes virtual labs. However, in the case that educational projects or in-person activities involve the use of animals, pupils may choose to refrain from participating in educational

projects involving the harmful or destructive use of animals based on moral objections, and may complete an alternative educational project acceptable to the teacher. In order to refrain from participation, a parent or guardian must submit a written note of the objections to participating in an educational project involving the harmful or destructive use of animals. The written note may be submitted via email to the homeroom teacher.

### Availability of Health Insurance

Children—regardless of immigration status (foster youth, pregnant women, and legally present individuals, including those with deferred action for childhood arrivals [“DACA”] status) may be eligible for no- or low-cost Medi-Cal insurance. Medi-Cal covers immunizations, checkups, specialists, vision and dental services, and more for children and youth at no- or low-cost. MediCal enrollment is available year-round. Covered California is where legal residents of California can compare quality health plans and choose the one that works best for them. Based on income and family size, many Californians may qualify for financial assistance. Enroll during Open Enrollment or any time you experience a life changing event, like losing your job or having a baby. You have sixty (60) days from the event to complete enrollment. Information regarding the availability of insurance is provided with enrollment forms and available at:

[http://hbex.coveredca.com/toolkit/PDFs/ALL\\_IN\\_Flyer\\_EnrollGetCareRenew\\_CC.pdf](http://hbex.coveredca.com/toolkit/PDFs/ALL_IN_Flyer_EnrollGetCareRenew_CC.pdf)

Method Schools shall not discriminate against a pupil who does not have health care coverage or use any information relating to a pupil’s health care coverage or interest in learning about health care coverage in any manner that would bring harm to the pupil or the pupil’s family.

### Availability of Prospectus

Method Schools makes available to any parent or legal guardian, a school prospectus, including the curriculum, titles, descriptions, and instructional aims of every course offered via its website: [methodschools.org](http://methodschools.org).

Upon request, Method Schools will make available a print copy to any parent or legal guardian, a school prospectus, which shall include the curriculum, including titles, descriptions, and instructional aims of every course offered. Please note that, pursuant to law, Method Schools may charge for the prospectus in an amount not to exceed the cost of duplication.

### Cal Grant Program [HERE](#)

All pupils enrolled in grade 12 will be deemed Cal Grant applicants, unless they, or their parent or guardian if the pupil is 17 years or younger, specifically opts-out of such notification. Method Schools will electronically submit each 12th grade pupil’s grade point average by October 1, including the sophomore year, the summer following the sophomore, and the junior year, and the

summer following the junior year. A pupil of 18 years of age or a parent or guardian of a pupil 17 years or younger, may by written statement, opt out of the Cal Grant program.

Cal Grants are for students who are pursuing an undergraduate degree or vocational or career training, and do not have to be repaid. In addition to meeting the financial criteria and Cal Grant requirements, you must:

- submit the [FAFSA](#) or [CA Dream Act Application](#) and your verified [Cal Grant GPA](#) by the deadline
  - be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen or meet AB540 eligibility criteria
  - be a California resident for 1 year
  - attend a qualifying California college
  - not have a bachelor's or professional degree
  - have financial need at the college of your choice
  - have family income and assets below the minimum levels
  - be enrolled or plan to enroll in a program leading to an undergraduate degree or certificate
  - be enrolled or plan to enroll at least half time
  - not owe a refund on any state or federal grant or be in default on a student loan
  - not be incarcerated
  - maintain the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards as established by the school.
- Recipients who do not meet the standards are ineligible for Cal Grant payment and will not use eligibility during the terms they are ineligible for payment.

## Concussion & Head Injuries

Pursuant to the athletic programs offered by Method, (apart from athletic activity during the regular school day or as part of a physical education course) Method will provide each student athlete's parent and guardian with a "concussion and head injury" information sheet. A signed notice of verification shall be signed and returned by the athlete's parent or guardian before the athlete may participate in practice or competition. Also, pursuant to the athletic programs offered by Method (apart from athletic activity during the regular school day or as part of a physical education course) Method shall annually give the Opioid Factsheet for Patients to each athlete. The athlete, and if the athlete is 17 years of age or younger, the athlete's parent or guardian shall sign the document acknowledging receipt of the factsheet and return it to the district before the athlete initiates practice or competition.

## English Immersion Program

In order to facilitate parental choice of program, Method will inform any parent or guardian of a pupil who is to be placed in a structured English immersion program and will notify the parent or guardian of an opportunity to apply for a parental exception waiver.

## Human Trafficking Prevention

The governing board of Method will work with their schools that maintain any grades 6 to 12, inclusive, to identify the most appropriate methods of informing parents and guardians of pupils in those grades of human trafficking prevention resources and to implement the identified methods in those schools by January 1, 2020.

## Immunizations

All of the following are required for enrollment into Method Schools

- Diphtheria
- Measles
- Mumps (except for children who have reached the age of 7 years old)
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Poliomyelitis
- Rubella
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chicken pox) – persons already admitted into California public or private schools at the Kindergarten level or about, before July 1, 2001, shall be exempt from Varicella immunization requirements for school entry.
- TDAP (pertussis) – the TDAP must be administered after a student's seventh birthday but before entering the 7th grade.

The schools' verification of immunization is through written medical records from your doctor or immunization clinic. Exceptions are allowed under the following conditions:

- o The parent provides a signed doctor's statement verifying that the child is to be exempted from immunizations for medical reasons. This statement must contain identifying the specific nature of probable duration of the medical condition.
- o As of January 1, 2016, due to Senate Bill 277, a parent may no longer request exemption of their child from immunization for personal or religious beliefs for students. The bill does exempt pupils enrolled in an independent study program, who do not receive classroom-based instruction. Any child leaving the United States for a short vacation, to any country considered by Center of Disease Control and Prevention (D) to have increased risk of TB exposure, such as, Mexico, Philippines, India or Southeast Asia must call the County of Tuberculosis clinic for TB screening upon return.

## Involuntary Removal Process

No student shall be involuntarily removed by Method Schools for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or,

if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder.

The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action. The hearing shall be consistent with Method Schools expulsion procedures. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until Method Schools issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to Method Schools suspension and expulsion policy. Upon parent/guardian request for a hearing, Method Schools will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. The notice of hearing shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder and shall include a copy of Method Schools expulsion hearing process. If the parent/guardian is nonresponsive to the Involuntary Removal Notice, the Student will be disenrolled as of the effective date set forth in the Involuntary Removal Notice. If a parent/guardian requests a hearing and does not attend on the date scheduled for the hearing the Student will be disenrolled effective the date of the hearing. If as a result of the hearing the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known district of residence within thirty (30) days. Page 8 of 40 A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent Method Schools from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy continue or reoccur.

## Mental Health Services

Method Schools recognizes that when unidentified and unaddressed, mental health challenges can lead to poor academic performance, increased likelihood of suspension and expulsion, chronic absenteeism, student attrition, homelessness, incarceration, and/or violence. Access to mental health services at Method Schools and in our community is not only critical to improving the physical and emotional safety of students, but it also helps address barriers to learning and provides support so that all students can learn problem-solving skills and achieve in school and, ultimately, in life. The following resources are available to your child: Available on Campus: ● School-based counseling services – your child is encouraged to directly contact Jade Fernandez, Head of Schools, by coming into the main office during school hours and making an appointment to speak with a counselor. Our Charter School counselors support students by providing individual sessions, group or parent consultations whenever a student is having a difficult time due to academic stress, transition to changes in their environment, or social concerns, including isolation. Counseling services, whether provided by our Charter School or by an outside provider listed in this letter, are voluntary. ● Special education services – if you believe your child may have a disability, you are encouraged to directly contact Christine Young, Special Education Director at 951-461-4620 X 7019 to request an evaluation.

Refer to the below resources available for your student:

- CareSolace - a concierge service which will connect you to local mental health resources. Information can be found at [www.caresolace.com/ms](http://www.caresolace.com/ms) or by calling 24/7 at 888-515-0595 or email [weserve@caresolace.org](mailto:weserve@caresolace.org)
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline - This organization provides confidential support for adults and youth in distress, including prevention and crisis resources. Available 24 hours at 1-800-273-8255
- The Trevor Project - This organization provides suicide prevention and crisis intervention for LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13 and 24. Available at 1-866-488-7386 or visit [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)
- ROWI Teen & Parent Wellness Centers - This organization provides comprehensive mental health services for teens with locations across Southern California. [www.ROWIteen.com](http://www.ROWIteen.com)

Prescription medication while on campus – if your child requires prescription medication during school hours while participating in an in-person activity and you would like assistance from School staff in providing this medication to your child, please contact your child’s homeroom teacher and the Director of Schools.

### Oral Health Assessment

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

### Parent and Family Engagement

Method Schools aims to provide all students in our school significant opportunities to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps while abiding by guidelines within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”). Method Schools staff recognizes a partnership with families is essential to meet this goal. Our Parent and Family Engagement Policy leverages and promotes active involvement of all families as partners with schools to ensure student success. A copy of Method Schools complete Policy is available upon request in the main office.

### Pregnant and Parenting Students

Method Schools recognizes that pregnant and parenting pupils are entitled to accommodations that provide them with the opportunity to succeed academically while protecting their health and the health of their children. A pregnant or parenting pupil is entitled to eight (8) weeks of parental leave, or more if deemed medically necessary by the pupil’s physician, which the pupil may take before the birth of the pupil’s infant if there is a medical necessity and after childbirth during the

school year in which the birth takes place, inclusive of any mandatory summer instruction, in order to protect the health of the pupil who gives or expects to give birth and the infant, and to allow the pregnant or parenting pupil to care for and bond with the infant. Method Schools will ensure that absences from the pupil's regular school program are excused until the pupil is able to return to the regular school program. Upon return to school after taking parental leave, a pregnant or parenting pupil will be able to make up work missed during the pregnant or parenting pupil's leave, including, but not limited to, makeup work plans and re enrollment in courses. Notwithstanding any other law, a pregnant or parenting pupil may remain enrolled for a fifth year of instruction in Method Schools if it is necessary in order for the pupil to be able to complete any graduation requirements, unless Method Schools determines that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school. Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pregnant or parenting pupils may be filed under the Uniform Complaint Procedures ("UCP") of Method Schools. The complaint may be filed in writing via the website. A copy of the UCP is available for download on the school website. For further information on any part of the complaint procedures, including filing a complaint or requesting a copy of the complaint procedures, please contact the Director of Schools.

### Right to Ask for Teacher Qualifications

Parents or guardians of all pupils may request specified professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher(s) and assigned paraprofessional(s).

### School Safety Plan

Method Schools is committed to ensuring that students enrolled in this School, and all employees attend campuses that are safe and secure. The School believes that a beginning step toward safer schools is the development of a comprehensive plan for school safety by every school within the School. The School intends that parents, students, teachers, administrators, counselors, classified personnel, and community agencies develop safe school plans, including local law enforcement. The school site committee will review these safe school plans on an annual basis and proposed changes will be submitted to the Board for approval.

Method Schools has established a Comprehensive School Safety Plan. The Plan is available upon request via the website.

### Section 504 Notice

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA") 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. The School will follow Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and all federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

## Sexual Health Education

Students enrolled in Method Schools programs or activities may receive instruction in personal health and public safety, which may include accident prevention, first aid, fire prevention, conservation of resources, and health education including comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention. Method plans to provide comprehensive sexual health education and/or HIV prevention education in grades 7 and 11. The instruction shall include, among other things, information about sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and human trafficking. Information on human trafficking shall include both of the following: a. Information on the prevalence, nature, and strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely seek assistance; and b. Information on how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking. Students will be taught by Method personnel or an outside agency. If Method decides to arrange for an outside consultant to provide comprehensive sexual health education and/or HIV prevention education, Method will provide notice to parents no fewer than 14 days before the instruction is delivered by mail or another form of communication. A pupil's parent or guardian has the right to request from Method, a copy of the California Healthy Youth Act, Education Code section 51930, et. seq. A pupil's parent or guardian also has the right to inspect and review the written and audiovisual educational materials used in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education by contacting the school in which their child is enrolled. A pupil's parent or guardian may submit a written request to excuse the pupil from participation in any class involving comprehensive sexual education or HIV prevention education by submitting their request in writing to the school in which their child is enrolled. The excused pupil shall not be subject to disciplinary action, academic penalty, or other sanction if the pupil's parent or guardian declines to permit the pupil to receive comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education. Alternative educational activity shall be made available to pupils whose parents or guardians have requested that they not receive this instruction.

## State Testing: CAASPP

As members of a public charter school, our students participate in all state-mandated tests. Participation rates are critical to the success of our school. According to recent regulations, a public school is required to achieve a participation rate of 95% on any state testing. If a school has less than 95% of its students participate in any assessment, the school runs the risk of receiving a serious penalty by the state of California.

A testing schedule will be distributed to all families. Individual student performance results on statewide achievement testing will be distributed to both parents and teachers in a timely manner.

### Surveys About Personal Beliefs

Unless the student's parent/guardian gives written permission, a student will not be given any test, questionnaire, survey, or examination containing any questions about the student's, or the student's parents' or guardians' personal beliefs or practices in sex, family life, morality, or religion.

## Policies

### Education of Foster, Homeless Children & Mobile Youth

Definitions: For the purposes of this annual notice the terms are defined as follows:

1. "Foster/Juvenile Court Youth" refers to any child who has been removed from their home pursuant Welfare and Institutions Code section 309 and/or is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code section 300 or 602. This includes children who are the subject of cases in dependency court and juvenile justice court.
2. "Former juvenile court school pupils" refers to a student who, upon completion of the student's second year of high school, transfers from a juvenile court school to Method Schools.
3. "Child of a military family" refers to a student who resides in the household of an active duty military member.
4. "Currently Migratory Child" refers to a child who, within the last 12-months, has moved with a parent, guardian, or other person having custody to Method Schools from another Local Educational Agency ("LEA"), either within California or from another state, in order that the child or a member of his or her immediate family might secure temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity, and whose parents or guardians have been informed of the child's eligibility for migrant education services. "Currently Migratory Child" includes a child who, without the parent/guardian, has continued to migrate annually to secure temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity.
5. "Pupil participating in a newcomer program" means a pupil who is participating in a program designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived immigrant pupils that has as a primary objective the development of English language proficiency.

Within this notice, foster/juvenile court youth, former juvenile court school pupils, a child of a military family, a currently migratory child, and a pupil participating in the newcomer program will be collectively referred to as "Foster and Mobile Youth."

Within this notice, a parent, guardian, or other person holding the educational rights for a Foster and Mobile Youth will be referred to as a "parent."

The term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship. It includes children and youths who (42 U.S.C.§ 11434a):

1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
2. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
3. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition of “homeless.”

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parent or guardian. In the case of unaccompanied youth, status is determined by the School Liaison. School Liaison: The School Director or designee designates the following staff person as the School Liaison for homeless students (42U.S.C.§ 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)): Jade Fernandez, Senior Director of Schools, [jfernandez@methodschools.org](mailto:jfernandez@methodschools.org) or 38750 Sky Canyon Rd., Suite B, Murrieta, CA 92563

The School Liaison shall ensure that (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)):

1. Homeless students are identified by school personnel and through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. Homeless students enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at Method Schools.
3. Homeless students and families receive educational services for which they are eligible, including services through Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs) under the Head Start Act, early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, any other preschool programs administered by Method Schools, if any, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
4. Parents/guardians are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated at places frequented by parents or guardians of such youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, and in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless youth and unaccompanied youth.
6. Enrollment/admissions disputes are mediated in accordance with law, Method Schools, and Board policy.
7. Parents/guardians and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, as applicable.

8. Charter School personnel providing services receive professional development and other support.
9. The School Liaison collaborates with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.
10. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school; have opportunities to meet the same challenging

State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth; and are informed of their status as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and that the youths may obtain assistance from the School Liaison to receive verification of such status for the purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of the Act. The California Department of Education publishes a list of the contact information for the Homeless Education Liaisons in the state, which is available at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/Acceptance of Course Work>: Method Schools will accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at any public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency by a homeless student.

For any homeless student who enrolls at Method Schools, a copy of Method Schools complete policy shall be provided at the time of enrollment. The complete Policy is available below: Method Modern Public Schools / [methodschools.org](http://methodschools.org) / [info@methodschools.org](mailto:info@methodschools.org) / 951-461-4620

### Notification of Rights of Children of Military Families and Other Protected Pupils

A pupil who is a “child of a military family” is defined as a school-aged child or children, enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade, in the household of an active duty member. “Active duty” means full time status in the active uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders pursuant to 10 U.S.C. sections 1209 and 1211. Children of military families who transfer between schools any time after the completion of the pupil’s second year of high school shall be exempt from all coursework and other graduation requirements adopted by the governing board of the local educational agency that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements, unless the local educational agency makes a finding that the child of a military family is reasonably able to complete the local educational agency’s graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil’s fourth year of high school.

Within 30 days of the child of a military family’s transfer into a school, the local educational agency should determine whether the child of a military family is reasonably able to complete the local educational agency’s graduation requirements within the pupil’s fifth year of high school. If the pupil is reasonably able to complete the local educational agency’s graduation requirements within a fifth year of high school, the local educational agency shall do all of the following:

- (1) Inform the pupil of his or her option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the local educational agency’s graduation requirements.
- (2) Inform the pupil, and the educational rights holder, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the local educational agency’s graduation requirements will affect the pupil’s ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution.

(3) Provide information to the pupil about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges.

(4) Permit the pupil to stay in school for a fifth year to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements upon agreement with the pupil, if the pupil is 18 years of age or older, or, if the pupil is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the educational rights holder.

Within 30 calendar days of the date that a pupil who is a child of a military family who may qualify for the exemption from local graduation requirements transfers into a school, the school district shall notify the pupil and the pupil's parent or guardian of the availability of the exemption and whether the pupil qualifies for an exemption.

If the District fails to provide timely notice, the pupil shall be eligible for the exemption from local graduation requirements, even if that notification occurs after the pupil no longer meets the definition of "a child of a military family." If a child of a military family is exempt from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section and completes the statewide coursework requirements before the end of his or her fourth year of high school and that pupil would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the school, a school or local educational agency shall not require or request that the pupil graduate before the end of his or her fourth year of high school, nor shall the child of a military family be required to accept the exemption or be denied enrollment in courses for which they are otherwise eligible.

If a child of a military family is not exempt from local graduation requirements or has previously declined the exemption pursuant to this section, a local educational agency shall exempt the pupil at any time if an exemption is requested by the pupil and the pupil qualifies for the exemption. The exemption shall apply after the pupil no longer meets the definition of "a child of a military family" while he or she is enrolled in school or if the pupil transfers to another school or school district.

A school district shall not require and a parent or guardian shall not request a child of a military family to transfer schools solely to qualify the pupil for an exemption under this section.

The local educational agency shall accept coursework satisfactorily completed by a pupil who is a child of a military family while attending another public school (including schools operated by the United States Department of Defense), a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency even if the pupil did not complete the entire course and issue that pupil full or partial credit for the coursework completed.

The local educational agency may not require a child of a military family to retake a course if the pupil has satisfactorily completed the entire course in a public school, a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the pupil did not complete the entire course, the local educational agency may not require the pupil to retake the portion of the course the pupil completed unless the local educational agency in consultation with the educational rights holder, finds that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the child of a military family shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the pupil may continue and complete the entire course. The pupil shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University or University of California.

A complaint of noncompliance with the requirements of this section may be filed with the local educational agency under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1

(commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. A complainant not satisfied with the decision of a local educational agency may appeal the decision to the CDE and shall receive a written decision regarding the appeal within 60 days of the CDE's receipt of the appeal. If a local educational agency finds merit in a complaint, or the Superintendent finds merit in an appeal, the local educational agency shall provide a remedy to the affected pupil.

The above protections shall also apply to pupils in foster care, pupils who are homeless, former juvenile court school pupils, migratory children, and pupils participating in a newcomer program, as defined in Education Code section 51225.2(a)

## Educational Records and Student Information Policy

Your student's records may be viewed at any time pursuant to the Notification of Rights under FERPA. Please provide our office with five (5) days notice so that the record may be pulled. The record must be viewed in the presence of Method Schools Administrative Staff Member. Students who transfer into Method Schools will complete the Release of Student Records Form Included in the student enrollment package. Our office will send this form to your student's previous school upon receipt in order to obtain your student's records. It is the responsibility of your previous school to mail the records to Method Schools at that time. Should you decide to withdraw from Method Schools and transfer to a new school, your new school will contact Method Schools to request your student's records, and we will mail the records to them. Should you decide to withdraw from Method Schools and teach in the home, please contact our school offices and we will email a copy of your student records to you.

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Method Schools receives a request for access.  
Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.  
Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Method Schools to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the

request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

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

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if

the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))

- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

## Employee Interactions with Students Policy



Method Schools teachers and staff may not communicate with students via personal text message or direct messaging in any social media platforms.

All communication with students is to be sent only through the following public communication platforms: Smartfox Broadcast Messaging, Zoom, Email, Sagebot and any other Method approved platforms.

Method recognizes its responsibility to make and enforce all rules and regulations governing student and employee behavior to bring about the safest and most learning-conducive environment possible.

### *Corporal Punishment*

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student. For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property. For clarification purposes, the following examples are offered for direction and guidance of School personnel: A. Examples of PERMITTED actions (NOT corporal punishment) 1. Stopping a student from fighting with another student; 2. Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism; 3. Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student; 4. Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object; 5. Requiring an athletic team to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition team members or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills; 6. Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities. B. Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment) 1. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control; 2. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment; 3. Paddling, swatting, slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain.

### *Acceptable and Unacceptable Staff/Student Behavior*

This policy is intended to guide all School faculty and staff in conducting themselves in a way that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of school employees and to specify the boundaries between students and staff. Although this policy gives specific, clear direction, it is each staff member's obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents, students, colleagues, or school leaders. One viable standard that can be quickly applied, when you are unsure if certain conduct is acceptable, is to ask yourself, "Would I be engaged in this conduct if my family or colleagues were standing next to me?" For the purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing the boundaries of a student/teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust. Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member's perspective, but can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from a student or parent point of view. The objective of the following lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors

is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived as, sexual misconduct. Staff must understand their own responsibility for ensuring that they do not cross the boundaries as written in this policy. Disagreeing with the wording or intent of the established boundaries will be considered irrelevant for disciplinary purposes. Thus, it is crucial that all employees learn this policy thoroughly and apply the lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors to their daily activities. Although personal interaction with students certainly fosters learning, student/staff interactions must have boundaries surrounding potential activities, locations and intentions.

#### *Duty to Report Suspected Misconduct*

When any employee reasonably suspects or believes that another staff member may have crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, he or she must immediately report the matter to an administrator. All reports shall be as confidential as possible under the circumstances. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse. Examples of Specific Behaviors The following examples are not an exhaustive list: Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors (Violations of this Policy) (a) Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal and intimate nature. (b) Kissing of any kind. (c) Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation. (d) Intentionally being alone with a student away from the school. (e) Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments. (f) Sexual jokes. (g) Seeking emotional involvement with a student for your benefit. (h) Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented. (i) Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student in an attempt to gain their support and understanding. (j) Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior. Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors without Parent and Supervisor Permission (These behaviors should only be exercised when a staff member has parent and supervisor permission.) (a) Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities. (b) Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed. (c) Allowing students in your home.

#### *Cautionary Staff/Student Behaviors*

(These behaviors should only be exercised when a reasonable and prudent person, acting as an educator, is prevented from using a better practice or behavior. Staff members should inform their supervisor of the circumstance and occurrence prior to or immediately after the occurrence) (a) Remarks about the physical attributes or development of anyone. (b) Excessive attention toward a particular student. (c) Sending emails, text messages or letters to students if the content is not about school activities. Acceptable and Recommended Staff/Student Behaviors (a) Getting parents' written consent for any after-school activity. (b) Obtaining formal approval to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions. (c) Emails, text, phone and instant messages to students must be very professional and pertaining to school activities or classes (Communication should be limited to school technology). (d) Keeping the door open when alone with a student. (e) Keeping reasonable space between you and your students. (f) Stopping

and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries. (g) Keeping parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student. (h) Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief. (i) Asking for advice from fellow staff or administrators if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries. (j) Involving your supervisor if conflict arises with the student. (k) Informing the School Director about situations that have the potential to become more severe. (l) Making detailed notes about an incident that could evolve into a more serious situation later. (m) Recognizing the responsibility to stop unacceptable behavior of students or coworkers. (n) Asking another staff member to be present if you will be alone with any type of special needs student. (o) Asking another staff member to be present when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours. (p) Giving students praise and recognition without touching them, (q) Pats on the back, high fives, and handshakes are acceptable. (r) Keeping your professional conduct a high priority. (s) Asking yourself if your actions are worth your job and career.

## English Learners

Method Schools meets all applicable legal requirements for English Learners (“EL”) in regards to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, facilitator qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. Method Schools has developed policies in place to ensure proper placement, evaluation and support for ELs and the rights of students and parents. In order to identify students who are English learners in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents are required to complete a Home Language Survey upon enrollment at the school. Cal. Education Code § 52164.1. Students who indicate that their home language is other than English are assessed using the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC). ELPAC assessment takes place within 30 days of the start of the school year or within two weeks after the date of first enrollment at the school, and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31 until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English learners is assessed in accordance with the test coordinator’s directions and California Education Code guidelines. Students with disabilities are permitted to take the test with the accommodations listed in the Education Code if they are specified in the learner’s Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) or Section 504 plan. An alternate assessment for English language proficiency is administered to learners who are unable to participate in the ELPAC, according to the guidelines set forth in the student’s IEP. Method Schools staff notifies parents of the school’s responsibility to conduct ELPAC testing and informs parents of ELPAC assessment results within 30 calendar days following receipt of test results from the test coordinator. Parents and guardians are informed of their rights, and they are encouraged to participate in the reclassification process. Results of students’ designation and English proficiencies are reported annually to the state on the school’s R30-LC report. In addition to the program options that support students who are English learners, teachers utilize Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies in their

instruction, which include a variety of strategies to shelter instruction towards language acquisition and are based on the latest California ELD Standards. Method Schools continues to administer the ELPAC as the state's measure of ELP and for federal accountability under Title III of the ESEA. Students are expected to advance at least 1 ELD level or the equivalent ELPAC Proficiency Level Descriptor, each year. At the end of each school year, the Director or designee uses data including ELPAC scores, progress reports, annual test scores and the student's teachers and parent feedback, to determine if the learner is ready to be reclassified. The Director or designee also collaborates with teachers to present data to determine if a student has progressed to the next ELD Proficiency Level. To evaluate different data sources effectively, Method Schools has established a reclassification process, to determine if an English learner is ready for reclassification. If the student meets or exceeds the standards outlined in the reclassification process, a reclassification letter is sent to these student's parents. Reclassified students continue to be monitored over a two-year period to ensure their continued ability to achieve mastery of the state standards for ELA/Literacy

### Nondiscrimination Statement Policy

The Board of Directors of Method Schools recognizes that it is responsible for complying with applicable laws and regulations governing educational programs. It is the policy and commitment of Method Schools to not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, or religion. Equal Employment Opportunity, Method Schools is an organization is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity and does not discriminate in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment on account of race, age, color, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, or religion or otherwise as may be prohibited by federal and state law.

Any employee, board member, volunteer or client who believes that s/he or any other affiliate of Method Schools has been discriminated against is strongly encouraged to report this concern promptly to the Executive Director. Discriminatory, harassment, or intimidation of a client, staff person or guest because of that person's race, age, color, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, or religion is specifically prohibited and may be grounds for termination. Harassment and intimidation includes abusive, foul or threatening language or behavior. Method Schools is committed to maintaining a workplace that is free of any such harassment and will not tolerate discrimination against staff members, volunteers or agency clients. Issues of discriminatory treatment, harassment, or intimidation on any of these bases should immediately be reported to the Executive Director or immediate supervisor and, if substantiated, prompt action will be Taken.

For any concerns or questions regarding discrimination, equity or Title IX, please contact:

Tracy Kimmel  
trobertson@methodschools.org

Jade Fernandez  
jfernandez@methodschools.org

## Special Education

Method Schools offer special education services within our full-inclusion model general education independent study model. These services are available for all students who have been identified as qualifying for special needs. In compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and the California Education Code, Method works to both identify and serve eligible children. Any parent who suspects that their child may have a disability should discuss their concerns with their child's regular education teacher. Any Special Education needs or concerns should be directed to the Director. Method Schools complies with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights ("OCR").

Method Schools complies with all California laws pertaining to special education students and all students are fully integrated into Method Schools' programs with the necessary materials, services, and equipment to support their learning. Method Schools ensures that any student with a disability is properly identified, evaluated and provided with necessary services and supports. Method Schools is solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the IDEA and the resources to be utilized by the school shall be accessible for all students with disabilities. Method Schools meets all the requirements within a learner's Individualized Education Plan and includes all special needs students with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate according to their IEPs.

Method Schools reserves the right to contract with professionals outside the district. The School will initially be a member of the District Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). The school will not discriminate on the basis of special education needs and the District will ensure that the student's needs are being addressed. The District will provide special education services for the School's special education pupils to the extent of the law.

The School reserves the right to act as its own Local Education Agency (LEA) for the purposes of special education and will make appropriate notification to the District before such plans are made. To the extent the school opts for District delivery of special education services, it will support the District's implementation of these services and will make resources available in a manner consistent with the District's need to provide

Method Schools provides services to all special education students. The School will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the District as to how it will provide evaluation and related services (for example, speech and language, occupational therapy, or physical therapy) that could include third party service providers.

Should the student not qualify for special education services or should the SST decide against formal evaluation, the SST or the parent may request that a 504 Plan meeting be scheduled. At the meeting, if it is determined that the learning process is being limited by a physical or mental condition, a 504 Plan will be developed including instructional and curricular modifications to provide the student with full access to academic programs. This plan will be implemented by Method Schools staff and will be reviewed annually.

## Suicide Prevention Policy

Method Schools understand that it is critical to play a leading role in implementing policies that follow best practices, are developmentally appropriate, and are culturally responsive. Equally important are parents and guardians, who also play a key role in youth suicide prevention. It is critical that school staff members actively and continuously engage and educate parents on suicide prevention policies and practices in place at the school and in the community.

This outlined policy has been utilized from a template offered by a suicide prevention agency and as Method School will continue to further refine this policy and it is further developed. Method Schools has adopted its own suicide prevention curriculum program called Hope Squad and has integrated it into our current LMS for students to utilize.

The school, especially the school psychologist and other school-employed mental health professionals, plays an integral role in suicide prevention. The Policy recommends that each school district designate suicide prevention coordinators at the district and the school levels. These people would help plan and implement suicide prevention policies and practices and be the points of contact when a student, parent, or staff member is concerned that a student is at elevated risk for suicide. Coordinators would work with administrators and other school staff to ensure that additional recommended preventive steps be taken school-wide (for example, that staff receive annual professional development on how to recognize the warning signs of suicide and make referrals for help; and that developmentally appropriate, student centered education about mental health and suicide prevention be infused into the K-12 health curriculum). School psychologists are critical resources for schools and are a logical choice for serving as these suicide prevention coordinators. School psychologists should also be involved in the development and implementation of suicide prevention education for staff and students. However, it is equally important that school employed mental health professionals receive annual professional development on best practices in risk assessment and crisis intervention so that they are equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to respond safely and effectively when receiving referrals from staff and students.

A key component of supporting overall student wellness and suicide prevention is access to a continuum of school-based mental health supports. Early identification of at-risk students can enhance opportunities for positive outcomes by addressing problems as they first arise. This enables the school, and in particular the school-employed mental health professional, to support the young person and the family in identifying and implementing potential solutions together,

before the problem develops into a crisis situation in need of more intensive intervention or treatment. Assessment and referral. It is important to take every statement regarding suicide or a wish to die be taken seriously. Although each school and school district will have unique policies and procedures for conducting threat assessments, the Policy outlines specific actions to take when a young person is thought to be at risk for suicide, when a suicide attempt is made in school, and when an attempt is made outside of the school setting.

In all cases, the school should make every attempt to notify the student's parent or guardian. When a student makes a verbal or written suicide threat, or if the student presents with several risk factors and a staff member is concerned, this student should be seen by a school-employed mental health professional within the same school day. That professional would conduct the risk assessment and facilitate any necessary referrals to an outside mental health agency. If the school-employed mental health professional is not immediately available, the school nurse or school administrator should assist the student until the mental health professional can be brought in. During this time, the student should be under constant supervision to ensure safety, and the suicide prevention coordinator should be made aware of the situation as soon as possible. Additionally, the school-employed mental health professional or principal should notify the student's parent or guardian to assist them with an urgent referral, if necessary, or to help facilitate an appointment with another health care provider. If such a referral is made, school staff should seek permission from the parent or guardian to exchange information with the outside healthcare provider. When a suicide attempt has been made during the school day, all students should be removed from the immediate area as soon as possible and the health and safety of the student who made the attempt should be of primary concern. The student should be supervised until any necessary medical treatment has been provided, per district emergency medical policy. If appropriate, a mental health assessment should be immediately requested and the principal, school suicide prevention coordinator, and the student's parent or guardian should be contacted. Based on the specific school or district policy, as well as the judgment of the school principal and school mental health staff, additional steps should be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of any students who may have been affected by the suicide attempt. Re-entry procedure. Each school and district will have specific procedures for handling students who are returning to school after a mental health crisis such as a suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization based on the specific needs and unique population of the school.

However, The Policy recommends that the following three specific components be a part of any re-entry plan:

- A designated school employed mental health professional will coordinate with the student, family, and any outside mental health providers (if permission was granted).
- The parent or guardian will provide documentation from a healthcare provider that the student is no longer a danger to themselves or others.
- The designated school-employed mental health person will determine what supports are needed to help the student readjust to the school community and meet with him or her periodically to address any concerns.

Postvention: Suicide in a school community is tremendously sad, often unexpected, and can leave a school with many uncertainties about what to do next. Schools need reliable information, practical tools, and pragmatic guidance to help students and the community at-large as they struggle to cope with and respond to the loss. The Policy, coupled with more detailed guidance from NASP and AFS (included in the resource section below) can help.

The specific circumstances surrounding a death by suicide will guide the school and community response. However, to prevent suicide contagion while effectively managing the situation, the Policy suggests the development and implementation of an action plan with the following steps:

- **Verify the death:** Even if the student's death is perceived to be suicide, it should not be considered such until confirmed by the coroner's office or local police department.
- **Assess the situation:** The school/district crisis team should consider the impact of the suicide on the student and community population and determine the appropriate resources and supports needed for individual students as well as the general school population.
- **Share information:** It is important to report only confirmed and factual information to faculty, students, and families. Additionally, the school should inform parents about supports available to students in school, as well as available resources in the community.
- **Avoid suicide contagion:** The crisis team should work with teachers and families to identify students who may be at a high risk of suicide and those who are most significantly impacted by the student's death.
- **Initiate support services:** School-employed mental health professionals should collaboratively determine which students need additional risk assessment or mental health support services and implement those as needed.
- **Develop memorial plans:** School communities often wish to memorialize a student who has died. It can be challenging for schools to strike a balance between compassionately meeting the needs of grieving students while preserving the ability of the school to fulfill its primary purpose of education. In the case of suicide, schools must consider how to appropriately memorialize the student who died without risking suicide contagion among other students who may themselves be at risk. Treating all deaths in the same way avoids stigma and also protects against inadvertently sensationalizing the suicide loss. Wherever possible, schools should meet with the student's friends and coordinate with the student's family to identify a meaningful, safe approach to acknowledging the loss.

External Communication: Following a student suicide, the media will almost certainly want to become involved in reporting the story. Although the school cannot control everything that is reported, there are steps that schools can take to help contain the media firestorm that often follows the report of a suicide. In many cases, a school has a designated media spokesperson who will respond to all media inquiries. The Policy recommends that the media spokesperson:

- Keep the suicide coordinator, superintendent, and other relevant administrators updated on how the school is handling the necessary postvention activities.
- Prepare a statement for the media that only includes confirmation of the death, the school's postvention plans, and available resources.



- Encourage the media to respect the privacy of the student who died and the family, and to avoid sensationalizing the suicide (e.g., putting story on the front page, describing the method of suicide). Additionally, the spokesperson should strongly suggest that the media refrain from speculating about the reason for the suicide.

## Suspension and Expulsion Policy

In order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students, Method Schools adheres to the Suspension and Expulsion guidelines established by California Education Code Section 48900. When a student interferes with the learning, safety, and well-being of students, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction or activity. Method Schools staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students.

If a Method Schools administrator does recommend expulsion for a specified offense, a student is entitled to a hearing within 30 school days after that determination, unless the student or parents or guardians request in writing that the hearing be postponed. It is important to note that suspension for students in grades kindergarten to grade eight, inclusive, for disruption or defiance (*EC* Section 48900[k]) is prohibited, and expulsion for students in kindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, is also prohibited.

Upon enrollment of the school, Method Schools' teachers ensure that all students and parents/guardians are notified in writing of all school rules related to discipline, suspension and expulsion.

Pursuant to *EC* Section 48900 paragraphs (v) and (w) Method Schools will encourage other means of correction, rather than suspension or expulsion, be used to bring about proper conduct as part of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports. This Multi-Tiered System of Supports includes restorative justice practices, trauma-informed practices, social and emotional learning, and schoolwide positive behavior interventions and support, which may be used to help pupils gain critical social and emotional skills, receive support to help transform trauma-related responses, understand the impact of their actions, and develop meaningful methods for repairing harm to the school community. This also includes referral to a School Attendance Review Board for students who are habitually insubordinate or disorderly during attendance at school (*EC* Section 48263).

Pursuant to *EC* 48915(c), Method Schools will recommend **mandatory** expulsion in the event that the following acts are committed at school or during a school activity:

1. Firearm

1. Possessing firearm when a district employee verified firearm possession and when student did not have prior written permission from a certificated employee which is concurred with by the principal or designee.
2. Selling or otherwise furnishing a firearm.
2. Brandishing a knife at another person.
3. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in *Health and Safety Code* Section 11053 et. seq.
4. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of EC48900 or committing sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of 48900.
5. Possession of an explosive.

Pursuant to EC Section 48915 (a) an administrator shall **recommend** expulsion for the following violations [except for subsections (c) and (e)] unless the administrator finds that expulsion is inappropriate due to a particular circumstance:

1. Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense. EC Section 48915 (a)(1).
2. Possession of any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil. EC Section 48915 (a)(2).
3. Possession and/or use of any substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the *Health and Safety Code*, except for the first offense for possession of not more than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana other than concentrated cannabis.
4. Robbery or extortion. EC Section 48915 (a)(4).
5. Assault or battery, or threat of, on a school employee.

The recommendation for expulsion shall be based on one or both of the following:

1. Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.
2. Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others [see Section 48915 (b)].

Method Schools will abide by **discretionary** expulsion guidelines pursuant EC 48900 in circumstances where acts committed at school or school activity or on the way to and from school or school activity, including:

1. Inflicted physical injury†
2. Possessed dangerous objects
3. Possessed drugs or alcohol (policy determines which offense)
4. Sold look alike substance representing drugs or alcohol
5. Committed robbery/extortion
6. Caused damage to property‡
7. Committed theft

8. Used tobacco (policy determines which offense)
9. Committed obscenity/profanity/vulgarity
10. Possessed or sold drug paraphernalia
11. Disrupted or defied school staff
12. Received stolen property
13. Possessed imitation firearm
14. Committed sexual harassment
15. Harassed, threatened or intimidated a student witness
16. Sold prescription drug Soma
17. Committed hazing
18. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

The recommendation for expulsion shall be based on one or both of the following:

1. Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.
2. Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others [see Section 48915 (b)].

† Section 48900 (s) (Statutes of 2001) states a pupil who aids or abets in infliction of physical injury to another, as defined in *Penal Code 31*, may suffer suspension, but not expulsion. However, if a student is adjudged by a court to have caused, attempted to cause, or threatened personal injury, the student may be expelled.

‡ Section 48900 (t) "school property" includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.

### Hearing & Due Process

Pursuant to EC 48918, Method Schools will hold hearings that will include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following:

(a) (1) The pupil shall be entitled to a hearing to determine whether the pupil should be expelled. An expulsion hearing shall be held within 30 schooldays after the date the principal or the superintendent of schools determines that the pupil has committed any of the acts enumerated in Section 48900, unless the pupil requests, in writing, that the hearing be postponed. The adopted rules and regulations shall specify that the pupil is entitled to at least one postponement of an expulsion hearing, for a period of not more than 30 calendar days. Any additional postponement may be granted at the discretion of the governing board of the school district.

(2) Within 10 school days after the conclusion of the hearing, the governing board of Method Schools shall decide whether to expel the pupil, unless the pupil requests in writing that the decision be postponed. If the hearing is held by a hearing officer or an

administrative panel, or if the governing board of the school district does not meet on a weekly basis, the governing board of the school district shall decide whether to expel the pupil within 40 schooldays after the date of the pupil's removal from his or her school of attendance for the incident for which the recommendation for expulsion is made by the principal or the superintendent of schools, unless the pupil requests in writing that the decision be postponed.

(3) If compliance by the governing board of Method Schools with the time requirements for the conducting of an expulsion hearing under this subdivision is impracticable during the regular school year, the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee may, for good cause, extend the time period for the holding of the expulsion hearing for an additional five schooldays. If compliance by the governing board of the school district with the time requirements for the conducting of an expulsion hearing under this subdivision is impractical due to a summer recess of governing board meetings of more than two weeks, the days during the recess period shall not be counted as school days in meeting the time requirements. The days not counted as school days in meeting the time requirements for an expulsion hearing because of a summer recess of governing board meetings shall not exceed 20 schooldays, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 48925, and unless the pupil requests in writing that the expulsion hearing be postponed, the hearing shall be held not later than 20 calendar days before the first day of school for the school year. Reasons for the extension of the time for the hearing shall be included as a part of the record at the time the expulsion hearing is conducted. Upon the commencement of the hearing, all matters shall be pursued and conducted with reasonable diligence and shall be concluded without any unnecessary delay.

(b) Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the pupil at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. The notice shall include all of the following:

- (1) The date and place of the hearing.
- (2) A statement of the specific facts and charges upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
- (3) A copy of the disciplinary rules of Method Schools that relate to the alleged violation.
- (4) A notice of the parent, guardian, or pupil's obligation pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 48915.1.
- (5) Notice of the opportunity for the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian to appear in person or to be represented by legal counsel or by a nonattorney adviser, to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing, to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing, to question all other evidence presented, and to present oral and documentary evidence on the pupil's behalf, including witnesses. In a hearing in which a pupil is alleged to have committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as specified in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or to have committed a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of

Section 48900, a complaining witness shall be given five days' notice before being called to testify, and shall be entitled to have up to two adult support persons, including, but not limited to, a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, present during his or her testimony. Before a complaining witness testifies, support persons shall be admonished that the hearing is confidential. This subdivision shall not preclude the person presiding over an expulsion hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the provisions of Section 868.5 of the Penal Code shall be followed for the hearing. This section does not require a pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian to be represented by legal counsel or by a nonattorney adviser at the hearing.

(A) For purposes of this section, "legal counsel" means an attorney or lawyer who is admitted to the practice of law in California and is an active member of the State Bar of California.

(B) For purposes of this section, "nonattorney adviser" means an individual who is not an attorney or lawyer, but who is familiar with the facts of the case, and has been selected by the pupil or pupil's parent or guardian to provide assistance at the hearing.

(c) (1) Notwithstanding Section 35145, the governing board of Method Schools shall conduct a hearing to consider the expulsion of a pupil in a session closed to the public, unless the pupil requests, in writing, at least five days before the date of the hearing, that the hearing be conducted at a public meeting. Regardless of whether the expulsion hearing is conducted in a closed or public session, the governing board of Method Schools may meet in closed session for the purpose of deliberating and determining whether the pupil should be expelled.

(2) If the governing board of the Method Schools or the hearing officer or administrative panel appointed under subdivision (d) to conduct the hearing admits any other person to a closed deliberation session, the parent or guardian of the pupil, the pupil, and the counsel of the pupil also shall be allowed to attend the closed deliberations.

(3) If the hearing is to be conducted at a public meeting, and there is a charge of committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or to commit a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm, including, but not limited to, videotaped deposition or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.

(d) Instead of conducting an expulsion hearing itself, the governing board of Method Schools may contract with the county hearing officer, or with the Office of Administrative Hearings pursuant to Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 27720) of Part 3 of Division 2

of Title 3 of the Government Code and Section 35207 of this code, for a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The governing board of Method Schools may also appoint an impartial administrative panel of three or more certificated persons, none of whom is a member of the governing board of Method Schools or employed on the staff of the school in which the pupil is enrolled. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with all of the procedures established under this section.

(e) Within three school days after the hearing, the hearing officer or administrative panel shall determine whether to recommend the expulsion of the pupil to the governing board of Method Schools. If the hearing officer or administrative panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the expulsion proceedings shall be terminated and the pupil immediately shall be reinstated and permitted to return to the classroom instructional program from which the expulsion referral was made, unless the parent, guardian, or responsible adult of the pupil requests another school placement in writing. Before the placement decision is made by the parent, guardian, or responsible adult, the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee shall consult with Method Schools personnel, including the pupil's teachers, and the parent, guardian, or responsible adult regarding any other school placement options for the pupil in addition to the option to return to his or her classroom instructional program from which the expulsion referral was made. If the hearing officer or administrative panel finds that the pupil committed any of the acts specified in subdivision (c) of Section 48915, but does not recommend expulsion, the pupil shall be immediately reinstated and may be referred to his or her prior school or another comprehensive school, or, pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 48432.5, a continuation school of Method Schools. The decision not to recommend expulsion shall be final.

(f) (1) If the hearing officer or administrative panel recommends expulsion, findings of fact in support of the recommendation shall be prepared and submitted to the governing board of Method Schools. All findings of fact and recommendations shall be based solely on the evidence adduced at the hearing. If the governing board of the Method Schools accepts the recommendation calling for expulsion, acceptance shall be based either upon a review of the findings of fact and recommendations submitted by the hearing officer or panel or upon the results of any supplementary hearing conducted pursuant to this section that the governing board of Method Schools may order.

(2) The decision of the governing board of Method Schools to expel a pupil shall be based upon substantial evidence relevant to the charges adduced at the expulsion hearing or hearings. Except as provided in this section, no evidence to expel shall be based solely upon hearsay evidence. The governing board of Method Schools or the hearing officer or administrative panel may, upon a finding that good cause exists, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of a witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at

the hearing in the form of sworn declarations that shall be examined only by the governing board of Method Schools or the hearing officer or administrative panel. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

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

(h) (1) Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to the hearing, but relevant evidence may be admitted and given probative effect only if it is the kind of evidence upon which reasonable persons are accustomed to rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A decision of the governing board of Method Schools to expel shall be supported by substantial evidence showing that the pupil committed any of the acts enumerated in Section 48900.

(2) In hearings that include an allegation of committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or to commit a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900, evidence of specific instances, of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is to be presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before the person conducting the hearing makes the determination on whether extraordinary circumstances exist requiring that specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct be heard, the complaining witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, guardian, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

(i) (1) Before the hearing has commenced, the governing board of Method Schools issue subpoenas at the request of either the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee or the pupil, for the personal appearance of percipient witnesses at the hearing. After the hearing has commenced, the governing board of Method Schools or the hearing officer or administrative panel may, upon request of either the county superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee or the pupil, issue subpoenas. All subpoenas shall be issued in accordance with Sections 1985, 1985.1, and 1985.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Enforcement of subpoenas shall be done in accordance with Section 11455.20 of the Government Code.

(2) Any objection raised by the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee or the pupil to the issuance of subpoenas may be considered by the governing board of Method Schools in closed session, or in open session, if so requested by the pupil before the meeting. Any decision by the governing board of Method Schools in response to an objection to the issuance of subpoenas shall be final and binding.

(3) If the governing board of Method Schools hearing officer, or administrative panel determines, in accordance with subdivision (f), that a percipient witness would be subject to an unreasonable risk of harm by testifying at the hearing, a subpoena shall not be issued to compel the personal attendance of that witness at the hearing. However, that witness may be compelled to testify by means of a sworn declaration as provided for in subdivision (f).

(4) Service of process shall be extended to all parts of the state and shall be served in accordance with Section 1987 of the Code of Civil Procedure. All witnesses appearing pursuant to subpoena, other than the parties or officers or employees of the state or any political subdivision of the state, shall receive fees, and all witnesses appearing pursuant to subpoena, except the parties, shall receive mileage in the same amount and under the same circumstances as prescribed for witnesses in civil actions in a superior court. Fees and mileage shall be paid by the party at whose request the witness is subpoenaed.

(j) Whether an expulsion hearing is conducted by the governing board of Method Schools or before a hearing officer or administrative panel, final action to expel a pupil shall be taken only by the governing board of Method Schools in a public session. Written notice of any decision to expel or to suspend the enforcement of an expulsion order during a period of probation shall be sent by the superintendent of schools or his or her designee to the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian and shall be accompanied by all of the following:

(1) Notice of the right to appeal the expulsion to the county board of education.

(2) Notice of the education alternative placement to be provided to the pupil during the time of expulsion.

(3) Notice of the obligation of the parent, guardian, or pupil under subdivision (b) of Section 48915.1, upon the pupil's enrollment in a new school, to inform that school district of the pupil's expulsion.

(k) (1) The governing board of Method Schools shall maintain a record of each expulsion, including the cause for the expulsion. Records of expulsions shall be nonprivileged, disclosable public records.

(2) The expulsion order and the causes for the expulsion shall be recorded in the pupil's mandatory interim record and shall be forwarded to any school in which the pupil subsequently enrolls upon receipt of a request from the admitting school for the pupil's school records.

### Tobacco-Free Schools

Method Schools takes the use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol by any student seriously. Students involved in the possession, sale and/or use of behavior affecting substances shall be subject to disciplinary procedures which may result in suspension or expulsion. Method Schools is committed to taking positive action through education, counseling, parental involvement, medical referral, and police referral in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale, and/or



use of behavior affecting substances and drug paraphernalia. These substances shall include but not be limited to marijuana, LSD, glue, alcohol, and barbiturates.

School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health and safety. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons, and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel; so long as such inspections are conducted in accordance with constitutional requirements of applicable state law relating to searches and seizures.

#### Use or Possession

1. No internal medication is to be administered to students by school personnel except as prescribed by a doctor.
2. Dangerous and narcotic drugs which a student has on prescription for ingestion as prescribed by a doctor must be in their original containers and kept in the nurse's or Director/Principal's office, whichever provides greater security
3. Whenever any staff member has reason to believe that a student may be under drug influence, he/she shall immediately notify the Director/Principal. The Director/Principal, if in agreement, shall notify the parent to come for the student and to remove the student to his/her home, to the jurisdiction of the police, and/or the paramedics.
4. In severe cases, if the parents or the doctor cannot or will not come to the school, the Director/Principal is authorized to call an ambulance to remove the student to a hospital. Parents will be notified of this action and shall be responsible for the incurred expenses.
5. In any first offense in which students illegally use or possess prescription or nonprescription drugs, including alcohol, marijuana, or inhalants, at school or at school activities, the following will result:
  - a. Suspension from school for at least five (5) days.
  - b. Referral to the proper police authority.
  - c. A parent conference.
  - d. A schedule of regular appointments with a school counselor or other school official.

In addition, the following action may be taken:

- a. Transfer to another school or alternative education program as appropriate.
- b. Recommendation for expulsion.
- c. A second incidence of use or possession of illegal drugs within one year at any school or school activity will result in a recommendation for expulsion as provided for in Education Code 48900.

#### Selling or Providing

When there is reason to believe that a student is selling or is in possession of drugs, the following procedures listed below will be followed:

1. The school administrator shall advise the local juvenile narcotics officer or law enforcement personnel. Juvenile authorities will make the decision as to whether they or the school will notify the parent.

2. The school administrator will escort the student to the school office and confront him/her with the suspicion. The administrator may notify the police before taking the student to the office. The student should be removed from a classroom by a school administrator or designee when there is reasonable cause.
3. For reasonable cause, a search for drugs may be made by the administrator. This may include searching the student's locker and/or other School-owned facilities such as science drawers, shop lockers, etc. Such search should be conducted by the administrator with at least one other certificated person as witness. No school staff member should search a student, but may ask a student to volunteer for self search. In cases when a personal search seems to be in order, the administrator should call for a law enforcement officer to make the search. Repeated attempts shall be made to notify the student's parent/guardian before the personal search is made.
4. The student may be questioned by the school administrator without notifying the student of his/her rights, but if the administrator believes that a law has been broken, the police will be notified. When there is good evidence that a student has actually used, sold or is in possession of narcotics or drug paraphernalia on or about school premises or at school-sponsored functions, the police must be notified. Regardless of any legal action taken by the police, the School must immediately suspend the student according to the provisions of BP/AR 5144.1 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process. The school administrator may, at his/her discretion, recommend expulsion to the Governing Board.

## Uniform Complaint Procedures

The Board of Directors of Method Schools recognizes that it is responsible for complying with applicable laws and regulations governing educational programs. This document contains rules and instructions about the filing, investigation and resolution of a Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) complaint regarding an alleged violation by a local educational agency of state laws or regulations governing educational programs, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

This policy outlines Method Schools' UCP and provides a comprehensive approach to resolution on any complaint. A complaint is a written and signed statement by a complainant alleging a violation of state laws or regulations, which may include an allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and charging pupil fees for participation in an educational activity. A complainant is any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization who files a written complaint alleging violation of state laws or regulations, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees. If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing, due to a disability or illiteracy, Method Schools shall assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint.

A pupil fee is a fee, deposit, or other charge imposed on pupils, or a pupil's parents or guardians, in violation of state codes and constitutional provisions which require educational activities to be provided free of charge to all pupils without regard to their families' ability or willingness to pay fees or request special waivers. Educational activities are those offered by a school, school district, charter school, or county office of education that constitute a fundamental part of education, including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities.

A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.
- A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain any school equipment or supplies.
- A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity. This document also applies to the filing of complaints which allege unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying against any protected group as identified under Education Code section 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135, including those with actual or perceived characteristics such as age, ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or on the basis of 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 a local agency, which is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from any state financial assistance.

The following complaints shall be referred to other agencies for appropriate resolution and are not subject to our UCP process set forth in this document unless these procedures are made applicable by separate interagency agreements:

1. Allegations of child abuse shall be referred to County Dept. of Social Services (DSS), Protective Services Division or appropriate law enforcement agency (or equivalent in the State of Tennessee.)
2. Health and safety complaints regarding a Child Development Program shall be referred to Dept. of Social Services for licensed facilities, and to the appropriate Child Development regional administrator for licensing-exempt facilities (or equivalent in the State of Tennessee.)
3. Employment discrimination complaints shall be sent to the State Dept. of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH, or equivalent in the State of Tennessee.)
4. Allegations of fraud shall be referred to the Legal, Audits and Compliance Branch in the California Department of Education.

The responsibilities of Method Schools

Method Schools has the primary responsibility to insure compliance with applicable state laws and regulations. We shall investigate complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable state laws and regulations and/or alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and charging pupil fees for participation in an educational activity and seek to resolve those complaints in accordance with our UCP procedures. In regards to complaints of noncompliance with laws

relating to pupil fees, if Method Schools finds merit in a complaint a remedy will be provided to all affected pupils, parents and guardians, that, where applicable, will include reasonable efforts by Method Schools to ensure full reimbursement to all affected pupils, parents and guardians. Our UCP policies shall ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation and that the identity of a complainant alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying remain confidential as appropriate.

The person responsible for receiving and investigating complaints and ensuring our compliance with state laws and regulations is: Jade Fernandez, Senior Director of Schools

Method Schools  
ATTN: Jade Fernandez  
38750 Sky Canyon Rd., Suite B  
Murrieta, CA 92563

We ensure that the person above, who is responsible for compliance and/or investigations, is knowledgeable about the laws/programs that he/she is assigned to investigate. Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees are filed with a principal of a school. We shall annually notify in writing our pupils, employees, parents or guardians of our pupils, the district advisory committee, school advisory committees, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties of our UCP process regarding an alleged violation by a local agency or state law or regulations governing educational programs, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees. The UCP Annual Notice will be disseminated to all of the six required groups each year and will include information on how to appeal to the CDE. An appeal is a request made in writing to a level higher than the original reviewing level by an aggrieved party requesting reconsideration or a reinvestigation of the lower adjudicating body's decision.

Our UCP Annual Notice shall also advise the recipient of any civil law remedies that may be available under state discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying laws, if applicable, and of the appeal pursuant to Education Code section 262.3. Our UCP Annual Notice shall be in English and in the primary language, pursuant to section 48985 of the Education Code, or mode of communication of the recipient of the notice. A copy of this UCP complaint policies and procedures document shall be available free of charge. Filing a complaint with the Method Schools Emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health or safety of pupils or staff, and teacher vacancies or misassignments, and complaints that allege discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, any individual, public agency or organization may file a written complaint with our district superintendent or his or her designee alleging a matter which, if true, would constitute a violation by our LEA of - or state law or regulation governing a program. A complaint of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees may be filed with the principal of a school under the Uniform Complaint Procedures and may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees.

An investigation of alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying shall be initiated by filing a complaint no later than six months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurred, or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The time for filing may be extended in writing by our district superintendent or his or her designee, upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension. The period for filing may be extended by our superintendent or his or her designee for good cause for a period not to exceed 90 calendar days following the expiration of the six-month time period. Our superintendent shall respond immediately upon a receipt of a request for extension. The complaint shall be filed by one who alleges that he or she has personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying or by one who believes an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying prohibited by this part.

An investigation of a discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying complaint shall be conducted in a manner that protects confidentiality of the parties and maintains the integrity of the process. Within 60 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the complaint, we shall conduct and complete an investigation of the complaint in accordance with our UCP policies and procedures and prepare a written Decision; also known as a final report. This time period may be extended by written agreement of the complainant.

The investigation shall include an opportunity for the complainant, or the complainant's representative, or both, to present the complaint(s) and evidence or information leading to evidence to support the allegations of non-compliance with state laws and/or regulations. Refusal by the complainant to provide the investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation or engage in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegations.

Refusal by Method Schools to provide the investigator with access to records and/or other information related to the allegation in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation or engage in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in a finding based on evidence collected that a violation has occurred and may result in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant.

We shall issue a Decision based on the evidence. The Decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant within 60 calendar days from receipt of the complaint by the local educational agency. The Decision should contain:

- (i) the findings of fact based on the evidence gathered,
- (ii) conclusion of law,
- (iii) disposition of the complaint,
- (iv) the rationale for such disposition,

(v) corrective actions, if any are warranted,  
(vi) notice of the complainant's right to appeal our LEA Decision to the CDE, and (vii) procedures to be followed for initiating an appeal to the CDE.

Nothing in this document shall prohibit anyone involved in the complaint from utilizing alternative methods to resolve the allegations, such as mediation. Nor are we prohibited from resolving complaints prior to the formal filing of a written complaint. Mediation is a problem solving activity whereby a third party assists the parties to the dispute in resolving the complaint.

Method Schools reserves the right to modify locations for receipt of forms as necessary.

## COMMUNITY COMPLAINT FORM

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1. School site and person you are filing a complaint against:

2. Has this been discussed with him/her?

Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ Date:

3. Has the complaint been discussed with the principal or supervisor?

Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ Date:

Description of Complaint: Please include all important information such as location, names, dates, who was present, and to whom it was reported. Please use additional paper if more space is Needed.

What remedy or action do you suggest?

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date received by Method Schools Corporate Office \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Freedom of Speech/Expression Policy

*Education Code sections 48907 and 48950 were amended in 2010 to explicitly include charter schools within their reach. Section 48907 requires charter schools to adopt rules and regulations in the form of a written publications code, including reasonable provisions for the time, place and manner of conducting such activities within that school's jurisdiction. This policy is drafted in conformity with section 48907. Section 48950 essentially provides that students may not be disciplined for speech that is constitutionally protected.*

### A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. To outline administrative procedures relating to individual rights and responsibilities of students in the exercise of free speech on school grounds outside the classroom situation.
2. To serve as a starting point for discussion of student rights and responsibilities in the study of the Bill of Rights in American government courses, moving to personal level aspects of government formerly treated more impersonally.
3. This procedure includes distribution of literature, publicity, use of bulletin boards, non-school publications, spoken work, symbolic speech (e.g., buttons, armbands, flags), and petitions.

### B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

1. Reference: Education Code Sections 48907, 48950, 51501, 51520; State Board of Education Guidelines for Student Expression (10-15-71).

### C. GENERAL

1. Suggestions or questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Superintendent.
2. Definitions
  - a. **School-sponsored materials (or official school publications):**  
Materials developed, printed, or produced and distributed, in whole or in part, at school expense. "At school expense" includes use of school staff time, facilities, equipment, or supplies.



- b. **Non-school-sponsored student materials:** Materials developed and printed off campus by students for distribution by students on campus.
- c. **Non-school materials:** Materials developed and printed by community organizations and/or individuals.

### 3. Free Speech and Public School-Age Students.

Federal judicial decree has profoundly changed the law governing First Amendment “free speech” rights of students on public school grounds. The two cases most directly related to this change of law in California are *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School* (decided by a three-judge Federal Court in February 1969) and *Rowe vs. Campbell Union High School District* (decided by a three-judge Federal Court convened in the U.S. Court for the Northern of California in September 1970). In the *Tinker* case, the U.S. Supreme Court set up a three-pronged test to judge the constitutional validity of any school regulation attempting to circumscribe the exercise of First Amendment “free speech” rights by students. The court said that “. . . conduct by the student, in class or out of it, which for any reason—it stems from time, place, or type of behavior—(1) materially disrupts classwork, or (2) involves substantial disorder, or (3) (involves) invasion of the rights of others . . .” may properly be proscribed by school authorities.

In the *Campbell Union High School District* case, the federal court summarized the legal status of students today:

- a. Students are “persons” within the meaning of the Constitution and are possessed of fundamental rights that are not lost in school.
- b. Students are not the “closed circuit” recipients of only that which the state wishes to communicate; they may not be confined to officially approved sentiments.
- c. Student freedom of speech includes personal communication of controversial ideas.
- d. School officials have the burden of showing constitutionally valid justifications for limitations on student speech.
- e. A generalized fear or apprehension of a disturbance is not a constitutionally adequate justification. A desire to avoid the expression of controversial or unpopular ideas or the discomfort and unpleasantness that accompany them is not a constitutionally adequate justification.
- f. School officials must demonstrate that the prohibited speech would have actually caused substantial and material disruption of, or

interference with, classwork, or with the requirements of discipline appropriate to the operation of the school. Reasonable time, place, and manner regulations regarding expression of ideas orally or in writing are permissible, as they are in any other public institution or facility. The new criteria, discussed generally above, have been framed in terms of practical guidelines pertinent to the public school setting in California. These practical guidelines appear in C.5. and C.6.

4. In addition to the evolving legal mandates described in this procedure, another significant dimension of First Amendment “free speech” rights in the public school must be considered. Responsible exercise of “free speech” rights should be recognized as a prime educational objective. This goal, which is indispensable to the successful continuation and improvement of our democracy, cannot be achieved without the close cooperation of the Board of Trustees; the administrative, teaching, and classified staff; the students; and the citizens who are served by public schools.

5. General Rights and Responsibilities Applying to All Manner of Free Speech.

Included in, but not limited to, forms of free expression available to students are school- sponsored materials, literature, publicity, bulletin boards, non-school publications, the spoken word, symbolic speech (e.g., armbands, buttons, signboards, flags), and petitions. The right of free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution shall not be restricted nor shall disciplinary action be taken because of the exercise thereof, if the exercise of such right is in accord with the following:

- a. It is not likely to substantially disrupt or materially interfere with the educational program. The fundamental purpose of the public school is to provide an educational program; it includes classwork, school activity programs, or any other element of programs conducted by the school. Every student enrolled therein has a right to participate without hindrance or unlawful denial by anyone. The educational program includes supervisory and disciplinary authority of teachers and administrators, both inside and outside the classroom as prescribed by law.
- b. Similarly, any act by students or others that substantially or materially impairs the capacity of a school official to perform his / her professional work in the school shall not be permitted. This includes complaints relating to the personal or professional capacity of a school official to render service to the school that are defamatory or slanderous and that are calculated to cause disturbance and disruption of school activities. (After exhausting all administrative remedies, complaints may be made to the LPS Board of Trustees.)
- c. It does not infringe on the rights of others.

In addition to the right of any student to an education free from disruption, hindrance or unlawful denial, other individual rights must not be violated, including:

- (1) The right to be secure in person and in property—free from threats to health and safety.
- (2) The right to be free from coercion—to be left alone.
- (3) The right to respect for the dignity of the individual and the expression of his/her views and opinions.

d. It does not involve substantial disorder.

Any act through which, in the judgment of school officials, physical injury and/or property damage is anticipated or does occur, shall not be permitted. Similarly, any act that so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, or the violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school shall be prohibited.

e. It does not violate existing laws covering specific matters including, but not limited to:

- (1) Harmful matter: Matter that, taken as a whole, . . . [T]he predominant appeal of which to the average person, applying contemporary standards, is to prurient interest; i.e., a shameful or morbid interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; and is matter which taken as a whole goes substantially beyond customary limits of candor in description or representation of such matters; and is matter which taken as a whole is utterly without redeeming social importance for minors. (Penal Code Sec. 313, 313.1; *Ginsburg v. New York*, 390 U. S. 629, 1968.)
- (2) Profanity: Matter containing words that, according to standards of the Leadership Public Schools/ school community, are deemed to be profanity (Education Code Sections 48900 and 44806; Penal Code Section 415; California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 300).
- (3) Prejudicial or discriminatory matter: Matter advocating prejudice or discrimination on account of sex, race, ethnic origin, or religion (Education Code Sections 51500–51501 and 44806.)
- (4) Injurious matter: Matter that encourages or advocates the use of tobacco, intoxicating liquor, narcotics, or other hallucinogenic or dangerous drugs (Education Code Section 48900).
- (5) Materials or instruction concerning human reproduction and venereal disease. This matter may not be distributed because state law prohibits students from receiving such information in the schools without first having written approval of their parents/guardians. (Education Code Sections 51550, 51551, 51820; Procedure 4188.)
- (6) Libel or slander: Matter, disseminated either in writing or verbally, that defames a person or, in some cases, a private organization. (Civil Code Sections 44 et seq.)

f. It does not advocate breaking the law. Any material that advocates breaking the law or school regulations is prohibited. This includes any material that would incite students so as to create a clear and present danger of the committing of unlawful acts on school premises or of causing substantial and material disruption of, or interference with, classwork or with requirements of discipline appropriate to the operation of the school.

g. It does not endorse political candidates or ballot measures. Endorsements of political candidates or ballot measures are prohibited (applicable to school-sponsored materials only). Newspapers, however, may publish stories on the issues as long as both sides are discussed.

h. It does not violate the time, place, and manner regulations of the individual school designed to ensure compliance with the above restrictions (C.6.)

6. Local school time, place, and manner regulations shall be established by each school and should address:

a. School-sponsored materials.

School-sponsored materials should be submitted by a student to the Superintendent or designee for review prior to time of printing and/or distribution of such materials. (A student editor who fails to submit a publication for review and publishes materials which are obscene, discriminatory, libelous, or otherwise in violation of C.5. and C.6. of this procedure, shall be held personally responsible and shall be subject to disciplinary action. Note: Failure to submit a publication for review, in itself, is not cause for disciplinary action.) It is the responsibility of the designated officials (journalism advisor or advisors of student publications) in each school to supervise publication activities, to maintain professional standards of English and journalism, and to comply with the provisions of this procedure (Education Code Section 48907). Student editors shall be fully responsible for assigning and editing the news and feature content of their publications (Education Code Section 48907).

(1) School official(s) designated by the Superintendent as authorized to receive and review written materials submitted pursuant to this procedure shall be specifically identified. The office to which such materials shall be submitted also shall be specifically identified.

(2) In order to prevent the "prior review" provision from operating as an invalid "prior restraint," the school official reviewing written materials shall give his/her views with regard to violations of this procedure and forward a response within four hours following submission of such materials, unless the material is submitted after 10:30 a.m. on any school day, in which case the school official shall give his/her views before noon

on the following school day. Such views must be given in writing to the student, with a copy kept by the Superintendent or designee in the case of noncompliance. The decision of the Superintendent or designee may be appealed to the appropriate instructional leader who shall render a decision within four (4) work hours and communicate that decision to the student. The decision and appeal process should not cause the student to miss the publishing deadline for the item.

(3) A review of written materials submitted hereunder shall not be construed to mean that the school necessarily agrees with or approves of the views contained in material distributed.

b. Non-school-sponsored student materials. Materials printed by students off campus and intended for distribution on campus shall include the

Superintendent's office in the distribution. When such materials are in violation of prohibitions listed in C.5. or the "time, place, and manner" regulations of this procedure, the Superintendent may stop distribution and discipline those responsible.

(Distribution of materials which are not in violation of C.5. may not be prevented through censorship or actions which might constitute prior restraint.) The student assumes sole responsibility for any materials distributed that are in violation of statutes and/or provisions of this procedure.

#### C. Specific rules governing distribution of printed materials and circulation of petitions

(1) Time of such activity shall be limited to periods before school, after dismissal, and during established lunch periods as deemed feasible by the Superintendent.

(2) Place of the activity shall be reasonably restricted to permit normal flow of traffic within the school, in lunch locations, and at exterior doors, and to avoid interference with school programs.

(3) Manner of conducting such activity shall be restricted to prevent coercion and undue levels of noise.

(4) School shall require that all printed matter distributed or circulated on school property be identified with the name of sponsoring organizations or individuals, both school-connected and non-school-connected.

(5) School may require that the individual(s) or group(s) distributing materials assume responsibility for cleanup of those materials that contribute to littering.

d. Buttons, badges, armbands, flags, and other items of symbolic speech bearing slogans, sayings, or symbols are permitted as another form of expression, provided the message or symbol does not violate

provisions of this procedure. Only American and California State flags may be flown from the main (school) flag pole. A flag other than American or California State flags may be flown from a portable stand at a time, place, and manner specified by the Superintendent in accordance with C.6.f. Permanent structures may not be installed without permission of the Superintendent.

- e. Bulletin boards and the posting of publicity. School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards and display areas to school announcements. Additional bulletin board and/or display space shall be provided for use of students and student organizations.

The following limitations on use of such areas must be observed:

- (1) Identification of the student or student group issuing a notice shall be required on any posted notice.
- (2) All notices shall be officially dated prior to posting and such material shall be removed after a prescribed time to ensure full access to bulletin boards by others.
- (3) Bulletin board space should be made available to all students under uniform rules approved by the Superintendent.

f. Privileges accorded students who, as individuals, are members of community organization youth programs. Students who, as individuals, are members of community youth organizations not considered school clubs, may disseminate information regarding youth organizations activities as provided in C.6.e.

g. Public expression on school grounds (outside the classroom). Students have the right to engage in speech or other communication that, when engaged in off campus, is protected under the First Amendment (Education Code Section 48950). A student shall have the right, either publicly or privately, to express opinions, to take stands, and to support causes. There shall be no limitations to this right except as specified below:

- (1) An area for speaking to mass groups of students shall be set aside by the Superintendent.
- (2) Time of such expressions shall be limited to periods before school begins, after dismissal, and during established lunch periods as deemed feasible by the Superintendent.
- (3) Manner of such expression shall be such as to prevent undue noise, substantial disorder, or infringement upon the rights of others not to listen. Therefore, electronic sound-amplification systems or devices of any kind are prohibited for this purpose unless allowed by school the Superintendent.
- (4) Such expression must be in compliance with C.5.

(5) Violations. Acts in violation of any of the above limitations and rules constitute defiance of school regulations and can result in suspension or other appropriate disciplinary action.

(6) Others. This term is used to describe all persons who are not students enrolled in the school, staff members of the school, or other school employees with legitimate business at the school site. Such persons may not come on to school grounds without permission of the Superintendent or designee.

#### D. IMPLEMENTATION

1. To establish specific written school guidelines and procedures, the CEO:
  - a. May develop specific written school regulations and guidelines consistent with this procedure. In doing so, Superintendent may consult with faculty, students, and other interested parties.
  - b. May designate other administrator, teacher, or group(s) to function as his/her designee in carrying out all or part of function of reviewing materials submitted for compliance with school policy and procedure.
  - c. May communicate accepted school guidelines and procedures, as well as school guidelines and limitations, as deemed necessary, to all students, staff, and parents. (Student handbook, faculty handbook, and parent newsletter may be used.) Guidelines include time, place, manner, penalties for violation, and “prior submission” review procedure for school-sponsored materials.
  
2. Prior to printing and/or distribution
  - a. Student
    - (1) Prepares or obtains printed materials, petitions, buttons, badges, armbands, and flags.
    - (2) Identifies all written material with name of student or organization that sponsored/prepared it.
    - (3) Checks for compliance with provisions of local school regulations.
    - (4) Submits, at his/her option, school-sponsored materials to Superintendent or designee for review as provided in C.6.a.
    - (5) Includes Superintendent’s office in distribution of non-school- sponsored materials.
  - b. Superintendent or designee

- (1) Reviews materials only on the basis of established limitations and guidelines.
  - (2) Expresses his/her views as to applicability of such established limitations and guidelines to school-sponsored materials. Consults with Legal Counsel as appropriate.
  - (3) Notifies student(s) of his/her views on school-sponsored materials. Provides student with written notice of noncompliance with this procedure if such is the case.
- c. Appeal from declaration of noncompliance by Superintendent or designee
- (1) Student may appeal to appropriate instructional leader having jurisdiction over school in which student is enrolled.
  - (2) Instructional leader shall make his/her decision on the appeal within a reasonable period of time and communicate decision to student.
  - (3) Nothing herein shall preclude a student from further appealing instructional leader's decision to the LPS Board of Trustees.

#### **California student free expression law (1977)**

In addition to the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, states can also provide free speech protection to their own citizens by enacting state laws or regulations. The California Student Free Expression Law is such a provision and provides student journalists attending California public high schools, including charter schools, with added protection against administrative censorship. The law also protect teachers and other school personnel against retaliation for students' lawful exercise of their free-speech rights. California's law, passed in 1977 and amended over the years to include protection for charter schools and advisers , was the first state law in the country specifically protecting student media. It is the only such law to pre-date the U.S. Supreme Court's 1988 *Hazelwood* decision and was the model for the anti-*Hazelwood* and New Voices laws that have followed.

#### **Cal. Educ. Code Section 48907 – Student exercise of free expression**

48907(a) Pupils of the public schools, including charter schools, shall have the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press including, but not limited to, the use of bulletin boards, the distribution of printed materials or petitions, the wearing of buttons, badges, and other insignia, and the right of expression in official publications, whether or not the publications or other means of expression are supported financially by the school or by use of school facilities, except that expression shall be prohibited which is obscene, libelous, or slanderous. Also prohibited shall be material that so incites pupils as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises or the violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

(b) The governing board or body of each school or charter school and each county board of education shall adopt rules and regulations in the form of a written publications code, which



shall include reasonable provisions for the time, place, and manner of conducting such activities within its respective jurisdiction.

(c) Pupil editors of official school publications shall be responsible for assigning and editing the news, editorial, and feature content of their publications subject to the limitations of this section. However, it shall be the responsibility of a journalism adviser or advisers of pupil publications within each school to supervise the production of the pupil staff, to maintain professional standards of English and journalism, and to maintain the provisions of this section.

(d) There shall be no prior restraint of material prepared for official school publications except insofar as it violates this section. School officials shall have the burden of showing justification without undue delay prior to a limitation of pupil expression under this section.

(e) "Official school publications" refers to material produced by pupils in the journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either free or for a fee.

(f) This section does not prohibit or prevent the governing board or body of a school or charter school from adopting otherwise valid rules and regulations relating to oral communication by pupils upon the premises of each school.

(g) An employee shall not be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, reassigned, transferred, or otherwise retaliated against solely for acting to protect a pupil engaged in the conduct authorized under this section, or refusing to infringe upon conduct that is protected by this section, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, or Section 2 of Article I of the California Constitution.

*(Amended by Stats. 2010, Ch. 142, Sec. 2. (SB 438) Effective January 1, 2011.)*

**2024-25 Student/Parent Handbook**  
Acknowledgement of Receipt

Please indicate that you **have reviewed and agree to abide by the Method Schools Student/Parent Handbook for the year 2024-25.**

And that you have **reviewed and acknowledge receipt of the 2024-2025 Annual Notifications via Method Schools** by completing the acknowledgement of receipt linked below.

[2024-2025 Acknowledgement of Student Parent Handbook](#)