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Admissions Policies and Procedures *(from charter petition)*

Board Policy #: 1; Adopted/Ratified: September 5, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Legal Assurances

GPS will be non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition. GPS will admit all grade-level eligible students residing in California who wish to attend the Charter School up to GPS' capacity, within the minimum and maximum age requirements for public school attendance specified in applicable law in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(A). GPS is a school of choice, and in compliance with Education Code Section 47605(g), no student will be required to attend GPS. GPS shall be open to all students at the appropriate grade levels who wish to attend.

Admission eligibility will not be determined by the place of residence of a student or the student's parent/guardian within the state, except in the case of a public random drawing or as otherwise required by law. If the number of students who wish to attend GPS exceeds the Charter School's capacity, admission to GPS, except for existing students, shall be determined by public random drawing in accordance with the admission preferences specified below.

There shall be no admission testing or other evaluation required of any applicant. GPS shall not charge an application fee nor shall it charge tuition. GPS will not require any monetary or other contribution as a condition for application, admission, enrollment, or participation in any of the Charter School's required educational activities. In accordance with Education Code Sections 49011 and 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

GPS shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

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

Non-Discrimination

GPS shall not require a parent/legal guardian or student to provide information regarding a student's disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admission or

attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

GPS may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admission preferences set forth in this Petition.

GPS shall not request or require submission of a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission or enrollment, participation in any admission or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Homeless and Foster Youth

GPS shall adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. GPS shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that GPS is open to enroll and provide services for all students and provides a standard District contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment. GPS shall comply with all applicable provisions of Education Code sections 48850 – 48859.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

GPS, including its employees and officers, shall comply with FERPA and Education Code section 49060 *et seq.* at all times.

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

Admission Criteria

GPS has established policies, processes, and procedures governing application, admission, and enrollment at GPS, all of which are included in Appendix 8. All students attending GPS must follow the application, admission, and enrollment policies of the Charter School.

The application packet for admission to GPS includes information that allows students and parents to be informed about the Charter School's operations, its educational programs, the academic and behavioral expectations of students, and the rights and responsibilities of students and parents who wish to become part of the Charter School. GPS will ensure all application materials provide complete information regarding application procedures, key dates, and admission preferences and requirements consistent with the Petition.

The Board shall have the sole authority to determine the size and grade-level breakdown (i.e., capacity) of the student body at GPS, in compliance with any applicable provisions of agreements with the District. The determination of capacity shall be based on, among other things, the Charter School's academic program, the Charter School's fiscal viability, the educational needs of currently enrolled students, the capacity of the school site, and the level of interest shown by students who want to attend the Charter School.

The only admission requirement is that students wishing to attend GPS must follow the Charter School's admission procedures with respect to completing the application, required enrollment forms and document submission by the announced deadlines.

Please see below and Appendix 8 for examples of typical enrollment deadlines.

Public Random Drawing and Admission Preferences

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following open enrollment, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. If the number of students who wish to attend GPS exceeds the Charter School's capacity, then enrollment, except for existing students, shall be determined by a public random drawing ("lottery") for each affected grade level conducted on a date set in the annual enrollment timeline. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B), GPS shall offer admission preferences to students in the following order:

1. Children of current GPS teachers and staff (the number of students admitted via this preference is capped at up to 10% of GPS' total enrollment)
2. Siblings of students admitted to or attending GPS residing within the boundaries of the District
3. Siblings of students admitted to or attending GPS residing outside the boundaries of the District
4. Students who are enrolled in, or reside in the attendance boundaries of, James Marshall Elementary School (for purposes of the SB 740 Charter School Facility Grant Program)
5. Students residing within the boundaries of the District
6. All other students residing in California who wish to attend the Charter School

GPS shall adhere to the requirements related to admission preferences as set forth in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv).

Families who submitted a completed application prior to the open enrollment deadline will be notified in writing regarding the date, time, and location of the lottery, which will be open to the public. Families do not need to be present to participate in the lottery. The lottery drawing will be held on the GPS campus or in a public space large enough to accommodate all who are interested in attending. If required due to public health orders or recommendations, the lottery drawing may be held virtually. GPS will ensure that the lottery process will be:

- Public, transparent, and fair
- Held in a public space large enough to accommodate all attendees, unless required to be held online
- Facilitated by a staff member ("Lottery Official"), appointed by the Executive Director or their designee, who doesn't have an interest in the outcome and is charged with conducting the process

Lottery spaces are pulled in order of grade level by the designated Lottery Official. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than students interested in attending. Lotteries will be conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity

shall be placed on a wait list according to their draw in the public random drawing. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening. The wait list does not carry over from year to year.

Conditions of Enrollment

Upon admission to GPS, the registration process is comprised of the following:

- Completion of a student registration form;
- Proof of Immunization;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form;
- Proof of minimum and maximum age requirements;
- Authorization for the Charter School to request and receive documents¹ from the schools the student has attended or is currently attending, if applicable;
- A copy of any existing SST evaluations and recommendations for the student will be requested;
- A copy of any existing 504 or Individualized Education Program for the student will be requested.

Upon enrollment:

- Families and students are expected to attend an orientation prior to the student's first day of school

Admission tests will not be administered. However, diagnostic assessments may be administered following enrollment to determine a baseline to identify the best individual instructional programs for the student. These may serve as diagnostics of students' reading, writing and math skills.

¹ In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(4)(B), GPS shall not request a student's records or require a parent/guardian or student to submit the student's records to GPS before enrollment.

Health and Safety Procedures (from charter petition)

Board Policy #: 2; Adopted/Ratified: September 5, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

GPS has implemented full health and safety procedures and risk management policies in consultation with insurance carriers and risk management experts. Health and safety policies are updated, reviewed and distributed to all staff and families annually. GPS ensures staff are trained annually on all health and safety policies. These policies and procedures are incorporated as appropriate into the Charter School's staff development efforts, student and staff handbooks, and policies of the Board. Employees are trained as needed and as legally required.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of GPS. The full health and safety policies and procedures for the Charter School are included in the Comprehensive School Safety Plan in Appendix 6.

Procedures for Background Checks

Employees and contractors of GPS will be required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code sections 44237 and 45125.1. GPS will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks and clearance of all personnel. All applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. GPS shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony, except as otherwise provided by law, pursuant to Education Code Sections 44830.1 and 45122.1. The Executive Director or designee will monitor compliance with this policy. The Board shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Executive Director. Volunteers or contractors who will have direct contact with students outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to contact with students without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

Employee Records

The Charter School complies with all applicable state and federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of employee records.

Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies and Procedures

GPS is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon the actual or perceived characteristics of race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, ethnic group identification, genetic information, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, sex and pregnancy, physical or mental disability, childbirth or related medical conditions, military and veteran status, denial of family and medical care leave, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. GPS has adopted comprehensive policies to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about discrimination or harassment at the Charter School (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with GPS' anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies. All supervisors are required to participate in regular training detailing their legal responsibilities. A copy of GPS' current policies are provided in Appendix 6.

A copy of these policies shall be provided as part of any orientation program conducted for new and continuing students at the beginning of each quarter, semester, or summer session, as applicable, and to each faculty

member, all members of the administrative staff, and all members of the support staff at the beginning of the first quarter or semester of the school year, or at the time that there is a new employee hired.

Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

All GPS employees are mandated child abuse reporters and follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District. GPS provides all employees, and other persons working on behalf of GPS who are mandated reporters, with annual training on child abuse detection and reporting, in accordance with Education Code Section 44691.

Tuberculosis Risk Assessment and Examination

Employees, and volunteers who have frequent or prolonged contact with students, will be assessed and, if necessary, examined for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students, and for employees at least once each four years thereafter, as required by Education Code Section 49406.

Health Screenings

All students are screened for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school pursuant to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq.*, as applicable to the grade levels served by the Charter School. GPS maintains student immunization, health examination, and health screening records on file.

Immunizations

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

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

Medication in School

GPS adheres to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school. GPS stocks and maintains the required number and type of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors onsite and provides training to employees and volunteers in the storage and use of the epinephrine auto-injector as required by Education Code Section 49414.

Per AB 1651 (2023), the Charter School shall store emergency epinephrine auto-injectors in an accessible location upon need for emergency use and include that location in annual notices required by law. To the extent the Charter School maintains a stock of albuterol inhalers to respond to respiratory distress in students, the Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code Section 49414.7, including with respect to training, notices, and the stocking of albuterol inhalers.

Bloodborne Pathogens

GPS meets state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Board has established a written “Exposure Control Plan” designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with bloodborne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) and hepatitis B virus (“HBV”).

Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

GPS ensures all staff members receive annual training on the Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on blood-borne pathogens.

Diabetes

GPS shall make type 1 diabetes informational materials accessible to the parent/guardian of a student when the student is first enrolled in elementary school.

GPS provides an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet is included in Appendix 6, includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

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

Drug-, Alcohol-, and Smoke-Free Environment

GPS functions as a drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free environment.

Facility Safety

GPS complies with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code, including provisions for seismic safety. GPS holds fire inspections to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. GPS shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Sections 32001. Copies of relevant facilities documents are available in Appendix 6.

Suicide Prevention Policy

The Charter School maintains a policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215. GPS shall review, at minimum every fifth year, its policy on student suicide prevention and, if

necessary, update its policy. Pursuant to AB 58 (2021-22), GPS will also review and update its suicide prevention policy by January 1, 2025, to incorporate best practices identified by the CDE's model policy, as revised.

Prevention of Human Trafficking

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

Nutritionally Adequate Free or Reduced Price Meals

The Charter School shall provide each needy student, as defined in Education Code Section 49552, breakfast and lunch free of charge during each school day, as well as to any student who requests a meal without consideration of the student's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one free meal for each meal service period. The meals provided under this paragraph shall be nutritionally adequate meals that qualify for federal reimbursement.

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

California Healthy Youth Act

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

Mental Health Education

If GPS offers one or more courses in health education to students in grades 7-8, GPS shall include in those courses instruction in mental health that meets the requirements of Education Code Section 51925, *et seq.*

Mental Health Information

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

School Safety Plan

The Charter School shall adopt a School Safety Plan, to be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year, which shall include identification of appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address the Charter School's procedures for complying with applicable laws related to school safety, including the development of all of the following pursuant to Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(K):

- child abuse reporting procedures

- routine and emergency disaster procedures
- policies for students who committed an act under Education Code Section 48915 and other Charter School-designated serious acts leading to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations
- procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students pursuant to Education Code Section 49079
- a discrimination and harassment policy consistent with Education Code Section 200
- provisions of any schoolwide dress code that prohibits students from wearing “gang-related apparel,” if applicable
- procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and employees to and from the Charter School
- a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning
- the rules and procedures on school discipline adopted pursuant to Education Code Sections 35291, 35291.5, and 47605
- procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents
- procedures to assess and respond to reports of any dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity that is being conducted or threatened to be conducted at the Charter School, at an activity sponsored by the Charter School, or on a school bus serving the Charter School

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

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

Bullying Prevention

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

Homicide Threats

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

Gun Safety Notice

Each school year at the beginning of the first semester, GPS shall distribute a notice to the parents/guardians of each student addressing California’s child gun access prevention laws and laws related to firearm safety utilizing the most updated model language published by the CDE.

Menstrual Products

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

Workplace Violence Prevention Plan

As of July 1, 2024, the Charter School shall establish, implement, and maintain, at all times in all work areas, an effective workplace violence prevention plan consistent with the requirements of Labor Code Section 6401.9.

Supporting LGBTQ Students

Commencing with the 2025-26 school year and ending with completion of the 2029-30 school year, the Charter School shall use an online training delivery platform and curriculum to provide at least 1 hour of required LGBTQ cultural competency training annually to teachers and other certificated employees and maintain records of such training as required by Education Code Section 218.

Recess

As of the 2024-25 school year and except where a field trip or other educational program is taking place, if the Charter School provides recess, then pursuant to Education Code Section 49056, the Charter School shall provide supervised and unstructured recess, distinct from physical education courses and mealtimes, of at least 30 minutes on regular instructional days and at least 15 minutes on early release days. The Charter School shall not restrict a student's recess unless there is an immediate threat to the physical safety of the student or one or more of their peers.

All Gender Restrooms

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

Pregnant And Parenting Students

The Charter School shall provide an annual notice to students about their rights regarding pregnancy or when parenting in compliance with Education Code Sections 222.5, and 46015.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy (*from charter petition*)

Board Policy #: 3; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

GPS is committed to creating a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment using restorative practices in order to build a strong student and faculty culture, a community of mutual respect, and to reduce discipline referrals, suspensions and expulsions. GPS draws best practices from the International Institute for Restorative Practices and provides ongoing trainings on restorative practices to faculty throughout the school year.

In cases where suspension or expulsion are necessary, GPS will follow a comprehensive set of suspension and expulsion policies which are listed below. The policies clearly describe the Charter School's expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits, and the policies and procedures for student discipline. Each student and his or her parent or guardian will be required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment. These policies will provide all students with an opportunity for due process and will conform to applicable federal and state law regarding students with exceptional needs.

Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

Each student and his or her parent or guardian will be provided with a copy of the following discipline policies including suspension and expulsion and will be required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment.

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at Growth Public Schools ("Charter School"). In creating this policy, the Charter School has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* which describes the non-charter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* The Charter School is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions, and involuntary removals, and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion. Such modifications may be made without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements.

When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy and procedures has been prepared to provide due process to all students. The list of offenses and procedures provide safety for students, staff, and visitors to the Charter School and serves the best interests of the Charter School's pupils and their parents/guardians. This policy shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will clearly describe discipline expectations, and it will be distributed as part of the Student/Parent Handbook which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year.

The Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians² are

² The Charter School shall ensure that a homeless child or youth's educational rights holder; a foster child or youth's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker; and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker have the

notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that these Policy and Procedures are available on request at the Principal's office
Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

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

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The Charter School will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the California Education Code when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent or /guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent 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 inform him or her, the student, and the student's parent/guardian, of the right to initiate the procedures specified below basis for suspensions, before the effective date of which the action. If student is being involuntarily removed and the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder initiates/guardian's, right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal. If a student's parent/guardian requests a hearing, the Charter School shall utilize the same hearing procedures specified below for suspensions and expulsions, before the effective date of the action to involuntarily remove the student. If the student's parent/ guardian requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the suspension and expulsion procedures described below. removals for misconduct which may be grounds for suspension or expulsion as enumerated below. Students may be involuntarily removed for reasons including, but not limited to, failure to comply with the terms of the student's independent study Master Agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(c)(4).

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time, including, but not limited to:

1. While on school grounds;
2. While going to or coming from school;
3. During the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; or
4. During, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

same rights as a parent or guardian to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, involuntary removal notice, and other documents and related information. For purposes of this Policy and its Procedures, the term "parent/guardian" shall include these parties.

Suspension Offenses

Discretionary Suspension Offenses. Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
- b. Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant
- e. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases
- g. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- h. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
- k. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties
 - (1) Except as provided in Education Code Section 48910, a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts enumerated in this subdivision.
- l. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- m. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.
- o. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- p. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or schools sanctioned events.
- r. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will

- result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, of the person threatened or his or her immediate family
- s. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
 - t. Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
 - u. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
 - v. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - (1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
 - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
 - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
 - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
 - (2) "Electronic Act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the schoolsite, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
 - i. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
 - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.

- b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
- c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
- iii. An act of cyber sexual bullying.
 - a. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
 - b. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

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

- w. A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (h)-(i).
- x. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee’s concurrence.

Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object destructive device unless, in the case of possession of any object device of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee’s concurrence.
- b. Brandished a knife at another person.
- c. Unlawfully sold a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, et seq.

- d. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 287, 288, or 289 or former Section 288a of the Penal Code, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4

Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or the Principal's designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference must take place within two (2) school days of the suspension, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense, in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(i). This conference shall be held within two (2) school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

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

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

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

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. In such instances when the Charter School has determined a suspension period

shall be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the pupil or the pupil's parents, unless the pupil and the pupil's parents fail to attend the conference.

This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Student Work/Homework during Out-Of-School Suspension

Whenever possible, GPS tries to avoid assigning out-of-school suspensions to students. We do not believe that removing a student from the school community and denying them access to curriculum or instruction is aligned to our vision or is an appropriate strategy to redirect unwanted behaviors. As such, in-school suspension is more commonly assigned allowing students to not only complete assignments but also continue to receive instruction. When out-of-school suspensions must be assigned, GPS compiles a series of assignments (consistent with the daily hour requirements of independent study) that allows students to complete missing/incomplete assignments and practice previously taught skills. These assignments are turned in upon completion of the suspension.

Expellable Offenses

Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students may be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- b. Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- g. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- h. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
- k. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- l. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.

- m. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- n. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- o. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school sanctioned events.
- p. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- q. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- r. Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- s. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - 1. Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student’s or those students’ person or property.
 - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.

- iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
 - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
2. “Electronic Act” means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- i. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
 - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A “burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
 - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated
 - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
 - i. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
 - iii. An act of cyber sexual bullying.
 - a. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
 - b. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific

value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.

3. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
- u. A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1a)-(b).
- v. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee's concurrence.

Non-Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the pupil:

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

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

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

Authority to Expel

As required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer to determine whether the student should be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing, as required by law.

A student may be expelled either by the neutral and impartial Charter School Board of Directors (or “Board”) following a hearing before it, or by the Board upon the recommendation of an neutral and impartial Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel shall consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil nor a Board member. Each entity shall be presided over by a designated neutral hearing chairperson. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense, and the Board of Directors shall make the final determination.

Expulsion Procedures

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

In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all pupil confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing in open session three (3) days prior to the date of the scheduled hearing.

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

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

Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

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

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.

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

Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students With Disabilities

1. Notification of SELPA (or District, if the Charter School is a School of the District for purposes of special education).

The School shall immediately notify the SELPA (or District, if applicable) and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA (or District) the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the School or SELPA (or District) would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability.

2. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting (which could constitute a change of placement and the student's IEP would reflect this change), and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP or 504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

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

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

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

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

- a.) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change
in placement.
- b.) If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.
- c.) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.
- d.) If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and

that the conduct in question was not a direct result of the failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

4. Due Process Appeals

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

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

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

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

5. Special Circumstances

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

6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

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

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

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

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

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

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

- a.) The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to the Charter School's supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
- b.) The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- c.) The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

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

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

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

Record of Hearing

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

Presentation of Evidence

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

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

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

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

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

Written Notice to Expel

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

1. Notice of the specific offense committed by the student; and
2. Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the Charter School.

The Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the District. This notice shall include the following:

1. The student's name; and
2. The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

Disciplinary Records

The Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the School. Such records shall be made available to the Authorizer upon request.

No Right to Appeal

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Charter School Board of Directors' decision to expel shall be final.

Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Parents/guardians of pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

Rehabilitation Plans

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

Readmission

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the Principal and the pupil and parent/guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Principal or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The Board shall then make a final decision regarding readmission during the closed session of a public meeting, reporting any action taken during closed session consistent with the requirements of the Brown Act. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

Notice to Teachers

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

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Board Policy #:4; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) does not discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived disability (mental or physical), gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, race or ethnicity, citizenship, immigration status, creed, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, pregnancy status, childbirth, medical condition, marital status, age, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code or otherwise protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation.

The GPS Board of Directors shall not refuse to approve the use or prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction or any book or other resource in a school library on the basis that it includes a study of the role and contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, persons with disabilities, or members of other ethnic, cultural, religious, or socioeconomic status groups. The Charter School Board of Directors shall not adopt or approve the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use of such would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code section 220.

GPS does not discourage students from enrolling or seeking to enroll in Charter School for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance, disability, neglect or delinquency, English proficiency, for being homeless or a foster/mobile youth, economic disadvantage, nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Charter School shall not encourage a student currently attending Charter School to disenroll or transfer to another school based on any of the aforementioned reasons except in cases of expulsion and suspension or involuntary removal in accordance with GPS’s charter and relevant policies.

GPS does not request nor require student records prior to a student’s enrollment.

GPS is committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment and discrimination. GPS adheres to all provisions of federal law, including but not limited to, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, or national origin), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

GPS adheres to the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act 2008, and its implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. 35.101-190, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of mental or physical disability in any program, activity, or employment opportunity offered by GPS.

GPS does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including but not limited to unlawful discrimination, intimidation, or bullying, including cyber sexual bullying or sexual harassment, by any employee; independent contractor or other person with whom the Charter School does business; student; volunteer; or community member regardless of position or gender. GPS will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

Pursuant to California law and the California Attorney General’s guidance to K-12 schools in responding to immigration issues (“Guidance”), Charter School provides equal access to free public education, regardless of a

student's or their parent's or guardian's immigration status or religious beliefs. The complete Guidance, including *Appendix G – Know Your Rights* can be reviewed via the following link: <https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/bcj/school-guidance-model-k12.pdf>

Inquiries, complaints, or grievances regarding harassment as described in this section, above, should be directed to the Charter School Uniform Complaint Procedures (“UCP”) Compliance Officer:

Audria Johnson
Executive Director
9320 Tech Center Drive
Sacramento, CA 95826

The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in GPS's programs or activities. GPS prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint or who participates or refuses to participate in a complaint investigation.

The Charter School's Nondiscrimination Statement relevant to employees is located within GPS's Employee Handbook and can be located at the school office.

**SECTION 504: POLICY, PROCEDURES, AND PARENT RIGHTS REGARDING IDENTIFICATION,
EVALUATION AND EDUCATION**

Board Policy #:5; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

A. SECTION 504 POLICY

The Board of Directors of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes the need to identify and evaluate students with disabilities in order to provide them with a free, appropriate public education (“FAPE”) and its legal responsibility to ensure that “no qualified person with a disability shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” This Policy and the related administrative regulation has been developed to ensure the implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), and its implementing regulations as amended, which pertains to public schools. The intent is to ensure that all students with disabilities, who are eligible under Section 504, are identified and evaluated and have access to a FAPE.

Under Section 504, individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities, including learning, are entitled to receive regular or special education and/or related aids and services designed to meet their individual needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. Major Life Activities include functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working, as well as the operation of a major bodily functions, including functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. Students may be disabled and entitled to services under Section 504 even though they are not eligible for services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”). An impairment need not prevent or severely restrict a major life activity to be considered “substantially limiting.”

The Charter School’s Executive Director or designee shall ensure that this policy and set of procedures is implemented and followed. Whenever there is reason to believe that, because of a disability, a student needs regular or special education and/or related aids and services (and the student has not been found eligible under IDEA) that student will be evaluated under this policy’s corresponding procedures.

A Section 504 Team will be convened to determine the student’s need for regular or special education and/or related aids and services. The 504 Team will include persons knowledgeable about the Section 504 standards, the student’s individual needs and school history, the meaning of evaluation data, and placement options. The student’s parent/guardian shall be invited to participate in this 504 Team and shall receive notice of procedural safeguards guaranteed by law.

If GPS does not assess a student after a parent has requested an assessment, the Charter School shall provide notice of the parent’s/guardian’s procedural safeguards. GPS shall not retaliate in any way against parents/guardians or students who exercise any rights under the procedural safeguards and/or Section 504.

If the student, due to disability, is found to require regular or special education and/or related aids and services under Section 504, the Section 504 Team shall develop a 504 plan for the provision of such services to the student. The student shall be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to the student’s individual needs. The student’s parent/guardian shall be provided a copy of the 504 plan and shall receive notice of procedural safeguards guaranteed by law. GPS shall periodically review the student’s progress and placement.

The Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of disability or any other characteristic protected under law. GPS will implement this policy through its corresponding procedures.

B. SECTION 504 PROCEDURES

A. Definitions

1. **Academic Setting** – the regular, educational environment operated by GPS.
2. **Individual with a Disability under Section 504** – An individual who:
 - a. has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
 - b. has a record of such an impairment; or
 - c. is regarded as having such an impairment.
3. **Evaluation** – procedures used to determine whether a student has a disability as defined within these Procedures, and the nature and extent of the services that the student needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual student and does not include basic tests administered to, or procedures used with, all students in a school, grade or class.
4. **504 Plan** – is a plan developed to identify and document the student’s needs for regular or special education and related aids and services for participation in educational programs, activities, and school–sponsored events.
5. **FAPE** – the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities as adequately as the needs of persons without disabilities are met.
6. **Major Life Activities** - Functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin, normal cell growth, digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions.
7. **Physical or Mental Impairment** –
 - a. Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory; including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitor-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
 - b. Any mental or psychological disorder, such as intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
8. **504 Coordinator** – The Student Support Services Coordinator shall serve as the Charter School’s Section 504 Coordinator. The parents or guardians may request a Section 504 due

process hearing from or direct any questions or concerns to the Section 504 Coordinator at 916-394-5007.

9. **Has a record of such an impairment** - means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
10. **Is regarded as having an impairment** - means
 - a. An individual meets the requirement of 'being regarded as having such an impairment' if the individual establishes that they have been subjected to an action prohibited under this Act because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity.
 - b. Being regarded as having an impairment shall not apply to impairments that are transitory and minor. A transitory impairment is an impairment with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

B. Referral, Assessment and Evaluation Procedures

1. GPS will evaluate any student who, because of disability, needs or is believed to need regular or special education and/or related aids and services.
2. A student may be referred by anyone, including a parent/guardian, teacher, other school employee or community agency, for consideration as to whether the student qualifies as a student with disabilities under Section 504. Requests for evaluation shall be made in writing, and a copy of said request will remain in the student's file regardless of the final determination. This referral should be made to the Section 504 Coordinator who will convene a 504 Team. Any requests made to another Charter School employee will be forwarded to the Section 504 Coordinator.
3. The Charter School has the responsibility to ensure that students with disabilities are evaluated. Therefore, it is important that students who have or may have a disability are referred to the Section 504 Coordinator so that the assessment process is initiated.
4. The 504 Team convened by the Section 504 Coordinator will be composed of the student's parents/guardians and other persons knowledgeable about the student (such as the student's regular education teachers), the student's school history, the student's individual needs (such as a person knowledgeable about the student's disabling condition), the meaning of evaluation data, the options for placement and services, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities.
5. The 504 Team shall promptly consider the referral and determine what assessments are needed in all suspected areas of disability to evaluate whether the student is a student with a disability under Section 504 and what special needs the student may have. The decision regarding what assessments shall be undertaken shall be based on a review of the student's school records (including academic, social and behavioral records), any relevant medical records, and the student's needs. Students requiring assessment shall be provided appropriate assessments administered by qualified assessment specialists.
6. The 504 Team will consider the following information in its evaluation of the student:
 - a. Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for

which they are used and are administered by trained personnel;

- b. Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient; and
 - c. Tests are selected and administered so as to best ensure that, when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure.)
7. The evaluation of the student must be sufficient for the 504 Team to accurately and completely describe: (a) the nature and extent of the disabilities; (b) the student's special needs; (c) the impact upon the student's education; and (d) what regular or special education and/or related aids and services are appropriate to ensure that the student receives a FAPE. All significant factors relating to the learning process for that student, including adaptive behavior and cultural and language background, must be considered. The evaluation may include, but is not limited to, classroom and playground observation, performance-based testing, academic assessment information, and data offered by the student's teachers and parent/guardian.
 8. Mitigating measures cannot be considered when evaluating whether or not a student has a substantially limiting impairment. Mitigating measures could include medications, prosthetic devices, assistive devices, or learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications a student uses to eliminate or reduce the effects of an impairment.
 9. The parents/guardians shall be given an opportunity in advance of 504 Team meetings to examine assessment results and all other relevant records.
 10. Information from all sources shall be documented and carefully considered.
 11. If a request for evaluation is denied, the 504 Team shall inform the parents/guardians in writing of this decision and of their procedural rights as described below.

C. 504 Plan

1. When a student is identified as having a disability within the meaning of Section 504, the 504 Team shall determine what, if any, services are needed to ensure that the student receives a FAPE.
2. The 504 Team responsible for making the placement decision shall include the parents/guardians and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options.
3. For each identified eligible student, the 504 Team will develop a 504 Plan describing the student's disability and the regular or special education and/or related aids and services needed. The Plan will specify how the special education and/or related aids and services will be provided to the eligible student and by whom. The 504 Plan will also identify the person responsible for ensuring that all the components of the Plan are implemented.

4. The student's teacher and any other staff who are to provide services to the student or who are to make modifications in the classroom for the student shall be informed of the services or modifications necessary for the student and, if appropriate, provided a copy of the 504 Plan. A copy of this plan shall be kept in the student's cumulative file in a manner that limits access to those persons involved in the 504 process and/or the provision of services and modifications.
5. The eligible student shall be placed in the regular education environment unless it is demonstrated that the student's needs cannot be met in the regular education environment with supplementary aids and services. The student shall be educated with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate to their individual needs.
6. The referral, assessment, evaluation and placement process will be completed within a reasonable time. It is generally not reasonable to exceed sixty (60) school days in completing this process.
7. The parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of the final decision concerning the student's identification as a person with disabilities, the educational program and services to be provided, if any, and of the Section 504 procedural safeguards, as described below, including the right to an impartial hearing to challenge the decision.
8. If the 504 Team determines that the student has a disability but that no special services are necessary for the student, the 504 Plan shall reflect the identification of the student as a person with a disability under Section 504 and shall state the basis for the decision that no special services are presently needed.
9. The 504 Plan shall include a schedule for annual review of the student's needs and indicate that this review may occur more frequently at the request of the parent/guardian or school staff.
10. GPS shall immediately implement a student's prior 504 Plan, when a student enrolls at the Charter School. Within thirty (30) calendar days of starting school, GPS shall schedule a 504 Team meeting to review the existing 504 Plan. GPS shall request a copy of the prior 504 plan from both the prior school and the parent/guardian.
11. A parent, guardian, or GPS shall have the right to audio record the proceedings of any team meetings held pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794). The parent or guardian or GPS shall notify the members of the team of the parent's, guardian's, or GPS's intent to audio record a meeting at least 24 hours before the meeting. If GPS initiates the notice of intent to audio record a meeting and the parent or guardian objects or refuses to attend the meeting because it will be audio recorded, the meeting shall not be audio recorded.

D. Review of the Student's Progress

1. The 504 Team shall monitor the progress of the eligible student and the effectiveness of the student's 504 Plan. According to the review schedule set out in the student's 504 Plan, the 504 Team shall annually determine whether the services and modifications are appropriate.
2. A reevaluation of the student's needs shall be conducted before any subsequent significant change in placement.

E. Procedural Safeguards

1. Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of all decisions regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of students with disabilities or suspected disabilities. Notifications shall include a statement of their rights to:
 - Examine relevant records
 - Have an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parents/guardians and their counsel
 - Have the right to file a Uniform Complaint pursuant to Charter School policy
 - Seek review in federal court if the parents/guardians disagree with the hearing decision.

2. Notifications shall also set forth the procedures for requesting an impartial hearing. Requests shall be made to the following:

Realyn McDaniel
9320 Tech Center Drive, Sacramento, 95826
916-394-5007; rmcdaniel@growthps.org

Notifications shall also advise that reimbursement for attorney's fees is available only as authorized by law.

3. The Executive Director or designee shall maintain a list of impartial hearing officers who are qualified and willing to conduct Section 504 hearings. To ensure impartiality, such officers shall not be employed by or under contract with GPS or any district within the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, Sacramento City Unified School District, or the Sacramento County Office of Education in any capacity other than that of hearing officer and shall not have any professional or personal involvement that would affect their impartiality or objectivity in the matter.
4. If a parent/guardian disagrees with the identification, evaluation or educational placement of a student with disabilities under Section 504, the parent/guardian may request a hearing to initiate due process procedures. The parent/guardian shall set forth in writing their request for a hearing. A request for hearing should include:
 - The specific decision or action with which the parent/guardian disagrees.
 - The changes to the 504 Plan the parent/guardian seeks.
 - Any other information the parent/guardian believes is pertinent.
5. Within five (5) calendar days of receiving the parent/guardian's request for a hearing, the Charter School may offer the parent/guardian an optional alternative dispute resolution process. However, the timeline for the hearing shall remain in effect unless it is extended by mutual written agreement of the parent/guardian and the Charter School. Alternative dispute resolution options include:
 - Mediation by a neutral third party.
 - Review of the 504 Plan by the Executive Director or designee.

6. Within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the parent/guardian's request, the Executive Director or designee shall select an impartial hearing officer. These 10 days may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parent/guardian and Executive Director.
7. Within thirty-five (35) calendar days of the selection of the hearing officer, the due process hearing shall be conducted. These thirty-five (35) calendar days may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parent/guardian and Executive Director.
8. The parent/guardian and the School shall be afforded the rights to:
 - Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training related to the individual needs of students who are qualified as having a disability under Section 504.
 - Present written and oral evidence.
 - Question and cross-examine witnesses.
 - Receive written findings by the hearing officer.
9. The hearing officer shall issue a written decision within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing.
10. If desired, either party may seek a review of the hearing officer's decision by a federal court. The decision shall be implemented unless the decision is stayed, modified or overturned by a court.
11. GPS shall not retaliate in any way against parents/guardians or students who exercise any rights under the procedural safeguards and/or Section 504.

F. Suspension and Expulsion, Special Procedures for Students with Disabilities

GPS shall follow the suspension and expulsion policy and procedures as set forth in the charter. A student who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is subject to the same grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. GPS will follow Section 504 and all applicable federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students. The following procedures shall be followed when a student with a disability is considered for suspension or expulsion. These procedures will be updated if there is a change in the law.

1. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's 504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment ("FBA") and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

2. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

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

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

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

If GPS, the parent, and relevant members of the 504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the 504 Team shall:

- a. Conduct an FBA and implement a behavioral intervention plan (“BIP”) for such child, provided that GPS had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b. If the child has a BIP, review the BIP and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- c. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and GPS agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the BIP.

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

3. Appeals

The parent/guardian of a child with a disability under a 504 Plan who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or if the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, either party may request to utilize the appeal process outlined in the Procedural Safeguards section of these Procedures.

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

4. Special Circumstances

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

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

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

5. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

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

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

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to the IDEA 2004 and who has violated GPS's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under these Procedures only if GPS had knowledge that the student had a disability before the behavior occurred.

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

- a. The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to GPS supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
- b. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- c. The child's teacher, or other GPS personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the Special Education Coordinator, or to other GPS supervisory personnel.

If GPS knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEA 2004-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

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

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

C. PARENT/STUDENT RIGHTS IN IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION, ACCOMMODATION AND PLACEMENT

The following is a description of the rights granted by federal law to students with disabilities. The intent of the law is to keep you fully informed concerning decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions. Please keep this explanation for future reference.

You have the right to:

1. Have your child take part in and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination because of their disabling condition.
2. Have GPS advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to Section 504 identification, evaluation and/or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a FAPE. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have GPS make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities.
5. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to non-disabled students.
6. Have your child receive special education and related services if your child is found to be eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004).
7. Have an evaluation, educational recommendation, and placement decision developed by a team of persons who are knowledgeable of the student, the assessment data, and any placement options. This includes the right to an evaluation before the initial placement of the student and before any subsequent significant change in placement.
8. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by GPS.
9. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's Section 504 identification, evaluation, educational program, and placement.
10. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
11. Obtain a response from GPS to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
12. Request an amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe they are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If GPS refuses this request for amendment, the Charter School shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of your right to an impartial hearing.

13. Request mediation or file a grievance in accordance with Charter School's Section 504 mediation grievance and hearing procedures, outlined above.
14. Request an impartial hearing regarding the Section 504 identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. You and the student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you.
15. File a formal complaint pursuant to the Charter School's Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures. Please ask the Executive Director for a copy of the Charter School's Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures if you need one.
16. File a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education.

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education
San Francisco Office
50 United Nations Plaza
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 486-5555 PHONE
(415) 486-5570 FAX
Email: OCR.SanFrancisco@ed.gov

17. Be free from any retaliation from GPS for exercising any of these rights.

Please contact Reilyn McDaniel, 504 Coordinator, in person or via mail at Growth Public Schools, 9320 Tech Center Drive, Sacramento, CA 95826 or via telephone at 916-394-5007 with any questions regarding the information contained herein.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Board Policy #:6; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The Board of Directors of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes the need to identify, evaluate, and serve students with disabilities in order to provide them with a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”) in the least restrictive environment. Accordingly, this Policy has been adopted consistent with Education Code section 56195.8.

Identification, Referral, and Evaluation for Special Education

Charter School shall follow applicable state and federal law and regulations and the El Dorado County Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”) policy with respect to the identification, referral, and assessments of students for special education and related services.

Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) Team Meetings

GPS shall convene IEP team meetings with the legally required composition within all legally applicable timelines, in accordance with state and federal law and regulations and SELPA policy.

If a student’s general or special education teacher requests a review of the student’s assigned class, Charter School shall ensure this review is conducted. A mandatory IEP meeting shall be convened if the review indicates a change to the student’s placement, instruction, related services, or any combination thereof may be required. The Special Education Coordinator shall be responsible for completing the review within fifteen (15) school days of the teacher’s request.

Procedural Safeguards

Parents/guardians shall receive written notice of their rights in accordance with state and federal law and regulation, and SELPA policy.

Please see the Special Education Coordinator for a copy of your procedural safeguards.

Nonpublic, Nonsectarian Services

GPS may contract with state-certified nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies to provide special education services or facilities when an appropriate public education program at GPS is not available in accordance with Education Code section 56366 and Section 3062 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. When entering into agreements with nonpublic, nonsectarian schools (“NPSs”) or agencies (“NPAs”), GPS shall consider the needs of the individual student and the recommendations of the IEP team. The IEP team shall remain accountable for monitoring the progress of students placed in nonpublic, nonsectarian programs towards the goals identified in each student's IEP.

In accordance with Education Code section 56366.1, when entering into a Master Contract with an NPS where GPS has not previously placed a student, the Charter School shall conduct an onsite visit to the NPS at the time of placement. GPS shall also conduct at least one onsite monitoring visit to the NPA during each school year in

which the Charter School has a student attending pursuant to a Master Contract. The monitoring visit shall include the following:

- A review of services provided to the student through the individual service agreement between GPS and the NPS;
- A review of progress the student is making toward the student's IEP goals;
- A review of progress the student is making toward the goals set forth in the student's behavior intervention plan;
- If applicable, an observation of the student during instruction;
- A walkthrough of the facility; and
- Any other reviews and/or observations deemed necessary by GPS.

In accordance with Education Code section 56366.45, GPS shall, within fourteen (14) days of becoming aware of any change to the certification status of an NPS or NPA as a state-certified school or agency, inform parents/guardians of pupils who attend the NPS or receive services from the NPA, of the change in certification status. The notice to parents/guardians shall be sent via email or regular mail and include a copy of the procedural safeguards. GPS shall maintain a record of the notice and shall make this notice available for inspection upon request of the California Department of Education.

GPS shall follow state and federal law and regulations and SELPA policy when contracting with nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies.

Resource Specialist Program

GPS shall employ or contract with certificated resource specialists to provide services for students with disabilities which shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing instruction and services to students whose needs have been identified in an IEP developed by the IEP team and who are assigned to regular classroom teachers for a majority of the school day. Students shall not be enrolled in a resource specialist program for the majority of the school day without approval of the IEP team.
2. Providing information and assistance to students with disabilities and their parents/guardians.
3. Providing consultation, resource information, and material regarding students with disabilities to their parents/guardians and regular education staff members.
4. Coordinating special education services with the regular school programs for each student with disabilities enrolled in the resource specialist program.
5. Monitoring student progress on a regular basis, participating in the review and revision of IEPs as appropriate, and referring students who do not demonstrate appropriate progress to the IEP team.
6. At the secondary school level, emphasizing academic achievement, career and vocational development, and preparation for adult life.

7. Resource specialists shall not simultaneously be assigned to serve as resource specialists and to teach regular classes.

GPS's resource specialist program shall be under the direction of a resource specialist who possesses:

1. A special education credential or clinical services credential with a special class authorization.
2. Three or more years of teaching experience, including both regular and special education teaching experience, as defined by rules and regulations of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
3. Demonstration of competencies required for a resource specialist as established by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

The Executive Director shall ensure that caseloads for special education teachers are within the maximum caseloads established by law, collective bargaining agreement, and/or SELPA policy. No resource specialist shall have a caseload which exceeds twenty-eight (28) students, unless a valid waiver is obtained through the State Board of Education, consistent with Title 5, California Code of Regulations, section 3100.

Transportation

Charter School shall ensure appropriate, no cost transportation services are provided for students with disabilities as specified in their IEP as a related service when required. The specific needs of the student shall be the primary consideration when an IEP team is determining the student's transportation needs. Considerations may include, but are not limited to, the student's health needs, travel distances, physical accessibility and safety of streets and sidewalks, accessibility of public transportation systems, midday or other transportation needs, extended-year services, and, as necessary, implementation of a behavioral intervention plan.

When transportation services are required, the Executive Director or designee shall arrange transportation schedules so that students with disabilities do not spend an excessive amount of time on buses compared to other students. Arrivals and departures shall not reduce the length of the school day for these students except as may be prescribed on an individual basis.

When contracting with a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency to provide special education services, the Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the contract includes general administrative and financial agreements related to the provision of transportation services if specified in the student's IEP.

Guide dogs, signal dogs and service dogs trained to provide assistance to persons with disabilities may be transported in a school bus when accompanied by students with disabilities, teachers with disabilities, or persons training the dogs.

Charter School shall ensure that all school buses, school student activity buses, youth buses and childcare motor vehicles, whenever they may be used, are equipped with an operational child safety alert system. Charter School shall ensure that all buses are equipped with a passenger restraint system.

Mobile seating devices, when used, shall be compatible with the securement systems required by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 222 (49 C.F.R. § 571.222). GPS shall ensure school bus drivers are trained in the proper installation of mobile seating devices in the securement systems.

Information on the Number of Individuals with Exceptional Needs

Information regarding the number of individuals with exceptional needs who are being provided special education and related services shall be provided in accordance with state and federal law and regulation and SELPA policy.

Independent Educational Evaluations

A. IEE at Parent Expense

Charter School acknowledges that a parent/guardian has the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation(s) (“IEE”) at their own expense at any time. In these circumstances, the Executive Director or designee(s) shall ensure that the student’s IEP team shall consider the results of the IEE when determining an offer of a FAPE for the student. However, the results of an IEE will not dictate the IEP team’s determinations.

If a parent/guardian requests reimbursement for an IEE assessment obtained by the parent/guardian at their own expense, the Executive Director or designee(s) shall ensure that the unilaterally obtained IEE meets the following criteria:

1. The parent disagreed with the Charter School’s evaluation and the Charter School received a request within a reasonable time after receipt of the results of the evaluation.
2. The parent timely and upon request provided Charter School with written consent to exchange information with the examiner.
3. The private evaluation meets all criteria contained in this Policy.
4. The parent timely provided a copy of the written evaluation report and all other documents\tests related to the report.
5. The examiner attends the relevant IEP team meeting by phone or in person to discuss their findings and provides protocols of all assessments to Charter School.

The reimbursement will be in an amount no greater than the actual cost to the parents. Parents may only be reimbursed for one (1) IEE for each assessment area or discipline with which they disagree.

In all cases, if Charter School initiates a due process hearing to show that Charter School’s evaluation is appropriate, no reimbursement shall be made unless ordered by a Hearing Officer.

B. IEE at Public Expense

Charter School recognizes that federal and state laws provide parents/guardians of students with disabilities with the right to obtain an IEE, at public expense, when the parent/guardian disagrees with an assessment

conducted by Charter School within the last two (2) years. Parents may only receive one (1) IEE for each assessment area or discipline with which they disagree.

The Executive Director or designee(s) shall ensure that when a parent/guardian requests an IEE at public expense, Charter School shall provide the parent/guardian with a copy of their Procedural Safeguards *and*, without unnecessary delay, either:

1. Initiate a due process hearing to show that the evaluation, completed by the Charter School, is appropriate; or
2. Provide the parent/guardian with information about where an IEE may be obtained, the Charter School's criteria applicable for IEEs, and ensure that an IEE is provided at public expense.

Should the Charter School grant the parent's request for an IEE, the Executive Director or designee(s) shall ensure the following:

1. The criteria under which the IEE is obtained at public expense, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, must be the same as the criteria that Charter School uses when it initiates an evaluation.
2. Charter School does not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an IEE at public expense.
3. All assessments shall be completed by persons competent to perform the assessment as determined by Charter School. Parent has the right to choose the examiner.
4. If the original evaluation completed by Charter School included in-class observation of the student, an equivalent opportunity shall apply to an independent educational assessment of the student in the student's current educational placement and setting.
5. A parent/guardian shall have the opportunity to demonstrate that unique circumstances justify a waiver of any of the criteria listed above as defined by Charter School.
6. The evaluator must prepare and sign a full evaluation report containing:
 - a. A list of all information/data reviewed.
 - b. A clear explanation of the testing and assessment results.
 - c. A complete summary of all test scores, including, for all standardized testing administered, all applicable full scale or battery scores, domain or composite scores, and sub-test scores reported in standard, scaled or T-score format.
 - d. A complete summary of all information obtained or reviewed from sources other than testing conducted by the evaluator.
 - e. Recommendations for IEP team consideration for educational programming and, if appropriate, placement that is educationally relevant and realistic within a public educational setting.

The cost determination for an IEE shall be comparable to the costs incurred by Charter School when it uses its own employees or contractors to complete an assessment, whenever possible and shall reflect reasonable and customary rates for such services in the area. As a result, the Executive Director or designee(s) shall provide a parent/guardian with a recommended cost ceiling. The cost ceiling shall be updated (*once every three (3) years*) and determined by averaging the cost of the following three factors:

1. The cost of an assessment provided by a Charter School employee.
2. The cost of an assessment provided by a neighboring local educational agency.
3. The cost of an assessment provided by a private service provider, with appropriate qualification, within 40 miles from the Charter School.

The Executive Director or designee(s) may consider a parent/guardian's demonstration of any unique circumstances related to the student's education need(s), that justify a financial waiver of any additional cost for an IEE, above the cost ceiling established by the Charter School.

The Executive Director or designee(s) shall ensure a parent/guardian voluntarily have their private health insurance pay the costs of the IEE if covered by their insurance. However, Charter School recognizes that federal and state laws specify that parents/guardians are not required to have private insurance cover the costs of an IEE if the process would result in a financial cost to the parent/guardian including but not limited to:

1. A decrease in available lifetime coverage or any other benefit under an insurance policy
2. An increase in premiums or the discontinuance of the policy
3. An out-of-pocket expense such as payment of a deductible amount incurred in filing a claim

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER AND MOBILE YOUTH POLICY
Board Policy #:7; Adopted/Ratified: March 12, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Introduction

The Governing Board of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes that Foster and Mobile Youth may face significant barriers to achieving academic success due to their family circumstances, disruption to their educational program, and their emotional, social, and other health needs. To enable such students to achieve state and charter school academic standards, the Charter School shall provide them with full access to the Charter School’s educational program and implement strategies identified as required by law and necessary for the improvement of the academic achievement of foster youth in the Charter School’s local control and accountability plan (“LCAP”).

Definitions

- “*Foster youth*” means any of the following:
 1. A child who has been removed from their home pursuant to Section 309 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code (“WIC”).
 2. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to WIC section 300 or 602 (whether or not the child has been removed from the child’s home by juvenile court).
 3. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant WIC section 602, has been removed from the child’s home by the juvenile court, and is in foster care.
 4. A nonminor under the transition jurisdiction of the juvenile court, as described in WIC section 450, who satisfies all of the following criteria:
 - a. The nonminor has attained 18 years of age while under an order of foster care placement by the juvenile court.
 - b. The nonminor is in foster care under the placement and care responsibility of the county welfare department, county probation department, Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization.
 - c. The nonminor is participating in a transitional independent living case plan.
 5. A dependent child of the court of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization who is the subject of a petition filed in the tribal court.³
 6. A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in WIC section 11400.
- “*Former juvenile court school student*” means a student who, upon completion of the student’s second year of high school, transfers from a juvenile court school to the Charter School, excluding a school district operated by the Division of Juvenile Justice of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, from a juvenile court school.
- “*Child of a military family*” refers to a student who resides in the household of an active duty military member.
- “*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 the Charter School from another Local Educational Agency (“LEA”), either within California or from another state, so that the child or a member of the child’s

³ Growth Public School shall not require an Indian tribe or tribal court representative to certify that any student is a dependent of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization.

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. This 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.

- *“Newcomer pupil”* is a person aged 3 to 21 years, who was not born in any of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more of the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, for more than three (3) full academic years.
- *“Educational Rights Holder” (“ERH”)* means a parent, guardian, or responsible adult appointed by a court to make educational decisions for a minor pursuant to WIC sections 319, 361 or 726, or a person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student pursuant to Education Code section 56055.
- *“School of origin”* means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster youth was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the student was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the Charter School liaison for foster youth, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the ERH for the youth, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster youth, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin. For a foster youth who is an individual with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code section 56026, “school” as used in the definition of “school of origin” includes a placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school as defined in Education Code section 56034, subject to the requirements of Education Code section 56325.
- *“Best interests”* means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational program and the foster youth's access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all Charter School students.
- *“Partial coursework satisfactorily completed”* includes any portion of an individual course, even if the pupil did not complete the entire course.

Within this Policy, foster youth, former juvenile court school students, a child of a military family, a currently migratory child, and a newcomer pupil will be referred to collectively as “Foster and Mobile Youth.”

Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison

In order to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of Foster and Mobile Youth to the Charter School, the Governing Board shall designate a Foster and Mobile Youth liaison. The Governing Board designates the following position as the Charter School's liaison for Foster and Mobile Youth:

Jeanette Rowe, Dean of Culture
916-394-5007

The Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison shall be responsible for the following:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in the Charter School, and

checkout from the Charter School of foster youth.

2. Ensure proper transfer of credits, records, and grades when foster youth transfer to or from the Charter School.
3. When a foster youth is enrolling in the Charter School, the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison shall contact the school last attended by the student within two (2) business days to obtain all academic and other records. The last school attended by the foster youth shall provide all required records to the new school regardless of any outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys owed to the school last attended. When a foster youth is transferring to a new school, the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison shall provide the student's records to the new school within two (2) business days of receiving the new school's request, regardless of any outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys owed to the Charter School.
4. When required by law, notify the foster youth's ERH, attorney, county social worker, and the appropriate representative of the county child welfare agency, and an Indian child's ERH, tribal social worker and if applicable, county social worker of the student's expulsion or involuntary removal, and, at least ten (10) calendar days preceding the date of the following:
 - a. An expulsion hearing for a discretionary act under the Charter School's charter.
 - b. Any meeting to extend a suspension until an expulsion decision is rendered if the decision to recommend expulsion is a discretionary act under the Charter School's charter. The foster youth's ERH, attorney, county social worker, an Indian child's ERH, tribal social worker and if applicable, county social worker, and the agency representative will be invited to participate.
 - c. A manifestation determination meeting prior to a change in the foster youth's placement if the change in placement is due to an act for which the recommendation for expulsion is discretionary and the student is a student with a disability under state and federal special education laws. The foster youth's ERH, attorney, county social worker, an Indian child's ERH, tribal social worker and if applicable, county social worker, and the agency representative will be invited to participate.
5. As needed, make appropriate referrals to ensure that students in foster care receive necessary special education services and services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
6. As needed, ensure that students in foster care receive appropriate school-based services, such as counseling and health services, supplemental instruction, and after-school services.
7. Develop protocols and procedures for creating awareness for Charter School staff, including but not limited to principals, deans, and attendance clerks, of the requirements for the proper enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.
8. Collaborate with the county placing agency, social services, probation officers, juvenile court officers, and other appropriate agencies to help coordinate services for the Charter School's foster youth.
9. Monitor the educational progress of foster youth and provide reports to the Executive Director or designee and the Governing Board based on indicators identified in the Charter School's local control

and accountability plan.

This Policy does not grant the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison authority that supersedes the authority granted under state and federal law to a parent or legal guardian retaining educational rights, a responsible person appointed by the court to represent the child pursuant to WIC sections 319, 361 or 726, a surrogate parent, or a foster parent exercising authority under Education Code section 56055. The role of the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison is advisory with respect to placement options and determination of the school of origin.

School Stability and Enrollment

The Charter School will work with foster youth and their ERH to ensure that each foster youth is placed in the least restrictive educational programs and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all students, including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports. All decisions regarding a foster youth's education and placement will be based on the best interest of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

Foster youth, currently migratory children, and children of military families have the right to remain in their school of origin if it is in their best interest. The Charter School will immediately enroll a foster youth, a currently migratory child, or child of a military family seeking reenrollment in the Charter School as their school of origin.

A foster youth, currently migratory child, or child of a military family who seeks to transfer to the Charter School will be immediately enrolled (subject to the Charter School's capacity, if the Charter School is not the student's school of origin, and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School's charter and Board policy) even if the student has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or monies due to the school last attended or is unable to meet normal enrollment documentation or school uniform requirements (e.g. producing medical records or academic records from a previous school).

At the initial detention or placement, or any subsequent change in placement, a foster youth may continue in their school of origin for the duration of the court's jurisdiction. A currently migratory child or child of a military family may continue in their school of origin as long as the student meets the definition of a currently migratory child or child of a military family as described above. Foster youth, currently migratory children, and children of military families have the right to remain in their school of origin following the termination of the court's jurisdiction or termination of the child's status as a currently migratory child or child of a military family, as follows:

1. For students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, inclusive, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year in which the student's status changed.
2. For students enrolled in high school, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through graduation.

If the foster youth, currently migratory child or child of a military family is transitioning between school grade levels, the youth shall be allowed to continue in the district of origin in the same attendance area to provide the youth the benefit of matriculating with their peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts. A student who is transitioning to a middle school or high school shall be allowed to enroll in the school designated for matriculation in another school district.

The Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison may, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and

the ERH for the foster youth, recommend that the foster youth's right to attend the school of origin be waived and the student be enrolled in any district school that the student would otherwise be eligible to attend as a resident of the school district or in the Charter School consistent with current enrollment procedures. All decisions shall be made in accordance with the foster youth's best interests.

Prior to making any recommendation to move a foster youth from their school of origin, the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison shall provide the foster youth and the foster youth's ERH with a written explanation of the basis for the recommendation and how the recommendation serves the foster youth's best interests.

If any dispute arises regarding a foster youth's request to remain in the Charter School as the foster youth's school of origin, the foster youth has the right to remain in the Charter School pending resolution of the dispute. The dispute shall be resolved in accordance with the existing Charter School dispute resolution process.

If the Charter School operates an intersession program, Charter School shall grant priority access to foster youths. Notwithstanding any other law, if the foster youth will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's educational rights holder, or Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable. "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by the Charter School on nonschooldays, including, but not limited to, summer school. "Indian custodian" is as the term is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

Transportation

The Charter School shall not be responsible for providing transportation to allow a foster youth to attend school, unless there is an agreement with a local child welfare agency that the Charter School assumes part or all of the transportation costs in accordance with Section 6312(c)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code, or unless required by federal law. The Charter School is not prohibited from providing transportation, at its discretion, to allow a foster youth to attend school.

In accordance with Section 6312(c)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code, the Charter School shall collaborate with local child welfare agencies to develop and implement clear written procedures to address the transportation needs of foster youth to maintain them in their school of origin, when it is in the best interest of the youth.

For any student who has an individualized education program ("IEP"), the student's IEP team will determine if the student requires special education transportation as a related service regardless of the student's status.

Effect of Absences on Grades

The grades of a foster youth shall not be lowered for any absence from the Charter School that is due to either of the following circumstances:

1. A decision by a court or placement agency to change the student's placement, in which case the student's grades shall be calculated as of the date the student left school.
2. A verified court appearance or related court-ordered activity.

Transfer of Coursework and Credits

The Charter School shall accept coursework satisfactorily completed by a Foster and Mobile Youth while attending another public school⁴, a juvenile court school, a charter school, a school in a country other than the United States, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency even if the student did not complete the entire course and shall issue that student full or partial credit for the coursework completed. The credits accepted pursuant to this paragraph shall be applied for enrollment purposes to the same or equivalent course, if applicable, as the coursework completed in the prior public school, juvenile court school, charter school, school in a country other than the United States, or nonpublic, nonsectarian school. For purposes of the official transcript, the credits accepted pursuant to this paragraph shall be added to the credits earned from the same or equivalent course for purposes of calculating the total credits earned for the course but shall separately identify the school and local educational agency in which the credits were earned.

If a Foster and Mobile Youth transfers in or out of Charter School, Charter School shall issue the full and partial credits on an official transcript for the pupil and shall ensure the transcript includes all of the following:

1. All full and partial credits and grades earned based on any measure of full or partial coursework being satisfactorily completed, including a determination of the days of enrollment or seat time, or both, if applicable, at a school of that local educational agency or a prior local educational agency, or any other public school, juvenile court school, charter school, school in a country other than the United States, or nonpublic, nonsectarian school.
2. The credits and grades for each school and local educational agency listed separately so it is clear where they were earned.
3. A complete record of the pupil's seat time, including both period attendance and days of enrollment.

If Charter School has knowledge that the transcript from the transferring local educational agency may not include certain credits or grades for the pupil, it shall contact the prior local educational agency within two business days to request that the prior local educational agency issue full or partial credits pursuant to this paragraph. The prior local educational agency shall issue appropriate credits and provide all academic and other records to Charter School within two business days of the request.

If the Foster and Mobile Youth did not complete the entire course, the student shall be issued partial credit for the coursework completed and shall not be required to retake the portion of the course that the student completed at another school unless the Charter School, in consultation with the student's ERH, finds that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. Whenever partial credit is issued to a Foster and Mobile Youth in any particular course, the student shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire course.

In no event shall the Charter School prevent a Foster and Mobile Youth from taking or retaking a course to meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University or the University of California.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

A student who is in foster care whose residence changes pursuant to a court order or decision of a child welfare worker shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities.

⁴ For purposes of coursework completed by a student who is a child of a military family, "public school" includes schools operated by the United States Department of Defense.

Waiver of Fees for Afterschool Programs

The Charter School shall not charge any student who the Charter School knows is in foster care any family fees associated with an After-School Education and Safety (“ASES”) Program operated by the Charter School.

Student Records

When the Charter School receives a transfer request and/or student records request for the educational information and records of a foster youth from a new LEA, the Charter School shall provide these student records within two (2) business days. The Charter School shall compile the complete educational record of the student, including but not limited to a determination of seat time, full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization and other records, and, if applicable, a copy of the student’s special education records including assessments, IEPs, and/or 504 plans. All requests for student records will be shared with the Foster and Mobile Youth Liaison, who shall be aware of the specific educational recordkeeping needs of Foster and Mobile Youth.

In accordance with the Charter School’s Educational Records and Student Information Policy, under limited circumstances, the Charter School may disclose student records or personally identifiable information contained in those records to certain requesting parties including but not limited to a foster family agency and state and local authorities within a juvenile justice system, without parental consent.

Complaints of Noncompliance

Complaints of noncompliance with this Policy shall be governed by the Charter School’s Uniform Complaint Procedures. A copy of the Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures is available upon request at the main office.

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY

Board Policy #:8; Adopted/Ratified: March 12, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) Governing Board desires to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to its educational program, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards, are provided a free and appropriate public education, are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless, and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

The term “*homeless children and youth*” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth 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/or
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 Charter School Liaison.

Charter School Liaison

The Executive Director designates the following staff person as the Charter School Liaison for homeless students (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)):

Jeanette Rowe, Dean of Culture
9320 Tech Center Drive
916-394-5007

The Charter School Liaison shall ensure that the following requirements are fulfilled by the Charter School (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)):

1. Homeless students are identified by Charter School personnel, through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies, and through the annual housing questionnaire administered by the Charter School.
2. Homeless students enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at GPS.

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 (“IDEA”); any other preschool programs administered by GPS, if any; and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, 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, GPS charter, 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 Charter 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 and that the youths may obtain assistance from the Charter School Liaison to receive verification of such status for the purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The California Department of Education (“CDE”) 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/>

Enrollment

The Charter School will work with homeless students and their parent/guardian to ensure that each student is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all students, including, but not necessarily limited to, interscholastic sports. All decisions regarding a homeless student’s education and placement will be based on the best interest of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

GPS shall immediately admit/enroll the student for which the Charter School is a School of Origin. “School of Origin” means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

GPS shall also immediately enroll a homeless youth who seeks to enroll in the Charter School, if the youth would otherwise be eligible to attend and subject to the Charter School’s capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the GPS charter and Board policy. A homeless youth who is enrolled will have the right to attend classes and participate fully in school activities, including extracurricular activities.

The youth shall be immediately enrolled even if the student lacks records normally required for enrollment (such as previous academic records, records of immunizations, other required health records, proof of residency) or has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C); Education Code Section 48850(a)(3)(A).)

If the student needs to obtain immunizations or does not possess immunization or other medical records, the Executive Director or designee shall refer the parent/guardian to the Charter School Liaison. The Charter School Liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunizations or records for the student. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C).)

A homeless youth may remain in the student's school of origin for the entire period for which the youth is homeless. Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin following the termination of the child's status as a homeless student as follows:

1. For students in Kindergarten through eighth grade, inclusive, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year in which the student's status changed.
2. For students enrolled in high school, the student will be allowed to continue in the school of origin through graduation.

If the Charter School operates an intersession program, Charter School shall grant priority access to homeless students. Notwithstanding any other law, if the homeless student will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's parent, guardian, educational rights holder ("ERH"), Indian custodian⁵ in the case of an Indian child, or, if none of the preceding are applicable, an accompanied homeless student themselves shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable. "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by the Charter School on nonschooldays, including, but not limited to, summer school. "Indian custodian" is as the term is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

Enrollment Disputes

If a dispute arises over admissions/enrollment, the student shall be immediately admitted (subject to Charter School's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School charter and Board policy), pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals. The parent/guardian shall be provided with a written explanation of the admission/enrollment decision, including an explanation of the parent/guardian's right to appeal the decision. The parent/guardian shall also be referred to the Charter School Liaison. The Charter School Liaison shall carry out the Board-adopted dispute resolution and complaint process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).)

Housing Questionnaire

GPS shall administer a housing questionnaire for purposes of identifying homeless children and youth. GPS shall ensure that the housing questionnaire is based on the best practices developed by the CDE. GPS shall annually provide the housing questionnaire to all parents/guardians of students and to all unaccompanied youths

⁵ "Indian custodian" means any Indian person who has legal custody of an Indian child under tribal law or custom or under State law or to whom temporary physical care, custody, and control has been transferred by the parent of such child. *Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code*

at GPS. The housing questionnaire shall include an explanation of the rights and protections a student has as a homeless child or youth or as an unaccompanied youth. The housing questionnaire shall be available in paper form. The housing questionnaire shall be available in the primary language other than English spoken by fifteen (15) percent or more of the students enrolled at GPS and shall be translated into other languages upon request of a student's parent/guardian or an unaccompanied youth. GPS shall collect the completed housing questionnaires and annually report to the CDE the number of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths enrolled. (Education Code Section 48851.)

Comparable Services

Each homeless child or youth shall promptly be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in GPS such as (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4)):

- Transportation services
- Educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria, such as educational programs for students with disabilities and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency
- Programs in vocational and technical education
- Programs for gifted and talented students
- Charter School nutrition programs

Transportation

In the event that GPS provides transportation services to all GPS students, GPS shall provide comparable transportation services to each homeless child or youth attending GPS, as noted above. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4).)

If the GPS does not otherwise provide transportation services to all GPS students, GPS shall ensure that transportation is provided for homeless students to and from GPS, at the request of the parent or guardian (or Charter School Liaison), if GPS is the student's school of origin. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J).) Transportation provided by GPS will be adequate and appropriate for the Student's situation, but GPS does not commit to any one method of transportation for all youth.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

A homeless child or youth shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities.

Waiver of Fees for Afterschool Programs

The Charter School shall not charge any student who is a homeless youth any family fees associated with an After-School Education and Safety ("ASES") Program operated by the Charter School.

Professional Development

All administrators, teachers and employees of GPS, including the Charter School Liaison, will be provided professional development on the identification, services, and sensitivity necessary when dealing with homeless children and youth. The Charter School Liaison will verify that the Charter School is providing the required training to school personnel providing services to youth experiencing homelessness at least annually through the CDE's verification system. (Education Code Section 48852.5(c)(2).)

The Charter School Liaison shall offer training to GPS certificated and classified employees providing services to students experiencing homelessness, including, but not limited to, teachers, support staff, and other school staff who work with pupils, at least annually relating to:

- (1) GPS's homeless education program policies; and
- (2) Recognition of signs that pupils are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

The Charter School Liaison shall inform such employees of the availability of training and the services the Charter School Liaison provides to aid in the identification and provision of services to students who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

Acceptance of Course Work

The Charter School 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.

The Charter School will provide homeless students credit for the partial completion of courses taken while attending a public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the student did not complete the entire course, the Charter School shall not require the student to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the Charter School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the student, finds that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the homeless student shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire course. These students shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet California State University or the University of California admission eligibility requirements.

Notice

For any homeless student who seeks enrollment at the Charter School, written notice will be provided to the parent/guardian at the time of enrollment and at least annually while the student is enrolled at the Charter School.

Annual Policy Review

The Charter School shall annually review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the identification of homeless children and youths or the enrollment of homeless children and youths at the Charter School. In reviewing and revising such policies, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Special attention shall be given to ensuring the identification, enrollment, and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school. GPS's review of its homeless education program policies shall use resources developed by the CDE and posted on the CDE's internet website and resources developed by homeless education technical assistance centers established using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

School Website Posting

GPS shall ensure that the following information is posted, and updated as necessary, on its internet website:

- The name and contact information of the Charter School Liaison(s) for homeless children and youths.
- The contact information of any employee or contractor that assists the Charter School Liaison in completing the Liaison's duties.
- Specific information regarding the educational rights and resources available to persons experiencing homelessness.

Complaints of Noncompliance

A complaint of noncompliance with any of the requirements outlined above may be filed through the Charter School's Uniform Complaint Procedures. A copy of the Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures is available upon request at the main office.

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

Board Policy #:9; Adopted/Ratified: March 12, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The Board of Directors of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Board of Directors has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures.

In compliance with Education Code section 215, this policy has been developed in consultation with GPS and community stakeholders, GPS school-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and professionals, the county mental health plan, law enforcement, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating GPS’s strategies for suicide prevention and intervention. GPS must work in conjunction with local government agencies, community-based organizations, and other community supports to identify additional resources.

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, GPS shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for GPS. The suicide prevention point of contact for GPS and the Principal shall ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Suicide Prevention Crisis Team

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, GPS created an in-house Suicide Prevention Crisis Team (“SPCT”) consisting of administrators, mental health professionals, relevant staff, and parents.

GPS designates the following administrators to act as the primary and secondary suicide prevention liaisons to lead the SPCT:

1. Student Support Services Coordinator
2. Principal

The functions of the SPCT are to:

- Review mental health related school policies and procedures;
- Provide annual updates on school and district data and trends;
- Review and revise school prevention policies;
- Review and select general and specialized mental health and suicide prevention training;
- Review and oversee staff, parent/guardian, and student trainings;
- Ensuring the suicide prevention policy, protocols, and resources are posted on the district and school websites;
- Collaborate with community mental health organizations,
- Identify resources and agencies that provide evidence-based or evidence-informed treatment,
- Help inform and build skills among law enforcement and other relevant partners, and
- Collaborate to build community response.

Staff Development

GPS, along with its partners, has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Training shall be provided for all school staff members. It may also be provided, when appropriate, for other adults on campus (such as substitutes and intermittent staff, volunteers, interns, tutors, coaches, and afterschool staff). Training shall include the following:

1. All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists, other public entity professionals, such as psychologists or social workers) who have received advanced training specific to suicide. Charter School has collaborated with [Insert Names of One Or More County and/or Community Mental Health Agencies] to review the training materials and content to ensure it is evidence-based, evidence-informed, and aligned with best practices.
2. Staff training may be adjusted year-to-year based on previous professional development activities and emerging best practices.
3. Charter School shall ensure that training is available for new hires during the school year.
4. At least annually, all staff shall receive training on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention.
5. At a minimum, all staff shall participate in training on the core components of suicide prevention (identification of suicide risk factors and warning signs, prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention) at the beginning of their employment or annually. Core components of the general suicide prevention training shall include:
 - a. Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.
 - b. How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide.
 - c. How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and an immediate referral for a suicide risk assessment.
 - d. Emphasis on immediately referring (same day) any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by staff member.
 - e. Emphasis on reducing stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.
 - f. Reviewing the data annually to look for any patterns or trends of the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, or death. Data from the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS) should also be analyzed to identify school climate deficits and drive program development. See the Cal-SCHLS Web site at <http://cal-schls.wested.org/>.
 - g. Information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Youth affected by suicide.
 - ii. Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts.
 - iii. Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders.
 - iv. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.
 - v. Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care.

- vi. Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences.
6. In addition to initial orientations to the core components of suicide prevention, ongoing annual staff professional development for all staff may include the following components:
- a. The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health.
 - b. Common misconceptions about suicide.
 - c. Charter School and community suicide prevention resources.
 - d. Appropriate messaging about suicide (correct terminology, safe messaging guidelines).
 - e. The factors associated with suicide (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors).
 - f. How to identify youth who may be at risk of suicide.
 - g. Appropriate ways to interact with a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or is suicidal. Specifically, how to talk with a student about their thoughts of suicide and (based on GPS guidelines) how to respond to such thinking; how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately respond and provide support based on GPS guidelines.
 - h. Charter School-approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including multi-tiered systems of support and referrals). Such procedures should emphasize that the suicidal student should be constantly supervised until a suicide risk assessment is completed.
 - i. Charter School-approved procedures for responding to the aftermath of suicidal behavior (suicidal behavior postvention).
 - j. Responding after a suicide occurs (suicide postvention).
 - k. Resources regarding youth suicide prevention.
 - l. Emphasis on stigma reduction and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.
 - m. Emphasis that any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide is to be immediately referred (same day) for assessment while being constantly monitored by a staff member.

Specialized Professional Development for School-based Mental Health Staff (Screening and/or Assessment)

Additional professional development in suicide risk assessment (SRA) and crisis intervention is provided to designated student mental health professionals, including but not limited to school counselors, psychologists, social workers, administrators, and nurses employed by Charter School. Training for these staff is specific to conducting SRAs, intervening during a crisis, de-escalating situations, interventions specific to preventing suicide, making referrals, safety planning, and re-entry.

Specialized Professional Training for targeted School-based mental health staff includes the following components:

- Best practices and skill building on how to conduct an effective suicide risk screening/SRA using an evidence-based, Charter-approved tool; Patient Health Questionnaire 9 (PHQ-9) Depression Scale; BSS Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation ; National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)'s Ask Suicide-Screening Questions (ASQ) Toolkit; and the Adolescent Suicide Assessment Protocol – 20.
- Best practices on approaching and talking with a student about their thoughts of suicide and how to respond to such thinking, based on district guidelines and protocols.

- Best practices on how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately respond and provide support based on district guidelines and protocols.
- Best practices on follow up with parents/caregivers.
- Best practices on re-entry.

Virtual Screenings for Suicide Risk

Virtual suicide prevention efforts include checking in with all students, promoting access to school and community-based resources that support mental wellbeing and those that address mental illness and give specific guidance on suicide prevention.

Charter School has established a protocol for assigning school staff to connect with students during distance learning and school closures. In the event of a school closure, Charter School has determined a process and protocols to establish daily or regular contact with all students. Staff understand that any concern about a student’s emotional wellbeing and/or safety must be communicated to the appropriate school staff, according to Charter School protocols.

Charter School has determined a process and protocols for school-based mental health professionals to establish regular contact with high-risk students, students who are on their caseloads, and those who are identified by staff as demonstrating need. When connecting with students, staff are directed to begin each conversation by identifying the location of the student and the availability of parents or caregivers. This practice allows for the staff member to ensure the safety of the student, particularly if they have expressed suicidal thoughts.

Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services

Employees of GPS must act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. While it is expected that school professionals are able to identify suicide risk factors and warning signs, and to prevent the immediate risk of a suicidal behavior, treatment of suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting. In addition, treatment of the mental health challenges often associated with suicidal thinking typically requires mental health resources beyond what schools are able to provide.

Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education

1. Parents/guardians/caregivers may be included in suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, the Charter School shall share this Policy with parents/guardians/caregivers by notifying them where a complete copy of the policy is available.

This Suicide Prevention Policy shall be easily accessible and prominently displayed on the GPS Web page and included in the student/parent handbook.

2. Parents/guardians/caregivers should be invited to provide input on the development and implementation of this policy.
3. Charter School shall establish and widely disseminate a referral process to all parents/guardians/caregivers/families, so they are aware of how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about protocols and school, community-based, and crisis resources.
4. Community-based organizations that provide evidence-based suicide-specific treatments shall be highlighted on the Charter School’s website with treatment referral options marked accordingly.

5. Staff autoreplies during vacations or absences shall include links to resources and phone/text numbers so parents and students have information readily available.
6. All parents/guardians/caregivers may have access to suicide prevention training that addresses the following:
 - a. Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors.
 - b. How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide.
How to respond appropriately to the student who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and referral for an immediate suicide risk assessment.
 - c. Charter School's referral processes and how they or their children can reach out for help, etc.
7. Parents/guardians/caregivers are reminded that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") generally protects the confidentiality of student records, which may sometimes include counseling or crisis intervention records. However, FERPA's health or safety emergency provision permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, to appropriate parties, in order to address a health or safety emergency when the disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

Student Participation and Education

Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, GPS along with its partners has carefully reviewed and will continue to review all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe messaging about suicide. Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with GPS and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

GPS's instructional and student support program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and resilience. The instruction shall not use the stress model to explain suicide.

GPS's instructional curriculum may include information about suicide prevention, as appropriate or needed. If suicide prevention is included in the Charter School's instructional curriculum, it shall consider the grade level and age of the students and be delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. Under the supervision of an appropriately trained individual acting within the scope of her/his credential or license, students shall:

1. Receive developmentally appropriate, student-centered education about the warning signs of mental health challenges and emotional distress. The content of the education may include:
 - a. Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma.
 - b. How to recognize behaviors (warning signs) and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others.
 - c. Help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help.

- d. Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.
2. Receive developmentally appropriate guidance regarding GPS's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures.

Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula (e.g., health classes, orientation classes, science, and physical education).

GPS will support the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that raise awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention.

Charter School maintains a list of current student trainings and is available upon request. Charter School has shared school-based supports and self-reporting procedures, so students are able to seek help if they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or if they recognize signs with peers. Although confidentiality and privacy are important, students should understand safety is a priority and if there is a risk of suicide, school staff are required to report. Charter-based mental health professionals are legally and ethically required to report suicide risk. **When reporting suicidal ideation or an attempt, school staff must maintain confidentiality and only share information limited to the risk or attempt.**

Charter School shall establish and widely disseminate a referral process to all students, so they know how to access support through school, community-based, and crisis services. Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they have knowledge or concerns of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt.

Intervention and Emergency Procedures

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary designated suicide prevention liaison. If this primary suicide prevention liaison is unavailable, the staff shall promptly notify the secondary suicide prevention liaison.

The suicide prevention liaison shall immediately notify the Principal or designee, who shall then notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible if appropriate and in the best interest of the student. Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.

The suicide prevention liaison shall also refer the student to mental health resources at GPS or in the community.

When a student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911. The call shall NOT be made in the presence of the student and the student shall not be left unsupervised. Staff shall NOT physically restrain or block an exit.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported on campus or at a school-related activity, the suicide prevention liaison shall, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one or more of the following, as appropriate:
 - a. Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred.

- b. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened.
 - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.
 - d. Remaining calm, keeping in mind the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed.
 - e. Moving all other students out of the immediate area.
 - f. Not sending the student away or leaving him/her alone, even to go to the restroom.
 - g. Providing comfort to the student, listening and allowing the student to talk and being comfortable with moments of silence.
 - h. Promising privacy and help, but not promising confidentiality.
2. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.
 3. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed and coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. **Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.**
 4. After a referral is made, GPS shall verify with the parent/guardian that the follow up treatment has been accessed. Parents/guardians will be required to provide documentation of care for the student. If parents/guardians refuse or neglect to access treatment for a student who has been identified to be at risk for suicide or in emotional distress, the suicide prevention liaisons shall meet with the parent to identify barriers to treatment (e.g., cultural stigma, financial issues) and work to rectify the situation and build understanding of care. If follow up care is still not provided, GPS may contact Child Protective Services.
 5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at GPS.
 6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted on the GPS campus, the suicide prevention liaison shall follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in GPS's safety plan. After consultation with the Principal or designee and the student's parent/guardian about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Principal or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. GPS staff may receive assistance from GPS counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted off the GPS campus and unrelated to school activities, the Principal or designee shall take the following steps to support the student:

1. Contact the parent/guardian and offer support to the family.
2. Discuss with the family how they would like GPS to respond to the attempt while minimizing widespread rumors among teachers, staff, and students.

3. Obtain permission from the parent/guardian to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis are correct.
4. The suicide prevention liaisons shall handle any media requests.
5. Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students.
6. Offer to the student and parent/guardian steps for re-integration to school. Re-integration may include obtaining a written release from the parent/guardian to speak with any health care providers; conferring with the student and parent/guardian about any specific requests on how to handle the situation; informing the student's teachers about possible days of absences; allowing accommodations for make-up work (being understanding that missed assignments may add stress to the student); appropriate staff maintaining ongoing contact with the student to monitor the student's actions and mood; and working with the parent/guardian to involve the student in an aftercare plan; providing parent's/guardians/caregivers/families local emergency numbers for after school and weekend emergency contacts.

Supporting Students during or after a Mental Health Crisis

Students shall be encouraged through the education program and in GPS activities to notify a teacher, the Principal, another GPS administrator, psychologist, GPS counselor, suicide prevention liaisons, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions. GPS staff should treat each report seriously, calmly, and with active listening and support. Staff should be non-judgmental to students and discuss with the student and the student's parent/guardian about additional resources to support the student.

Responding After a Suicide Death (Postvention)

A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have devastating consequences on the school community, including students and staff. GPS shall follow the below action plan for responding to a suicide death, which incorporates both immediate and long-term steps and objectives:

The suicide prevention liaison shall:

1. Coordinate with the Principal to conduct an initial meeting of the Suicide Prevention Crisis Team to:
 - a. Confirm death and cause.
 - b. Identify a staff member to contact the deceased's family (within 24 hours).
 - c. Enact the Suicide Postvention Response.
 - d. Notify all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
2. Coordinate an all-staff meeting, to include:
 - a. Notification (if not already conducted) to staff about suicide death.
 - b. Emotional support and resources available to staff.
 - c. Notification to students about suicide death and the availability of support services (if this is the protocol that is decided by administration).
 - d. Share information that is relevant and that which you have permission to disclose.

3. Prepare staff to respond to needs of students regarding the following:
 - a. Review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment.
 - b. Talking points for staff to notify students.
 - c. Resources available to students (on and off campus).
4. Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior, and refer them to a school-based mental health professional.
5. Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior.
6. Communicate with the larger school community about the suicide death. Staff shall not share explicit, graphic, or dramatic content, including the manner of death.
7. Consider funeral arrangements for family and school community.
8. Respond to memorial requests in respectful and non-harmful manner; responses should be handled in a thoughtful way and their impact on other students should be considered.
9. Identify media spokesperson if needed.
10. Ensure that all communications, documents, materials related to messaging about suicide avoid discussing details about method of suicide, avoid oversimplifying (i.e. identifying singular cause of suicide), avoid sensational language, and only includes clear, respectful, people-first language that encourages an environment free of stigma. As part of safe messaging for suicide, we use specific terminology when referring to actions related to suicide or suicidal behavior:

Use	Do Not Use
<p>“Died by suicide” or “Took their own life”</p>	<p>“Committed suicide” Note: Use of the word “commit” can imply crime/sin</p>
<p>“Attempted suicide”</p>	<p>“Successful” or “unsuccessful” Note: There is no success, or lack of success, when dealing with suicide</p>

11. Include long-term suicide postvention responses:
 - a. Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed.
 - b. Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of the deceased.
 - c. Consider long-term memorials and how they may impact students who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk of suicide.

Student Identification Cards

Charter School will include the telephone numbers on all student identification cards:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/Suicide Crisis Lifeline:
 - Call or Text “988”
 - Call 1-800-273-8255
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: Call 1-800-799-7233
- Crisis Text Line: Text “HOME” to 741741
- Teen Line: Text “TEEN” to 839863
- Trevor Project: Text “START” to 678678
- Trans Lifeline: 1-877-565-8860

TITLE IX POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

Board Policy #: 10; Adopted/Ratified: July 25, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

This Title IX Policy Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Sex (“Policy”) contains the policies and grievance procedures of Growth Public Schools (“GPS”) to prevent and address sex discrimination, including but not limited to sexual harassment, sex-based hostile environment harassment, discrimination based on pregnancy or related conditions, sex-based discrimination in access to athletics or educational resources, and retaliation against a person who has reported sex discrimination.

GPS does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits any acts of sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by California law, Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*) and the Title IX regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106), including in admission and employment.⁶ GPS will take actions to promptly and effectively end any sex discrimination in its education program or activity, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects.

This Policy applies to conduct occurring in GPS’s education programs or activities on or after August 1, 2024 including but not limited to incidents occurring on the school campus, during school-sponsored events and activities regardless of the location, and through school-owned technology, whether perpetrated by a student, parent/guardian, employee, volunteer, independent contractor or other person with whom GPS does business.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (hereinafter collectively referred to as “Title IX”) may be referred to the GPS Title IX Coordinator, the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

Definitions

Prohibited Sex Discrimination

Title IX and California law prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, including sex-based harassment and differences in the treatment of similarly situated individuals on the basis of sex with regard to any aspect of services, benefits, or opportunities provided by GPS. Discrimination on the basis of sex includes discrimination on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Prohibited Sex-Based Harassment

Under Title IX, “sex-based harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- Quid pro quo harassment occurs when an employee, agent, or other person authorized by GPS to provide an aid, benefit, or service under GPS’s education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditions the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
- Hostile environment harassment is unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from GPS’s education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:

⁶ Growth Public Schools complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and local ordinances in its investigation of and response to reports and complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

- The degree to which the conduct affected the complainant’s ability to access GPS’s education program or activity;
 - The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
 - The parties’ ages, roles within GPS’s education program or activity, previous interactions, and other factors about each party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;
 - The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
 - Other sex-based harassment in GPS’s education program or activity.
- Sexual assault, meaning an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 - Dating violence, meaning violence committed by a person:
 - Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
 - Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - The length of the relationship;
 - The type of relationship; and
 - The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
 - Domestic violence, meaning felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:
 - Is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under applicable family or domestic violence laws, or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;
 - Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
 - Shares a child in common with the victim; or
 - Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under applicable family or domestic violence laws.
 - Stalking, meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:
 - Fear for the person’s safety or the safety of others; or
 - Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Under California Education Code section 212.5, sexual harassment consists of conduct on the basis of sex, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct on the basis of sex, regardless of whether or not the conduct is motivated by sexual desire, when: (a) submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or a condition of an individual’s employment, education, academic status, or progress; (b) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment, educational or academic decisions affecting the individual; (c) the conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual’s work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment; and/or (d) submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through GPS.

Examples of conduct that may fall within the Title IX definition of sex-based harassment, the Education Code definition of sexual harassment, or both:

- Physical assaults of a sexual or sex-based nature, such as:
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
 - Intentional physical conduct that is sex-based or sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another’s body, poking another’s body, violence, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work or school because of sex.
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, derogatory sex-based comments, or other sex-based conduct, such as:
 - Sexually oriented or sex-based gestures, notices, epithets, slurs, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person’s sexuality or sexual experience.
 - Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an individual for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward or deferential treatment for rejecting sexual conduct.
 - Subjecting or threats of subjecting a student or employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making the student’s or employee’s performance more difficult because of the student’s or the employee’s sex.
 - Retaliation against an individual who has articulated a good faith concern about sex-based harassment.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the work or educational environment, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, cartoons, posters, calendars, graffiti, objections, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic or bringing or possessing any such material to read, display or view in the work or educational environment.
 - Reading publicly or otherwise publicizing in the work or educational environment materials that are in any way sexually revealing, sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic.
 - Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate an individual by sex in an area of the work or educational environment (other than restrooms or similar rooms).

The illustrations above are not to be construed as an all-inclusive list of sex-based harassment acts prohibited under this Policy.

Complainant means a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex-based discrimination, or a person other than a student or employee who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination and who was participating or attempting to participate in GPS’s education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination. Complaints may also be made by: (1) a parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of a complainant; or (2) GPS’s Title IX Coordinator. For complaints of sex discrimination other than sex-based harassment, complaints can also be made by any student, employee, or other person who was participating or attempting to participate in GPS’s education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

Complaint means an oral or written request to GPS that objectively can be understood as a request for GPS to investigate and make a determination about alleged sex discrimination.

Confidential Employee means an employee of GPS whose communications are privileged or confidential under Federal or State law (e.g., a licensed therapist or psychologist, etc.) or an employee whom GPS has

designated as confidential under Title IX for the purpose of providing services to persons related to sex discrimination.

Party means a complainant or respondent.

Respondent means a person who is alleged to have violated GPS's prohibition on sex discrimination.

Supportive Measures are individualized measures offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, without unreasonably burdening a complainant or respondent, not for punitive or disciplinary reasons, and without fee or charge to a party to (1) restore or preserve that party's access to GPS's education program or activity, including measures that are designed to protect the safety of the parties or GPS's educational environment; or (2) provide support during GPS's grievance procedures or during an informal resolution process.

Title IX Coordinator

The Board of Directors of GPS ("Board") has designated the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator ("Coordinator"):

Devonna Abbott
Principal
9320 Tech Center Drive Sacramento, CA 95826
916-394-5007
dabbott@growthps.org

In the event the above-named individual becomes unavailable or unable to serve as the Coordinator, the Board has designated the following employee to serve as a temporary or interim Coordinator until a new Coordinator is designated:

Jeanette Rowe
Dean of Culture
9320 Tech Center Drive Sacramento, CA 95826
916-394-5007
jrowe@growthps.org

The Coordinator is responsible for coordinating GPS's efforts to comply with the requirements of Title IX, receiving reports and complaints of sex discrimination and inquiries about the application of Title IX, addressing reports and complaints of sex discrimination and taking other actions as required by this Policy, monitoring for barriers to reporting conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, and taking steps reasonably calculated to address such barriers.

The Coordinator may serve as an investigator and/or decisionmaker for complaints, except in cases where doing so would constitute a conflict of interest. The Coordinator may delegate one or more of their duties to one or more designees who have received the required Title IX training and do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. However, the Coordinator must at all times retain ultimate oversight over those responsibilities and ensure GPS's consistent compliance with Title IX.

Reporting Sex Discrimination

All employees who are not a confidential employee must promptly notify the Coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. This requirement does not apply to an employee when the employee is the person who was subjected to the conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Any student who feels they are a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the Principal, Coordinator, a staff person or a family member so that the student can get assistance in resolving the issue in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.

Complaints regarding such misconduct may also be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. Civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders may also be available to complainants.

While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report to the Coordinator. GPS will promptly and effectively investigate and respond to all oral and written complaints and reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on an anonymous report.

Privacy

GPS acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. All reports and complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible. This includes but is not limited to keeping the identity of the reporter and other personally identifiable information confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to comply with the law, carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by the Coordinator or designee on a case-by-case basis.

Retaliation

GPS prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who files a report or complaint, testifies, assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation or proceeding related to misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation or lack of participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the individual. Individuals alleging retaliation in violation of this Policy may file a complaint in accordance with the grievance procedures set forth in this Policy.

Nothing in this Policy precludes GPS from requiring an employee or other person authorized by GPS to provide aid, benefit, or service under GPS's education program or activity to participate as a witness in, or otherwise assist with, an investigation or proceeding under this Policy.

Confidential Employees

Contact information for the confidential employees at GPS, if any, can be found on the GPS website or obtained from the Coordinator.

A confidential employee's status as confidential, for Title IX purposes, is only with respect to information received while the employee is functioning within the scope of their duties to which privilege or confidentiality applies or with respect to information received about sex discrimination in connection with providing services to persons related to sex discrimination.

A confidential employee must explain the following to any person who informs them of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX:

- The employee's status as confidential for purposes of Title IX, including the circumstances in which the employee is not required to notify the Coordinator about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination;
- How to contact the Coordinator and how to make a complaint of sex discrimination; and
- That the Coordinator may be able to offer and coordinate supportive measures, as well as initiate an informal resolution process or an investigation under the grievance procedures.

Coordinator's Response to Reports of Sex Discrimination

When notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, the Coordinator or designee must:

- Treat complainants and respondents equitably;
- Promptly offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the complainant;
- If grievance procedures are initiated or an informal resolution process is offered; offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the respondent; and
- Notify the complainant or, if the complainant is unknown, the reporting individual, of the grievance procedures and informal resolution process, if available and appropriate. If a complaint is made, the Coordinator will notify the respondent of the same.

In response to a complaint, the Coordinator will initiate the grievance procedures, or the informal resolution process if available, appropriate, and requested by all parties. In the absence of a complaint or the withdrawal of any or all of the allegations in a complaint, and in the absence or termination of an informal resolution process, the Coordinator must determine whether to initiate a complaint by considering, at a minimum:

- Complainant's request not to proceed with a complaint and the complainant's reasonable safety concerns;
- Risk that additional acts of sex-based discrimination would occur if a complaint is not initiated;
- Severity of the alleged conduct, including whether the discrimination, if established, would require removal or discipline of a respondent to end the discrimination and prevent its recurrence;
- The age and relationship of the parties, including whether the respondent is an employee;
- The scope of the alleged conduct including but not limited to whether there is a pattern, ongoing conduct, or impact to multiple individuals;
- The availability of evidence and the complainant's willingness to participate in the grievance procedures; and
- Whether GPS could end the alleged sex discrimination and prevent its recurrence without initiating its grievance procedures.

The Coordinator may initiate a complaint if the conduct as alleged presents an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the complainant or other person, or prevents GPS from ensuring equal access on the basis of sex to its education program or activity. The Coordinator or designee must notify the complainant before initiating a complaint and appropriately address reasonable safety concerns, including by providing supportive measures.

The Coordinator will take other appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within GPS's education program or activity.

Supportive Measures

Once notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX, the Coordinator or designee will promptly contact the complainant to offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the complainant. If the grievance procedures are initiated or informal resolution is offered, the Coordinator or designee will offer and coordinate supportive measures, as appropriate, for the respondent.

Supportive measures may include but are not limited to: counseling; extensions of deadlines and other course-related adjustments; campus escort services; increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus; restrictions on contact applied to one or more parties; leaves of absence; changes in class, work, housing, or extracurricular or any other activity, regardless of whether there is or is not a comparable alternative; and training and education programs related to sex-based harassment.

Supportive measures must not unreasonably burden either party or be imposed for punitive or disciplinary reasons. Supportive measures will be designed to protect the safety of the parties or GPS's educational environment, or to provide support during the grievance procedures or the informal resolution process.

Parties may contact the Coordinator to discuss modification of any supportive measures. Parties also have the opportunity to seek modification or termination of a supportive measure applicable to them if circumstances change materially.

If the party is not satisfied with the Coordinator's decision on the request to modify supportive measures, the party may contact Audria Johnson, Executive Director via email at ajohnson@growthps.org, who is an appropriate and impartial employee or who may designate such an employee, to seek modification or reversal of GPS's decision to provide, deny, modify, or terminate supportive measures applicable to them. The impartial employee is someone other than the Coordinator who made the challenged decision and has the authority to modify or reverse the decision.

If a party is a student with a disability, the Coordinator must consult with one or more members of the student's IEP Team and 504 Team, if any, in the implementation of supportive measures for that student.

Informal Resolution

At any time prior to determining whether sex discrimination occurred under GPS's Title IX grievance procedures, GPS may offer an informal resolution process to the parties. GPS does not offer or facilitate informal resolution to resolve a complaint that includes allegations that an employee engaged in sex-based harassment of an elementary school or secondary school student, or when such a process would conflict with Federal, State, or local law.

Before initiation of the informal resolution process, the parties will be provided with notice that explains:

- o The allegations;
- o The requirements of the informal resolution process;
- o The right to withdraw and initiate or resume the grievance procedures;
- o That the parties' agreement to a resolution at the conclusion of the informal resolution process precludes the parties' use of the grievance procedures arising from the same allegations;
- o The potential terms that may be requested or offered in an informal resolution agreement (e.g., restrictions on contact and participation in activities or events) including notice that an informal resolution agreement is binding only on the parties; and
- o What information is retained and whether and how it may be disclosed by GPS for use in grievance procedures if the grievance procedures are initiated or resumed.

Parties will not be required or pressured to agree to participate in the informal resolution process. GPS will obtain the parties' voluntary consent to participate in the informal resolution process. Parties may end the informal resolution process and proceed with the grievance procedures at any time.

The facilitator of the informal resolution process will not be the same person as the investigator or the decisionmaker in the grievance procedures. The facilitator cannot have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. The Coordinator will take appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure sex discrimination does not continue or recur.

Grievance Procedures

Scope and General Requirements

GPS has adopted these grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in GPS's education program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Coordinator or designee will promptly initiate these grievance procedures, or the informal resolution process if available, appropriate, and requested by all parties.

GPS requires that any Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. A decisionmaker may be the same person as the Coordinator or investigator.

GPS will treat complainants and respondents equitably. GPS presumes that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged sex discrimination until a determination is made at the conclusion of its grievance procedures.

GPS may consolidate complaints of sex discrimination against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against another party, when the allegations of sex discrimination arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

GPS allows for the reasonable extension of timeframes on a case-by-case basis for good cause with notice to the parties that includes the reason for the delay. Requests for extensions must be submitted to the Coordinator in writing at least one (1) business day before the expiration of the timeframe. If a timeframe is extended, the Coordinator or designee will notify the parties of the new timeframe and the reason for the delay.

GPS will take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of the parties and witnesses during its grievance procedures. These steps will not restrict the ability of the parties to obtain and present evidence, including by speaking to witnesses; consult with their family members, confidential resources, or advisors; or otherwise prepare for or participate in the grievance procedures. The parties shall not engage in retaliation, including against witnesses.

GPS will objectively evaluate all evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible—including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.⁷ Credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

If a party is a student with a disability, the Coordinator or designee must consult with one or more members, as appropriate, of the student's IEP Team and 504 Team, if any, to determine how to comply with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") throughout the grievance procedures.

Dismissal

⁷ Inculpatory means tending to impute guilt or fault, and exculpatory means tending to absolve from guilt or fault.

In most cases, GPS will determine whether a complaint is dismissed within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the complaint.

GPS may dismiss a complaint if:

- GPS is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so;
- The respondent is not participating in GPS's education program or activity and is not employed by GPS;
- The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all of the allegations in the complaint, the Coordinator declines to initiate a complaint, and GPS determines that, without the complainant's withdrawn allegations, the conduct that remains alleged in the complaint, if any, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX even if proven; or
- GPS determines the conduct alleged in the complaint, even if proven, would not constitute sex discrimination under Title IX. Prior to dismissing the complaint on this ground, GPS will make reasonable efforts to clarify the allegations with the complainant.

Upon dismissal, the Coordinator or designee must promptly notify the complainant in writing of the basis for the dismissal and the complainant's right to appeal the dismissal on the following grounds within five (5) business days of the dismissal notice:

- Procedural irregularity that would change the outcome;
- New evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the determination whether sex-based harassment occurred or dismissal was made; and
- The Coordinator, investigator, or decisionmaker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that would change the outcome.

If the dismissal occurs after the respondent has been notified of the allegations, then the Coordinator or designee must also simultaneously notify the respondent in writing of the dismissal, the basis for the dismissal, and the respondent's right to appeal the dismissal on the above grounds within five (5) business days of the dismissal notice.

If the complaint is dismissed, the Coordinator or designee will offer supportive measures to the complainant, as appropriate. The Coordinator or designee will also offer supportive measures to the respondent, as appropriate, if the respondent has been notified of the allegations. The Coordinator will continue to take appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur. Dismissal does not preclude action under another applicable GPS policy.

Appeal of a Dismissal

If a dismissal is timely appealed in accordance with this Policy, the Coordinator or designee will promptly notify the parties in writing of the appeal, including notice of the allegations if such notice was not previously provided to the respondent, the contact information for the decisionmaker for the appeal, and the parties' right to submit a statement to the decisionmaker of the appeal in support of, or challenging, the outcome within five (5) business days of the appeal notice.

The decisionmaker for the appeal will be someone who has received the required Title IX training and did not take part in an investigation of the allegations or dismissal of the complaint. The appeal procedures will be implemented equally for the parties. Within fifteen (15) business days of the appeal notice to the parties, the decisionmaker will notify the parties in writing of the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

Notice of the Allegations

Upon initiation of the grievance procedures, the Coordinator or designee will provide notice of the allegations to the parties whose identities are known. The notice will include:

- GPS's grievance procedures and any informal resolution process;
- Sufficient information available at the time to allow the parties to respond to the allegations. Sufficient information includes the identities of the parties involved in the incident(s), the conduct alleged to constitute sex discrimination under Title IX, and the date(s) and location(s) of the alleged incident(s), to the extent that information is available to GPS;
- A statement that retaliation is prohibited; and
- A statement that the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence or an accurate description of this evidence; and if GPS provides a description of the evidence, the parties are entitled to an equal opportunity to access to the relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence upon the request of any party.

Emergency Removal

GPS may place a non-student employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance procedures in accordance with GPS's policies.

GPS may remove a respondent from GPS's education program or activity on an emergency basis, in accordance with GPS's policies, provided that GPS undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of any person arising from the allegations of sex discrimination justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

This provision must not be construed to modify any rights under the IDEA, Section 504, or the ADA.

Investigation

Investigations of complaints will be adequate, reliable, and impartial. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than twenty-five (25) business days. GPS has the burden to conduct an investigation that gathers sufficient evidence to determine whether sex discrimination occurred. The investigator will review all evidence gathered through the investigation and determine what evidence is relevant and what evidence is impermissible regardless of relevance in accordance with Title IX.

The following types of evidence, and questions seeking that evidence, are impermissible (i.e., will not be used, accessed or considered, except by GPS to determine whether one of the exceptions listed below applies, and will not be disclosed), regardless of whether they are relevant:

- Evidence that is protected under a privilege recognized by Federal or State law or evidence provided to a confidential employee, unless the person to whom the privilege or confidentiality is owed has voluntarily waived the privilege or confidentiality;
- A party's or witness's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional in connection with the provision of treatment to the party or witness, unless GPS obtains that party's or witness's voluntary, written consent for use in the grievance procedures; and
- Evidence that relates to the complainant's sexual interests or prior sexual conduct, unless evidence about the complainant's prior sexual conduct is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct or is evidence about specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual conduct with the respondent that is offered to prove consent to the alleged sex-based harassment. The fact of prior consensual sexual conduct between the complainant and respondent does not by itself demonstrate or imply the complainant's consent to the alleged sex-based harassment or preclude determination that sex-based harassment occurred.

The parties will have an equal opportunity to present fact witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence that is relevant and not otherwise impermissible and to access such evidence. The parties may submit a written response to the investigator within five (5) business days of being provided with access to the evidence or an accurate description of it. The parties' timely submitted written responses, if any, will be considered by the investigator and decisionmaker before a determination of responsibility is made.

GPS will take reasonable steps to prevent and address any unauthorized disclosure of information or evidence by the parties.

Determination of Responsibility

Before making a determination of responsibility, the decisionmaker may interview parties and witnesses to adequately assess a party's or witness's credibility to the extent credibility is in dispute and relevant to evaluating one or more allegations of sex discrimination.

Determinations will be based on an objective evaluation of all relevant and not otherwise impermissible evidence and credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness. The standard of evidence used to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard.

Within fifteen (15) business days of the expiration of the timeframe for the parties to submit a written response to the evidence or an accurate description of it, the decisionmaker will notify the parties in writing of the determination whether sex discrimination occurred including the rationale for such determination, and the procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

Appeal of the Determination of Responsibility

Should a party find GPS's determination unsatisfactory, the party may, within five (5) business days of notice of GPS's determination, submit a written appeal to the Chair of the GPS Board, who will serve as the decisionmaker for the appeal or designate a decisionmaker for the appeal. The decisionmaker for the appeal must not have taken part in the investigation of the allegations.

The decisionmaker for the appeal will: 1) notify the other party of the appeal in writing; 2) implement appeal procedures equally for the parties; 3) allow the parties to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome within five (5) business days of the appeal or notice of the appeal; and 4) within fifteen (15) business days of the appeal, issue a written decision to the parties describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from GPS or termination of employment. If there is a determination that sex discrimination occurred, the Coordinator or designee will coordinate the provision and implementation of any remedies and/or disciplinary sanctions ordered by GPS including notification to the complainant of any such disciplinary sanctions. The Coordinator will take appropriate prompt and effective steps to ensure that sex discrimination does not continue or recur within GPS's education program or activity.

No party, witness, or other person participating in GPS's grievance procedures will be disciplined for making a false statement or for engaging in consensual sexual conduct based solely on GPS's determination whether sex discrimination occurred.

Student Pregnancy and Related Conditions

GPS will not discriminate against any student or applicant based on their current, potential, or past pregnancy or related conditions. For more information about policies and procedures applicable to employees who are pregnant or have a related condition, please refer to the GPS employee handbook.

When a student, or a person who can legally act on behalf of the student, informs any employee of the student's pregnancy or related condition, unless the employee reasonably believes that the Coordinator has already been notified, the employee must promptly:

- Provide that person with the Coordinator's contact information; and
- Inform that person that the Coordinator can coordinate specific actions to prevent sex discrimination and ensure the student's equal access to GPS's education programs and activities.

If a student, or a person who has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, notifies the Coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related condition, the Coordinator or designee must promptly:

- Inform the student, and if applicable, the person who notified the Coordinator of the student's pregnancy or related conditions and has a legal right to act on behalf of the student, of GPS's obligations under:
 - 34 C.F.R. § 106.40(b)(1) through (5), which relates to the rights of students who are pregnant or have a related condition; and
 - 34 C.F.R. § 106.44(j), which includes rules on disclosures of personal information;
- Provide GPS's Title IX notice of nondiscrimination; and
- Consult with the student about potential reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures as necessary to prevent sex discrimination and ensure equal access, and if the student accepts an offered reasonable modification, implement the modification.

A student who is pregnant or has a related condition will be provided with a lactation space other than a bathroom, that is clean, shielded from view, free from intrusion from others, and may be used for expressing breast milk or breastfeeding as needed.

A student who is pregnant or has a related condition may voluntarily take a leave of absence for the time deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed healthcare provider, or if the student so chooses, the time allowed under any GPS leave policy for which the student qualifies. A pregnant or parenting student is entitled to eight weeks of parental leave, which the student may take before the birth of the student'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 student who gives or expects to give birth and the infant, and to allow the pregnant or parenting student to care for and bond with the infant.

Upon the student's return from leave, the student will be reinstated to the academic status, and, as practicable, to the extracurricular status that the student held when the leave began. The student will not be required to provide any kind of certification demonstrating their ability to physically participate in any class, program, or extracurricular activity unless:

- The certified level of physical ability or health is necessary for participation in the class, program, or extracurricular activity;
- Such certification is required of all students participating in the class, program, or extracurricular activity; and
- The information obtained is not used as a basis for sex discrimination.

Students who are pregnant or have a related condition will not be required to provide supporting documentation unless necessary and reasonable to determine reasonable modifications or additional actions related to lactation space, leaves of absence, or voluntary access to any available separate and comparable portion of the program.

Training

All supervisors of staff will receive sexual harassment training within six (6) months of their assumption of a supervisory position and will receive further training once every two (2) years thereafter. All employees, Coordinators and designees, investigators, decisionmakers, facilitators of the informal resolution process, and other persons who are responsible for implementing GPS's grievance procedures or have the authority to modify or terminate supportive measures will receive Title IX and sexual harassment training and/or instruction concerning sexual harassment as required by law.

Recordkeeping

GPS will maintain the following records for at least seven (7) years:

- For each complaint of sex discrimination, records documenting the informal resolution process or the grievance procedures, and the resulting outcome.
- For each notification the Coordinator receives of information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination, records documenting the actions GPS took to meet its obligations under 34 C.F.R. § 106.44.
- All materials used to provide required Title IX training. GPS will make these training materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.

The above records will be maintained in a secure location until destroyed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.



TITLE IX SEX DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur? _____

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e., specific statements and conduct; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I hereby authorize GPS to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Complainant

Date: _____

Print Name

To be completed by GPS:

Received by: _____

Date: _____

Follow up Meeting with Complainant held on: _____

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, DISCRIMINATION, AND BULLYING POLICY

Board Policy #: 11; Adopted/Ratified: July 25, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors, which interfere with students' ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, Growth Public Schools ("GPS") prohibits any acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying altogether.

As used in this policy, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are described as the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication or cyber-bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, based on the actual or perceived characteristics of mental or physical disability, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions, and parental status), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status, nationality (including national origin, country of origin, and citizenship), race or ethnicity (including ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, ethnic background, and traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locs, and twists), religion (including agnosticism and atheism), religious affiliation, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or based on any other characteristic protected under applicable state or federal law or local ordinance. Hereafter, such actions are referred to as "misconduct prohibited by this Policy."

To the extent possible, GPS will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond, address and report on such behaviors in a timely manner. GPS school staff who witness acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.

This policy applies to incidents occurring on the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities regardless of the location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means, whether perpetrated by a student, employee, parent/guardian, volunteer, independent contractor or other person with whom GPS does business, and all acts of GPS's Board of Directors ("Board") in enacting policies and procedures that govern GPS.⁸

GPS complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and local ordinances in its investigation of and response to reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Definitions

Harassment means conduct based upon one or more of the protected characteristics listed above that is severe or pervasive, which unreasonably disrupts an individual's educational or work environment or that creates a hostile educational or work environment. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes, comments or slurs.
- Physical conduct including assault, unwanted touching, intentionally blocking normal movement or interfering with work or school based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.
- Retaliation for reporting or threatening to report harassment.
- Deferential or preferential treatment based on any of the protected characteristics listed above.

⁸ This policy becomes effective on August 1, 2024. Conduct occurring before August 1, 2024 will be addressed in accordance with the former version of this policy, which was entitled "Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination and Bullying Policy."

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act. Bullying includes one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that may constitute hate violence, or creates an intimidating and/or hostile educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable student ⁹ or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with the student's academic performance.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by GPS.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, video or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

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

- A message, text, sound, video, or image.
- A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in the definition of "bullying," above.
 - Creating a credible impersonation of another actual student for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of "bullying," above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a student for the purpose of bullying the student and such that another student would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the student was or is the student who was impersonated.
 - Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in the definition of "bullying," above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious student or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual student other than the student who created the false profile.
- An act of "Cyber sexual bullying" including, but not limited to:
 - The dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a student to another student or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in definition of "bullying," above. A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.

⁹ "Reasonable student" is defined as a student, including, but not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill and judgment in conduct for a person of the student's age, or for a person of the student's age with the student's exceptional needs.

- “Cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
- Notwithstanding the definitions of “bullying” and “electronic act” above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

GPS has adopted the following procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying Prevention Procedures

GPS advises students:

- To never share passwords, personal data, or private photos online.
- To think about what they are doing carefully before posting and by emphasizing that comments cannot be retracted once they are posted.
- That personal information revealed on social media can be shared with anyone including parents, teachers, administrators, and potential employers. Students should never reveal information that would make them uncomfortable if the world had access to it.
- To consider how it would feel receiving such comments before making comments about others online.

GPS informs its employees, students, and parents/guardians of GPS’s policies regarding the use of technology in and out of the classroom. GPS encourages parents/guardians to discuss these policies with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with such policies.

Education

GPS employees cannot always be present when bullying incidents occur, so educating students about bullying is a key prevention technique to limit bullying from happening. GPS advises students that hateful and/or demeaning behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable in our society and at GPS and encourages students to practice compassion and respect each other.

GPS educates students to accept all student peers regardless of protected characteristics (including but not limited to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identification, physical or cognitive disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration status) and about the negative impact of bullying other students based on protected characteristics.

GPS’s bullying prevention education also discusses the differences between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and includes sample situations to help students learn and practice appropriate behavior and to develop techniques and strategies to respond in a non-aggressive way to bullying-type behaviors. Students will also develop confidence and learn how to advocate for themselves and others, and when to go to an adult for help.

GPS informs GPS employees, students, and parents/guardians of this Policy and encourages parents/guardians to discuss this Policy with their children to ensure their children understand and comply with this Policy.

Professional Development

GPS annually makes available the online training module developed by the California Department of Education pursuant Education Code section 32283.5(a) to its certificated employees and all other GPS employees who have regular interaction with students.

GPS informs certificated employees about the common signs that a student is a target of bullying including:

- Physical cuts or injuries
- Lost or broken personal items
- Fear of going to school/practice/games
- Loss of interest in school, activities, or friends
- Trouble sleeping or eating
- Anxious/sick/nervous behavior or distracted appearance
- Self-destructiveness or displays of odd behavior
- Decreased self-esteem

GPS also informs certificated employees about the groups of students determined by GPS and available research to be at elevated risk for bullying and provides its certificated employees with information on existing school and community resources related to the support of these groups. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth (“LGBTQ”) and those youth perceived as LGBTQ; and
- Students with physical or learning disabilities.

GPS encourages its employees to demonstrate effective problem-solving, anger management, and self-confidence skills for GPS’s students.

Complaint Procedures

Scope of the Complaint Procedures

GPS will comply with its Uniform Complaint Procedures (“UCP”) policy when investigating and responding to complaints alleging unlawful harassment, discrimination, intimidation or bullying against a protected group or on the basis of a person’s association with a person or group with one or more of the protected characteristics set forth in the UCP that:

- Are written and signed;
- Filed by an individual who alleges that they have personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying, or by one who believes any specific class of individuals has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on a protected characteristic, or by a duly authorized representative who alleges that an individual student has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying; and
- Submitted to the GPS UCP Compliance Officer not later than six (6) months from the date the alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.

GPS will comply with its Title IX Policy when investigating and responding to complaints alleging sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, in its education program or activity, as applicable.

The following procedures shall be utilized for complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy that do not fall within the scope of GPS’s Title IX Policy or comply with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements of the UCP. A copy of GPS’s Title IX Policy and UCP is available on the school website.

Submitting a Report or Complaint

All staff are expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, to intervene when safe to do so, call for assistance, and

report such incidents. The Board requires staff to follow the procedures in this Policy for reporting alleged acts of misconduct prohibited by this Policy.

Reports and complaints of misconduct prohibited by this Policy shall be submitted to the Principal (or the Executive Director if the complaint is against the Principal) as soon as possible after the incidents giving rise to the report or complaint.

Complaints regarding such misconduct may also be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. Civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders may also be available to complainants.

While submission of a written report is not required, and GPS will investigate and respond to all oral and written reports of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, the reporting party is encouraged to submit a written report. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on an anonymous report.

Students are expected to report all incidents of misconduct prohibited by this Policy and other verbal or physical abuses. Any student who feels they are a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, the Principal, a staff person or a family member so that the student can get assistance in resolving the issue in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.

GPS acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. All reports and complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible. This includes keeping the identity of the reporter and/or complainant confidential, as appropriate, except to the extent necessary to comply with applicable law, carry out the investigation and/or to resolve the issue, as determined by GPS on a case-by-case basis.

GPS prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who files a report or complaint, testifies, assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation or proceeding related to misconduct prohibited by this Policy. Such participation or lack of participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the individual. Individuals alleging retaliation in violation of this Policy may file a grievance using the procedures set forth in this Policy.

Investigation and Response

Upon receipt of a report or complaint of misconduct prohibited by this Policy, the Principal or designee will promptly initiate an investigation. In most cases, a thorough investigation will take no more than twenty-five (25) school days.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Principal or designee will, to the extent possible with respect to confidentiality laws, provide the complainant with information about the investigation and resolution of the incident/situation. However, the Principal or designee will not reveal confidential information related to other students or employees.

If the complaint is against the Principal, the Executive Director or designee will conduct a fact-finding investigation and provide the complainant with information about the investigation and resolution of the incident/situation.

Consequences

Students or employees who engage in misconduct prohibited by this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from GPS or termination of employment.

Right of Appeal

Should a complainant find GPS's resolution unsatisfactory, for complaints within the scope of this Policy, the complainant may, within five (5) business days of notice of GPS's decision or resolution, submit a written appeal to the Chair of the GPS Board, who will serve as the decisionmaker for the appeal or designate a decisionmaker for the appeal. The decisionmaker for the appeal will notify the complainant of the final decision.



**HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, DISCRIMINATION & BULLYING
COMPLAINT FORM**

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur? _____

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e., specific statements and conduct; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I hereby authorize GPS to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Complainant

Date: _____

Print Name

To be completed by GPS:

Received by: _____

Date: _____

Follow up Meeting with Complainant held on: _____

UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Board Policy #:12; Adopted/Ratified: July 25, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “Charter School”) complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. The Charter School is the local agency primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing educational programs. Pursuant to this policy, persons responsible for compliance and/or conducting investigations shall be knowledgeable about the laws and programs which they are assigned to investigate.

Scope

This complaint procedure is adopted to provide a uniform system of complaint processing (“UCP”) for the following types of complaints:

- (1) Complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying against any protected group on the basis of the actual or perceived characteristics of age, ancestry, color, mental disability, physical disability, ethnic group identification, immigration status, citizenship, gender expression, gender identity, gender, genetic information, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, medical condition, marital status, sex, or 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 Charter School program or activity. Unlawful discrimination includes, but is not limited to, noncompliance with Education Code sections 243(a) or 244(a).
- (2) Complaints alleging a violation of state or federal law or regulation governing the following programs:
 - Accommodations for Pregnant, Parenting or Lactating Students;
 - Adult Education Programs;
 - Career Technical and Technical Education and Training Programs;
 - Child Care and Development Programs;
 - Migrant Child Education Programs;
 - Consolidated Categorical Aid Programs;
 - Every Student Succeeds Act;
 - Education or graduation of Students in Foster Care, Students who are Homeless, former Juvenile Court Students now enrolled in a public school, Migratory Children and Children of Military Families;
 - Regional Occupational Centers and Programs;
 - School Safety Plans; and/or
 - State Preschool Programs.
- (3) Complaints alleging that a pupil enrolled in a public school was required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity as those terms are defined below.

- a. “Educational activity” means an activity offered by GPS that constitutes an integral fundamental part of elementary and secondary education, including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities.
- b. “Pupil fee” means a fee, deposit or other charge imposed on pupils, or a pupil’s parents or guardians, in violation of Section 49011 of the Education Code and Section 5 of Article IX of the California Constitution, 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, as provided for in *Hartzell v. Connell* (1984) 35 Cal.3d 899. A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:
 - i. 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.
 - ii. A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, uniform or other materials or equipment.
 - iii. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms associated with an educational activity.
- c. Complaints regarding pupil fees, local control and accountability plans (“LCAP”), or noncompliance with Education Code sections 243 or 244 only, may be filed anonymously (without an identifying signature) if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with the respective applicable laws.
- d. If the Charter School finds merit in a pupil fees complaint, or the California Department of Education (“CDE”) finds merit in an appeal, the Charter School shall provide a remedy to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians that, where applicable, includes reasonable efforts by the Charter School to ensure full reimbursement to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians, subject to procedures established through regulations adopted by the state board.
- e. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to prohibit solicitation of voluntary donations of funds or property, voluntary participation in fundraising activities, or GPS or other entities from providing pupils prizes or other recognition for voluntarily participating in fundraising activities.

(4) Complaints alleging noncompliance with the requirements governing the Local Control Funding Formula (“LCFF”) or LCAP under Education Code sections 47606.5 and 47607.3, as applicable. If GPS adopts a School Plan for Student Achievement in addition to its LCAP, complaints of noncompliance with the requirements of the School Plan for Student Achievement under Education Code sections 64000, 64001, 65000, and 65001 shall also fall under this Policy.

Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding child nutrition programs established pursuant to Education Code sections 49490-49590 no longer fall under the UCP. Instead, they are governed by Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (“C.F.R.”) sections 210.19(a)(4), 215.1(a), 220.13(c), 225.11(b), 226.6(n), and 250.15(d) and Title 5, California Code of Regulations (“C.C.R.”) sections 15580 - 15584.

Complaints alleging noncompliance regarding special education programs established pursuant to Education

Code sections 56000-56865 and 59000-59300 no longer fall under the UCP. Instead, they are governed by the procedures set forth in 5 C.C.R. sections 3200-3205 and 34 C.F.R. sections 300.151-300.153.

The Charter School acknowledges and respects every individual's right to privacy. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints shall be investigated in a manner that protects (to the greatest extent reasonably possible and as permitted by law) the confidentiality of the parties, including but not limited to the identity of the complainant, and maintains the integrity of the process. The Charter School cannot guarantee anonymity of the complainant. This includes keeping the identity of the complainant confidential. However, the Charter School will attempt to do so as appropriate. The Charter School may find it necessary to disclose information regarding the complaint/complainant to the extent required by law or necessary to carry out the investigation or proceedings, as determined by the Executive Director or designee on a case-by-case basis. GPS shall ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation.

Compliance Officer

The Board of Directors designates the following compliance officer(s) to receive and investigate complaints, and to ensure the Charter School's compliance with law:

Growth Public Schools
Audria Johnson, Executive Director
9320 Tech Center Drive
Sacramento, CA 95826

Complaints of noncompliance with laws relating to pupil fees may be filed with the Principal of the Charter School.

The Executive Director shall ensure that employees designated to investigate complaints are knowledgeable about the laws and programs for which they are responsible. Designated employees may have access to legal counsel as determined by the CEO or designee.

Should a complaint be filed against the Executive Director, the compliance officer for that case shall be the Chair of the Charter School Board of Directors.

Notifications

The Executive Director or designee shall annually provide written notification of the Charter School's UCP to employees, students, parents and/or guardians, advisory committees, private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties as applicable.

The annual notice shall be in English. When necessary, under Education Code section 48985 if fifteen (15) percent or more of the pupils enrolled in the Charter School speak a single primary language other than English, this annual notice will also be provided to the parent/guardian of any such students in their primary language.

The Executive Director or designee shall make available copies of the Charter School's UCP free of charge. The annual notice of this Policy may be made available on GPS's website.

The annual notice shall include the following:

- (a) A list of the types of complaints that fall under the scope of the UCP and the state and federal provisions that govern complaints regarding child nutrition programs and special education programs.
- (b) A statement clearly identifying any California State preschool programs that GPS is operating as exempt from licensing pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 1596.792(o) and corresponding Title 5 health and safety regulations, and any California State preschool programs that GPS is operating pursuant to Title 22 licensing requirements.
- (c) A statement that the Charter School is primarily responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.
- (d) A statement that a pupil enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity.
- (e) A statement identifying the title of the compliance officer, and the identity(ies) of the person(s) currently occupying that position, if known.
- (f) A statement that if a UCP complaint is filed directly with the CDE and the CDE determines that it merits direct intervention, the CDE shall complete an investigation and provide a written decision to the complainant within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the complaint, unless the parties have agreed to extend the timeline or the CDE documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.
- (g) A statement that the complainant has a right to appeal the Charter School's decision to the CDE by filing a written appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of GPS's Decision, except if GPS has used its UCP to address a complaint that is not subject to the UCP requirements.
- (h) A statement that a complainant who appeals GPS's decision on a UCP complaint to the CDE shall receive a written appeal decision within sixty (60) calendar days of the CDE's receipt of the appeal, unless extended by written agreement with the complainant or the CDE documents exceptional circumstances and informs the complainant.
- (i) A statement that if GPS finds merit in a UCP complaint, or the CDE finds merit in an appeal, GPS shall take corrective actions consistent with the requirements of existing law that will provide a remedy to the affected student and/or parent/guardian as applicable.
- (j) A statement advising the complainant of any civil law remedies that may be available under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying laws, if applicable, and of the appeal pursuant to Education Code § 262.3.
- (k) A statement that copies of GPS's UCP shall be available free of charge.

Procedures

The following procedures shall be used to address all complaints which allege that the Charter School has violated federal or state laws or regulations enumerated in the "Scope" section above. The compliance officer shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions. for at least three (3) calendar years. Compliance officers shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions.

All parties named shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when a complaint meeting or hearing is

scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

Step 1: Filing of Complaint

Any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization may file a written complaint of alleged noncompliance or unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying pursuant to this Policy.

A complaint of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying may be filed by an individual who alleges that that individual has personally suffered unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying or by one who believes any specific class of individuals has been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying, or by a duly authorized representative who alleges that an individual student has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. An investigation of alleged unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be initiated by filing a complaint no later than six (6) months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying unless the time for filing is extended by the Executive Director or designee, upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension. Such extension by the Executive Director or designee shall be made in writing. The period for filing may be extended by the Executive Director or designee for good cause for a period not to exceed ninety (90) calendar days following the expiration of the six-month time period. The Executive Director shall respond immediately upon a receipt of a request for extension.

All other complaints under this Policy shall be filed not later than one (1) year from the date the alleged violation occurred. For complaints relating to the LCAP, the date of the alleged violation is the date on which the GPS Board of Directors approved the LCAP or the annual update was adopted by GPS.

The complaint shall be presented to the compliance officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a code number and date stamp.

Complaints filed pursuant to this Policy must be in writing and signed. A signature may be handwritten, typed (including in an email) or electronically generated. Only complaints regarding pupil fees, LCAP, or noncompliance with Education Code section 243 or 244 may be filed anonymously as set forth in this Policy. If a complainant is unable to put a complaint in writing due to conditions such as a disability or illiteracy, the Charter School staff shall assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint.

Step 2: Mediation

Within three (3) business days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer may informally discuss with the complainant the possibility of using mediation. If the complainant agrees to mediation, the compliance officer shall make arrangements for this process.

Before initiating the mediation of an unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaint, the compliance officer shall ensure that all parties agree to make the mediator a party to related confidential information.

If the mediation process does not resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant, the compliance officer shall proceed with the investigation of the complaint.

The use of mediation shall not extend the Charter School's timelines for investigating and resolving the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to such an extension of time.

Step 3: Investigation of Complaint

The compliance officer is encouraged to hold an investigative meeting within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint or an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the complaint. This meeting shall provide an opportunity for the complainant and/or the complainant's representative to repeat the complaint orally.

The complainant and/or the complainant's representative shall have an opportunity to present evidence or information leading to evidence to support the allegations in the complaint.

A complainant's refusal to provide the Charter School's investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or the complainant's failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or the complainant's engagement in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegation.

The Charter School's refusal to provide the investigator with access to records and/or other information related to the allegation in the complaint, or its failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation or its engagement 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.

Step 4: Final Written Decision

GPS shall issue an investigation report (the "Decision") based on the evidence. GPS's Decision shall be in writing and sent to the complainant within sixty (60) calendar days of GPS's receipt of the complaint unless the timeframe is extended with the written agreement of the complainant. GPS's Decision shall be written in English and in the language of the complainant whenever feasible or as required by law.

The Decision shall include:

1. The findings of fact based on evidence gathered.
2. The conclusion providing a clear determination for each allegation as to whether GPS is in compliance with the relevant law.
3. Corrective actions, if GPS finds merit in the complaint and any are warranted or required by law.
4. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal GPS's Decision within thirty (30) calendar days to the CDE, except when GPS has used its UCP to address complaints that are not subject to the UCP requirements.
5. Procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.

If an employee is disciplined as a result of the complaint, the Decision shall simply state that effective action was taken and the employee was informed of the Charter School's expectations. The Decision shall not give any further information as to the nature of the disciplinary action.

Appeals to the California Department of Education

If dissatisfied with the Charter School's Decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the CDE within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the Charter School's Decision. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the complaint filed with GPS and a copy of the Decision. When appealing to the CDE, the complainant must specify and explain the basis for the appeal including at least one of the following:

1. GPS failed to follow its complaint procedures.
2. Relative to the allegations of the complaint, GPS's Decision lacks material findings of fact necessary to reach a conclusion of law.
3. The material findings of fact in GPS's Decision are not supported by substantial evidence.
4. The legal conclusion in GPS's Decision is inconsistent with the law.
5. In a case in which GPS's Decision found noncompliance; the corrective actions fail to provide a proper remedy.

Upon notification by the CDE that the complainant has appealed the Charter School's Decision, the Executive Director or designee shall forward the following documents to the CDE within ten (10) calendar days of the date of notification:

1. A copy of the original complaint.
2. A copy of the Decision.
3. A copy of the investigation file, including but not limited to all notes, interviews, and documents submitted by the parties or gathered by the investigator.
4. A report of any action taken to resolve the complaint.
5. A copy of the Charter School's complaint procedures.
6. Other relevant information requested by the CDE.

If the CDE determines the appeal raises issues not contained in the local complaint, the CDE will refer those new issues back to GPS for resolution as a new complaint. If the CDE notifies GPS that its Decision failed to address

an allegation raised by the complaint and subject to the UCP process, GPS will investigate and address such allegation(s) in accordance with the UCP requirements and provide the CDE and the appellant with an amended Decision addressing such allegation(s) within twenty (20) calendar days of the CDE's notification. The amended Decision will inform the appellant of the right to separately appeal the amended Decision with respect to the complaint allegation(s) not addressed in the original Decision.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the CDE's appeal Decision pursuant to 5 C.C.R. section 4633(f)(2) or (3), either party may request reconsideration by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction ("SSPI") or the SSPI's designee. The request for reconsideration shall specify and explain the reason(s) for contesting the findings of fact, conclusions of law, or corrective actions in the CDE's appeal Decision. The SSPI will not consider any information not previously submitted to the CDE by a party during the appeal

unless such information was unknown to the party at the time of the appeal and, with due diligence, could not have become known to the party. Pending the SSPI's response to a request for reconsideration, the CDE appeal Decision remains in effect and enforceable, unless stayed by a court.

The CDE may directly intervene in the complaint without waiting for action by the Charter School when one of the conditions listed in Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 4650 exists, including but not limited to cases in which, through no fault of the complainant, the Charter School has not taken action within sixty (60) days of the date the complaint was filed with the Charter School.

Complaints alleging noncompliance with Education Code section 243 or 244 may be filed with the SSPI directly, and the SSPI may directly intervene without waiting for an investigation by GPS. The complainant shall present the SSPI with evidence that supports the basis for the direct filing and why immediate action is necessary.

Civil Law Remedies

A complainant may pursue available civil law remedies outside of the Charter School's complaint procedures. Complainants may seek assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys. Civil law remedies that may be imposed by a court include, but are not limited to, injunctions and restraining orders. For unlawful discrimination complaints arising under state law, however, a complainant must wait until sixty (60) days have elapsed from the filing of an appeal with the CDE before pursuing civil law remedies. The moratorium does not apply to injunctive relief and is applicable only if the Charter School has appropriately, and in a timely manner, apprised the complainant of the complainant's right to file a complaint.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FORM

Last Name:

First Name/MI:

Student Name (if applicable):

Grade:

Date of Birth:

Street Address/Apt. #:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Work Phone:

School/Office of Alleged Violation:

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

- Adult Education Programs
- Every Student Succeeds Act
- School Plans for School Achievement
- Local Control Funding Formula/
- School Safety Plan
- State
- Career Technical and Technical Education and Training
- Local Control and Accountability Plan
- Preschool Programs
- Child Care and Development Programs
- Fees
- Migrant Child Education Programs
- Pupil Programs
- Pregnant, Parenting, or Lactating Students
- Consolidated Categorical Aid
- Regional Occupational Centers and Programs

Education or graduation of Students in Foster Care, Students who are Homeless, former Juvenile Court Students now enrolled in a Public School, Migratory Children and Children of Military Families

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

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration Status | <input type="checkbox"/> SEX (Actual or Perceived) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ancestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender / Gender Expression / Gender Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation (Actual or Perceived) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color | <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic Information | <input type="checkbox"/> Based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability (Mental or Physical) | <input type="checkbox"/> National Origin | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Group Identification | <input type="checkbox"/> Race or Ethnicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Condition | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion | |

1. Please give facts about the complaint. Provide details such as the names of those involved, dates, whether witnesses were

present, etc., that may be helpful to the complaint investigator.

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

3. Please provide copies of any written documents that may be relevant or supportive of your complaint. I have attached supporting documents. Yes No

Signature:

Date:

Mail complaint and any relevant documents to:

Growth Public Schools
Audria Johnson, Executive Director
9320 Tech Center Drive
Sacramento, CA 95826

STUDENT FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION POLICY

Board Policy #: 13; Adopted/Ratified: March 12, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The Board of Directors of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) respects students’ rights to express ideas and opinions, take stands, and support causes, whether controversial or not, through their speech, writing, printed materials, including the right of expression in official publications, and/or the wearing of buttons, badges and other insignia.

Definitions

1. “*Obscenity*”: when the (1) average person applying current community standards finds the work as a whole appeals to the prurient interest, (2) the work is patently offensive, and (3) the work lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. Examples include pornography or sexually explicit material.
2. “*Defamation*”: Libel (written defamation) and Slander (oral defamation), which includes but is not limited to inaccurately attributing a statement to another, either on purpose for public officials (which includes Charter School staff) or by mistake for private officials, that mischaracterizes the statement.
3. “*Discriminatory Material*”: material that demeans a person or group because of the person/group’s mental or physical disability, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions and parental status), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status, nationality (including national origin, country of origin, and citizenship), race or ethnicity (including ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, ethnic background, and traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twist), religion (including agnosticism and atheism), religious affiliation, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, age, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation that has the purpose of humiliating, offending, or provoking a person/group.
4. “*Harassment (including sexual harassment), Intimidation and/or Bullying*”: severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act. Bullying includes one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that may constitute sexual harassment, hate violence, or creates an intimidating and/or hostile educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following: (1) placing a reasonable student or students in fear of harm to that student’s or those students’ person or property, (2) causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health, (3) causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with his or her academic performance, (4) causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
5. “*Fighting Words*”: words likely to cause (1) the average person to fight or (2) the creation of a clear and present danger of violence, unlawful acts in violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of school.
6. “*Vulgarity and/or Profanity*”: the continual use of curse words by a student, even after warning.
7. “*Violating Privacy*”: publicizing or distributing confidential or private material without permission.

On-Campus Expression

Student free speech rights include, but are 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. Student expression on the Charter School website and online media shall generally be afforded the same protections as print media within the Policy.

Student freedom of expression shall be limited only as allowed by state and federal law in order to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights, health, and safety of all members of the school community. Unprotected Expression includes the following: obscenity; defamation; discriminatory material; harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation and/or bullying; fighting words; vulgarity and/or profanity; or violating privacy as defined above. Also prohibited shall be material that incites 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 Charter School.

A. Distribution of Circulars, Un-Official Newspapers, and Other Printed Matter

Free inquiry and exchange of ideas are essential parts of a democratic education. Students shall be allowed to distribute circulars, leaflets, newspapers, and pictorial or other printed matter, and to circulate petitions, subject to the following specific limitations:

1. Leaflets, pictorial and other printed matter to be distributed shall be submitted to the Charter School Executive Director or designee at least one (1) school day prior to distribution. The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall review material submitted in a reasonable amount of time and shall allow the approved material to be distributed according to the time and manner established by this Policy. The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall notify student(s) if distribution will be granted or denied (and if denied, why distribution is not in compliance with this Policy).
2. Distribution, free or for a fee, may take place before school, after school, and/or during lunch provided there is no substantial disruption in the school programs (as determined by the Charter School Executive Director). Distribution may not occur during instructional time and should not occur in locations that disrupt the normal flow of traffic within the school or at school entrances.
3. The manner of distribution shall be such that coercion is not used to induce students to accept the printed matter or to sign petitions.
4. The solicitation of signatures must not take place in instructional classes or school offices, nor be substantially disruptive to the school program (as determined by the Charter School Executive Director or designee).

The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall work with student government representatives in the development of these procedures. Student responsibilities shall be emphasized.

B. Official School Publications

Student 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 Policy. However, it shall be the

responsibility of the journalism staff adviser(s) of student publications to supervise the production of the student staff, to maintain professional standards of English and journalism, and to maintain the provisions of this Policy.¹⁰ The journalism staff adviser(s) shall help the student editors judge the literary value, newsworthiness and propriety of materials submitted for publication.

There shall be no prior restraint of material prepared for official school publications except insofar as it violates this Policy. GPS officials shall have the burden of showing justification without undue delay prior to a limitation of student expression under this Policy. If the journalism staff adviser(s) consider material submitted for publication to violate this Policy, he or she will notify the student without undue delay and give specific reasons why the submitted material may not be published. The student should be given the opportunity to modify the material or appeal the decision of the journalism staff adviser to the Charter School Executive Director.

C. Buttons, Badges, and Other Insignia of Symbolic Expression

Students shall be permitted to wear buttons, badges, armbands, and other insignia as a form of expression, subject to the prohibitions enumerated in this Policy.

D. Use of Bulletin Boards

Students will be provided with bulletin boards, upon request and subject to availability, for use in posting student materials on campus locations convenient to student use. Where feasible, the location and quantity of such bulletin boards shall be by mutual agreement of student government representatives and GPS administration. Posted material must be in compliance with other sections of this Policy, particularly regarding the distribution of materials and prohibited speech. Students may not post or distribute materials regarding the meetings of non-curricular student-initiated groups.

E. Organized Demonstrations

Students have the right to lawful organized on-campus demonstrations, subject to the provisions of this Policy and applicable law. Demonstrations that incite students to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises or the violation of lawful school regulations, or demonstrations that substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school are prohibited.

No individual student may demonstrate in the name of the Charter School or as an official school group at any time unless authorized by the Charter School to participate in the activity.

No student may participate in an organized demonstration that occurs during the hours of mandatory school attendance unless sanctioned by the Charter School and supervised by a designated Charter School employee. Missing school to attend an organized demonstration is not an excused absence. The Charter School will follow its Attendance Policy when determining consequences for students which may include but are not limited to detention, a low grade for a missed test, or receiving a truancy letter. The Charter School will follow its Suspension and Expulsion Policy when determining consequences for students if Charter School policy is violated.

F. Student Speeches

¹⁰ “Official school publications” refers to material produced by students in the journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either free or for a fee.

If a student is selected to speak at a Charter School sponsored event, including but not limited to graduation or school assemblies, Charter School has the right to review the pre-prepared speech to ensure that unprotected speech is not included. If unprotected speech is included, the student will be given the opportunity to revise the speech or deliver a modified speech. If not revised or removed, the student will not be permitted to speak at the Charter School sponsored event.

Off-Campus Expression

Off-campus student expression, including but not limited to student expression on off-campus internet web sites, is generally constitutionally protected but shall be subject to discipline when there is a sufficient nexus between the speech and the school.

Relevant considerations include:

1. The degree and likelihood of harm to the Charter School (staff, students, volunteers, and/or property) caused or augured by the expression,
2. Whether it is reasonably foreseeable that the expression would reach and impact the Charter School, and
3. The relation between the content and/or context of the expression and the Charter School. There is always a sufficient nexus between the expression and the Charter School when the Charter School reasonably concludes that it faces a credible, identifiable threat of school violence.

The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall document the impact the expression had or could be expected to have on the educational program. Off-campus expression that results in the material disruption of classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others may be subject to discipline.

Off-campus expression may result in discipline if the expression involves but is not limited to:

- a. Serious or severe bullying or harassment targeting particular individuals;
- b. Threats aimed at teachers or other students;
- c. The failure to follow rules concerning lessons, the writing of papers, the use of computers, or participation in other online school activities; or
- d. Breaches of school security devices.

Enforcement

1. Upon learning that students are considering actions in the areas covered by this Policy they will be informed of the possible consequences of their action under each specific circumstance. The Charter School Executive Director shall ensure that due process is followed when resolving disputes regarding student freedom of expression.
2. This Policy does not prohibit or prevent the GPS Governing Board from adopting otherwise valid rules and regulations relating to oral communications by students upon the GPS campus.
3. No GPS employee shall be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, reassigned, transferred, or otherwise retaliated against solely for acting to protect a student engaged in the conduct authorized under this Policy, or refusing to infringe upon conduct that is authorized under this Policy, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, or Section 2 of Article I of the California Constitution.
4. GPS shall not make or enforce a rule subjecting a student to disciplinary sanctions solely on the basis of conduct that is speech or other communication that, when engaged in outside of the campus, is protected

from governmental restriction by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Section 2 of Article I of the California Constitution.

Complaints and Appeals

The following procedures shall be used to address general disputes regarding student freedom of speech and expression:

1. The student and faculty member shall first attempt to resolve the problem internally.
2. If the student and faculty member are unable to resolve the dispute, the student and/or faculty member may bring the matter to the Charter School Executive Director or designee, who shall hear both sides and strive to resolve the dispute as quickly as possible.
3. Any student or faculty member may appeal the decision of the Charter School Executive Director or designee to the Board who shall render a decision within a reasonable period of time after receipt of the appeal. The appeal by the student must be made within five (5) school days from the time the unsatisfactory decision was rendered.

A student who feels their freedom of expression was unconstitutionally limited and/or limited on the basis of discrimination may file a complaint with GPS through following the Charter School's General Complaint Policies and Procedures.

Educational Records and Student Information Policy

Board Policy #:14; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “Charter School”), a California nonprofit public benefit corporation operating public charter schools, adopts this Educational Records and Student Information Policy to apply to all educational records and student information maintained by GPS.

I. DEFINITIONS

1. Education Record

An education record is any information recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwriting, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche containing information directly relating to a student that is maintained by GPS or by a party acting for GPS. Such information includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Date and place of birth; parent and/or guardian’s address, mother's maiden name and where the parties may be contacted for emergency purposes;
- b. Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and school activities;
- c. Special education records;
- d. Disciplinary records;
- e. Medical and health records;
- f. Attendance records and records of past schools attended; and/or
- g. Personal information such as, but not limited to, a student’s name, the name of a student’s parent or other family member, student identification numbers, social security numbers, photographs, biometric record or any other type of information that aids in identification of a student.

An education record does not include any of the following:

- A. Records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel and educational personnel ancillary thereto which are in the sole possession of the maker thereof and which are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute;
- B. In the case of a person who is employed by GPS but who is not in attendance at such agency or institution, records made and maintained in the normal course of business, relate exclusively to the individual in that individual's capacity as an employee; and are not available for use for any other purpose;
- C. Records of a student who is 18 years of age or older, or is attending an institution of postsecondary education, that are: a) made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his or her

professional capacity or assisting in a paraprofessional capacity; b) made, maintained, or used only in connection with treatment of the student; and c) disclosed only to individuals providing the treatment. For the purpose of this definition, “treatment” does not include remedial educational activities or activities that are part of the program of instruction at GPS;

- D. Records that only contain information about an individual after he or she is no longer a student at GPS; or
- E. Grades on peer-graded papers before they are collected and recorded by a teacher.

2. Personally Identifiable Information

Personally identifiable information is information about a student that is contained in his or her education records that cannot be disclosed without compliance with the requirements of FERPA. Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to: a student's name; the name of a student's parent or other family member; the address of a student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's Social Security number, student number or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combinations, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or information requested by a person who GPS reasonably believes knows the identify of the student to whom the education record relates.

3. Directory Information

GPS may disclose the personally identifiable information that it has designated as directory information, consistent with the terms of GPS' annual notice provided pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) (“FERPA”). GPS has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Telephone listing
- Student's electronic mail address (if they have one)
- Parent/guardian's electronic mail address
- Photograph

4. Parent

Parent means a parent of a student and includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian.

5. Eligible Student

Eligible student means a student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age.

6. School Official

A school official is a person employed by GPS 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 Board of Directors of GPS. A school official also may include a volunteer or an independent contractor outside of GPS who performs an institutional service or function for

which GPS would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of GPS 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.

7. Legitimate Educational Interest

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

II. DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

At the beginning of each year, GPS shall provide parents and eligible students with a notice containing the following information: 1) The type of personally identifiable information it designates as directory information; 2) The parent's or eligible student's right to request that GPS not release "directory information" without obtaining prior written consent from parent or eligible student; and 3) The period of time within which a parent or eligible student may notify GPS in writing of the categories of "directory information" that it may not disclose without the parent or eligible student's prior written consent.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow GPS to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets

III. ANNUAL NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

At the beginning of each school year, in addition to the notice required for directory information, GPS shall provide parents and eligible students with a notice of their rights under the FERPA. The notice shall inform the parents and eligible students that they have the right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that disclosure is permitted without prior written consent pursuant to FERPA
4. File with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by GPS to comply with the requirements of FERPA and its promulgated regulations; and
5. Request that GPS not release student names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

The notice must also include the following:

1. The procedure for exercising the right to inspect and review educational records;
2. The procedure for requesting amendment of records;
3. A statement that GPS forwards education records to other agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll; and
4. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest.

IV. PARENTAL AND ELIGIBLE STUDENT RIGHTS RELATING TO EDUCATION RECORDS

Parents and eligible students have the right to review the student's education records. In order to do so, parents and eligible students shall submit a request to review education records in writing to the Principal. Within five (5) business days, GPS shall comply with the request.

1. Copies of Education Records

GPS will provide copies of requested documents within five (5) business days of a written request for copies. GPS may charge reasonable fees for copies it provides to parents or eligible students. The charge will not include a fee to search for or to retrieve the education records.

2. Request for Amendment to Education Records

Following the inspection and review of a student's education record, a parent or eligible student may file a written request with the Principal to correct or remove any information in the student's education record that is any of the following:

- (1) Inaccurate;
- (2) An unsubstantiated personal conclusion or inference;
- (3) A conclusion or inference outside of the observer's area of competence;
- (4) Not based on the personal observation of a named person with the time and place of the observation noted;
- (5) Misleading; or
- (6) In violation of the privacy rights of the student.

The request must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the discovery of the inaccurate or misleading information or a violation of the student's right of privacy, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. GPS will respond within ten (10) days of the receipt of the request to amend. GPS' response will be in writing and if the request for amendment is denied, GPS will set forth the reason for the denial and inform the parent or eligible student of his or her right to a hearing challenging the content of the education record.

If the Principal sustains any or all of the allegations, he or she must order the correction or the removal and destruction of the information. The Principal or Principal's designee must then inform the parent or eligible student of the amendment in writing. However, the Principal shall not order a pupil's grade to be changed, unless the teacher who determined the grade is, to the extent practicable,

given an opportunity to state orally, in writing, or both, the reasons for which the grade was given and is, to the extent practicable, included in all discussions relating to the changing of the grade.

3. Hearing to Challenge Education Record

If GPS denies a parent or eligible student's request to amend an education record, the parent or eligible student may request in writing that he/she be given the opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds that the information contained in the education records is: inaccurate, misleading, in violation of the privacy rights of the student, an unsubstantiated personal conclusion or inference; a conclusion or inference outside of the observer's area of competence; or not based on the personal observation of a named person with the time and place of the observation noted.

The Principal or the Board Chair may convene a hearing panel to assist in making determinations regarding educational record challenges provided that the parent has given written consent to release information from the pupil's records to the members of the panel convened. The hearing panel shall consist of the following persons:

- 1) The Principal of a public school other than the public school at which the record is on file;
- 2) A certificated employee; and
- 3) A parent appointed by the Principal or by the Board of Directors, depending upon who convenes the panel.

The hearing to challenge the education record shall be held within thirty (30) days of the date of the request for a hearing. Notice of the date, time and place of the hearing will be sent by GPS to the parent or eligible student no later than twenty (20) days before the hearing.

The hearing will be conducted by the Principal or his/her designee, who shall not be required to use formal rules of evidence or procedure. The parent or eligible student will be given a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues relating to the challenge to the education record. The parent or eligible student may also, at his/her own expense, be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of his/her choice, including an attorney. The decision of the Principal or his/her designee will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and is final. Within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the hearing, GPS' decision regarding the challenge will be made in writing and will include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

If, as a result of the hearing, GPS decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, in violation of the privacy rights of the student, an unsubstantiated personal conclusion or inference, a conclusion or inference outside of the observer's area of competence, or otherwise not based on the personal observation of a named person with the time and place of the observation noted, it will amend the record accordingly and inform the parent or eligible student of the amendment in writing.

If, as a result of the hearing, GPS decides that the information in the education record is not inaccurate, misleading in violation of the privacy rights of the student, an unsubstantiated personal conclusion or inference, a conclusion or inference outside of the observer's area of competence,

or otherwise not based on the personal observation of a named person with the time and place of the observation noted, it shall inform the parent or eligible student of the right to place a statement in the record commenting on the contested information in the record or stating why he/she disagrees with the decision of GPS, or both. If GPS places a statement by the parent or eligible student in the education records of a student, it will maintain the statement with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and disclose the statement whenever it discloses the portion of the record to which the statement relates.

V. DISCLOSURE OF EDUCATION RECORDS AND DIRECTORY INFORMATION

GPS must have a signed and dated written consent from the parent or eligible student before releasing any non-directory information from a student's education record except as provided below. The written permission must specify the records that may be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. When disclosure is made pursuant to written permission, the parent or eligible student may request a copy of the disclosed records. Signed and dated written consent may include a record and signature in electronic form if it identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic consent and indicates such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic consent.

If you do not want GPS to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify GPS in writing at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment. Please notify the front office at 916-394-5007 or info@growthps.org.

GPS will only disclose personally identifiable information on the condition that the receiving party not disclose the information to any party without the prior written consent of the parent or eligible student and that the receiving party use the information for the purposes for which the disclosure was made. This restriction does not apply to disclosures that fall within the disclosure exceptions listed below. GPS must maintain the appropriate records related to these disclosure exceptions, as described below. Except for disclosures pursuant to a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, or directory information or to parents or eligible students, the GPS will inform a receiving party of the requirement that the party not disclose the information to any other party without the prior written consent of the parent or eligible student and that the receiving party use it for the purpose for which the disclosure was made. Note specifically that GPS will not release information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order.

Parents and eligible students have the right to request that GPS not release student names, addresses and telephone listings to military recruiters or institutions of higher education without prior written parental consent.

GPS will disclose education records, without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student, to the following parties:

1. School employees who have a legitimate educational interest as defined by 34 C.F.R. Part 99;
2. Other schools to which a student seeks or intends to enroll so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer. GPS will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the request for records at his/her last known address, unless the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student. Additionally, GPS will give the parent or eligible student, upon request, a copy of the record that was disclosed and give the parent or eligible student, upon request, an opportunity for hearing pursuant to Section (IV)(3) above;
3. Certain government officials listed in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1) in order to carry out lawful functions;
4. Appropriate parties in connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid if it is necessary to determine eligibility, amount of aid, conditions for aid or enforcing the terms and

- conditions of the aid;
5. Organizations conducting certain studies for the GPS in accordance with 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(F);
 6. Accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting functions;
 7. Parents of a dependent student as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
 8. Individuals or entities, in compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. Subject to the exceptions found in 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(9)(i), reasonable effort must be made to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance, so that the parent or eligible student may seek a protective order;
 9. Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies;
 10. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law;
 11. A foster family agency with jurisdiction over a currently enrolled or former student, a short-term residential treatment program staff responsible for the education or case management of a student, and a caregiver (regardless of whether the caregiver has been appointed as the pupil's educational rights holder) who has direct responsibility for the care of the student, including a certified or licensed foster parent, an approved relative or nonrelated extended family member, or a resource family, may access the current or most recent records of grades, transcripts, attendance, discipline, and online communication on platforms established by GPS for student and parents, and any individualized education program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan that may have been developed or maintained by GPS; and/or
 12. A victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense. The disclosure may only include final results of the disciplinary proceedings conducted by GPS with respect to that alleged crime or offense. GPS may disclose the final results of the disciplinary proceeding, regardless of whether GPS concluded a violation was committed.

VI. RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

GPS will maintain a record of each request for access to and each disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records of each student for as long as the records are maintained. For each request, the record must include the following information: the parties who have requested or received the information and the legitimate interests the parties had in requesting or obtaining the information.

For disclosures of personally identifiable information to institutions that make disclosures of the information on behalf of GPS in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 99.33(b), the record must include the names of the additional parties to which the receiving party may disclose the information on behalf of GPS and the legitimate interests that each of the additional parties has in requesting or obtaining the information.

These record keeping requirements do not apply to requests from or disclosure to parents or eligible students, GPS officials with a legitimate purpose of inspecting the records, a party with written consent from the parent or eligible student, a party seeking directory information, or a party seeking or receiving the records as directed by a court order or subpoena.

The records relating to disclosures of personally identifiable student information may be inspected by parents and eligible students, GPS officials (or their assistants) responsible for the custody of the records, and parties authorized by regulations for the purpose of auditing the recordkeeping procedures of GPS.

Student cumulative records may not be removed from the premises of GPS, unless the individual removing the record has a legitimate educational interest, and is authorized by the Principal, or by a majority of a quorum of the Board of Directors at a duly agendaized meeting. Employees who remove student cumulative records or other student records from the GPS premises without a legitimate educational interest and authorization may be subject to discipline. Employees are permitted to take student work-product, or other appropriate student records, off premises without authorization for legitimate academic purposes (e.g. grading work-product, assigning credit, reviewing materials for classroom discussion, etc.)

VII. COMPLAINTS

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by GPS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

VIII. RECORD RETENTION

GPS complies with the definition and retention of student records as established in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations sections 432 and 437, per the following:

Mandatory Permanent Pupil Records: must be maintained indefinitely. These records are defined as:

- Legal name of pupil
- Date of birth
- Method of verification of birth date
- Sex of pupil
- Place of birth
- Name and address of parent of minor pupil
 - o Address of minor pupil if different than above
 - o An annual verification of the name and address of the parent and the residence of the pupil
- Entering and leaving date of each school year and for any summer session or other extra session
- Subjects taken during each year, half year, summer session or quarter
- If marks or credit are given, the mark or number of credits toward graduation allows for work taken.

■ Verification of or exemption from required immunizations

■ Date of high school graduation or equivalent.

Mandatory Interim Pupil Records: must be maintained until their usefulness ceases and may be destroyed after three (3) years following the pupil's completion or withdrawal from school. These records are defined as:

■ A log or record identifying those persons (except authorized school personnel) or organizations requesting or receiving information from the record. The log or record shall be accessible only to the legal parent or guardian or the eligible pupil, or a dependent adult pupil, or an adult pupil, or the custodian of records.

■ Health information, including Child Health Developmental Disabilities Prevention Program verification or waiver

■ Participation in special education programs including required tests, case studies, authorizations, and action necessary to establish eligibility for admission or discharge

■ Language training records

■ Progress slips and/or notices

■ Parental restrictions regarding access to directory information or related stipulations.

■ Parental or adult pupil rejoinders to challenged records and to disciplinary action

■ Parental authorizations or prohibitions of pupil participation in specific programs

■ Results of standardized tests administered within the preceding three years

Permitted Records: must be maintained until their usefulness ceases and may be destroyed after six (6) months following the pupil's completion or withdrawal from school. These records are defined as:

■ Objective counselor and/or teacher ratings

■ Standardized test results older than three years

■ Routine discipline data

■ Verified reports of relevant behavioral patterns

■ All disciplinary notices

■ Attendance records not covered in the 5 CCR § 400

When a student transfers schools, GPS will mail the original or copy of a student's cumulative file upon request by the receiving district within ten (10) school days.

Universal School Meals Policy

Board Policy #:15; Adopted/Ratified: [INSERT]; Revision Date: [INSERT]

School Wellness Policy

Board Policy #: 16; Adopted/Ratified: [INSERT]; Revision Date: [INSERT]

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Board Policy #:17; Adopted/Ratified: [INSERT]; Revision Date: [INSERT]

Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy

Board Policy #:18; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Although this is a long and detailed policy, it is very important that you read it thoroughly because it explains everything you need to know about using the Internet, computers and other devices at Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “School”). It is your responsibility to use the Internet in ways that follow and support this policy.

All electronic usage throughout GPS, including the things you do on a day to day basis, will be governed by this Policy. Your use - or misuse - of any electronics while at School will be interpreted according to this Policy.

If you have any questions about the expectations set out in this Policy, please contact the CEO, Principal, or Chief Operating Officer.

General Principles of Access

GPS provides access to the Internet, including access to e-mail, for its school, faculties, students, and guests. Guests include, but are not limited to, parents, student teachers, temporary employees, parent volunteers, and other School volunteers. All Internet access, including the use of email, occurs through GPS’ system.

This Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy governs all electronic activity, including e-mail and access to the Internet, which is undertaken by GPS faculties, students, and parents/guardians either in their official GPS capacity or as part of the educational, instructional or extracurricular programs connected to GPS. No GPS faculty member, student, guest or parent/guardian may engage in activities prohibited by this Policy, whether through GPS’ Internet service or through any other Internet Service Provider, for whatever reason. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to discuss and monitor their child’s school Internet use and to discuss any issues or concerns that they may have with the school’s teacher and administrators. All use of the Internet will be governed by this Policy.

Technology Team Responsibilities

- The Chief Executive Officer, or his/her designee, will serve as the coordinator to oversee Internet access on GPS systems.
- The Chief Executive Officer, the Principal, and the Chief Operating Officer are responsible for the dissemination of this Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy and they will work to enforce this policy on their site.
- GPS reserves the right to revise this Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy, as it deems necessary, and it will always post the current policy on the School’s websites as notice to students of any revisions.

Limitation of Liability

GPS makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the GPS system will be error-free or without defect. GPS will not be responsible for any damages students may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. GPS is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. GPS will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from a user’s unauthorized use of the system.

Neither GPS nor its staff shall be responsible for the failure of, or any losses resulting from, any technology protection measures, violations of copyright restrictions, or user mistakes, misuse or negligence.

Content Filtering

GPS has installed Internet filtering software in a best-effort attempt to block user access to inappropriate and/or harmful content on the Internet, such as to websites that have no educational purpose and/or contain visual depictions that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or that are harmful to minors. While GPS is able exercise reasonable control over content created and purchased by the School, it has limited control over content accessed via the internet and no filtering technology is 100% effective and this technology may occasionally fail. In the event that the filtering software is unsuccessful and students gain access to inappropriate and/or harmful material, neither the School nor its staff shall be responsible for the failure of any technology protection measures, violations of copyright restrictions, or user mistakes, misuse or negligence. *GPS filter systems adhere to the US Congress enacted Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA") guidelines, updated 2011: <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act>*

The filter is set at the most restrictive setting in restricting access to Internet sites that may contain interactive chat or mail or information regarding:

- Sex acts
- Sex attire
- Sex/nudity
- Sex/personal
- Basic sex education
- Advanced sex education
- Sexuality
- Sports
- Gambling
- Pornography
- Hacking
- Proxy avoidance
- Addictions
- Forums
- Social Networks
- Violence
- Streaming Music
- Non Academic Videos
- Illegal Drugs
- Weapons
- Criminal Activity
- Chat
- Torrenting
- Hate and Intolerance

Regulations of Access

1. Important Consequences of Access

- GPS will always cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any lawful investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through the GPS system.
- Internet access is a privilege, not a right, and all students should be aware that GPS may revoke Internet access for any reason. If a student's access is revoked, GPS will provide an explanation for the revocation and the school site will ensure that the student continues to have equal access to participate in the educational program.
- It is very important for students and families to understand that violations of this Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy DO count as disciplinary actions. All violations of this policy will be addressed according to the graduated discipline plan of the School. Students and their

families WILL have to meet specific concerns related to the violation and cooperate with the School to help the student acquire the specific behaviors necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network.

2. Privacy

Students of the GPS system should understand that there is no expectation of privacy on this system.

- GPS reserves the right to monitor the use of the Internet through its system, at all times. GPS will collect and store information about usage which includes, but may not be limited to, the date and time a user visits the site and information about the user's activities while online. Except as otherwise specified in this Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy, GPS will not use cookies to gather personal identifying information about any of its students. (Cookies are computer programs that store information about a user on a computer hard drive or disk and allow GPS, among other things, to verify whether a visitor is an authorized user of the GPS system.) Personal identifying information includes, but is not limited to, names, home addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers.
- As required by CIPA, GPS will monitor students' online activities. Such monitoring may lead to discovery that the user has violated or may be violating the GPS Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy, the student handbook, or the law. GPS also reserves the right to monitor other students' (e.g., non-students) online activities through its systems.
- GPS reserves the right to employ and review the results of software that searches, monitors, and/or identifies potential violations of the Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy.
- Students should be aware that their personal files may be discoverable in court and administrative proceedings and in accordance with public records laws.
- GPS students should have no privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the GPS system. GPS does not encourage students to store personal data on the GPS system - GPS cannot be responsible for the loss or damage of such data.

3. Parental Notification and Responsibility

- Where appropriate, the School will provide students and parents with guidelines and instructions for student safety while using the Internet.
- GPS Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. However, there is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may or may not fit the particular values of students and families. While student use will be supervised and logged, it is not practically possible for GPS to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Further, GPS recognizes that parents bear primary responsibility for transmitting their particular set of family values to their children. GPS strongly encourages parents to specify to their child(ren) what material is and is not acceptable for their child(ren) to access through the GPS system.

4. Access

- Students will generally be provided with Internet access. This document describes the terms of that access. In addition, a school may decide to create a written agreement or “compact” with parents that expands the terms and responsibilities of the student, parent, and school in further detail. However, that written agreement may not permit any Internet or e-mail activity prohibited by this Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy, and it may not prohibit any such activity permitted by this Policy.

5. Limitations on Internet Usage

- Personal Safety Violations For Students
 - GPS strongly recommends that all students follow the two guidelines below, at all times:
 - students do not post or transmit photographs or personal contact information about themselves or other people.
 - students do not agree to meet with someone they have met online.
 - GPS requires that students promptly disclose to their mentor or other School employee any electronic message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

6. Illegal Activities

All students should be aware that engaging in any of the following illegal activities will result in disciplinary action by GPS.

- Students shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the GPS system or to any other computer system through the GPS system, or go beyond their authorized access. This prohibition includes intentionally seeking information about passwords belonging to other students, modifying passwords belonging to other students, illegally obtaining wireless passkeys, or attempting to login through another person's account. Further, students may not attempt to access, copy, or modify another user's files. These actions are not permitted and may be illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing."
- Students shall not attempt to subvert network security, impair the functionality of the network, or bypass restrictions set by network administrators. Students are also prohibited from destroying data by spreading computer viruses or vandalizing data, software, or equipment, and from using hacking tools on the network or intentionally introducing malicious code or viruses into the School's network. Students shall also not install software on School equipment without the permission of a teacher or other authorized School staff person or use any software or proxy service to obscure either the student's IP address or the sites that the student visits.
- Students shall not use the GPS system to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of a person, etc. Students shall also not engage in any activity that is harmful to other student(s), including the use of technology to harass, intimidate, bully or otherwise disrupt the educational process.
- Students shall not use the GPS system to download illegal music, books, video, software or other content in violation of licensing requirements, copyright or other intellectual property rights and without payment to the originator.

- Users shall not use software applications that have a continuous connection to the internet that is streaming steadily and consuming large amount of internet bandwidth (e.g. bit-torrent, etc.) for the purpose of obtaining illegal content.
- Students shall not download, view or share inappropriate content, including pornographic, defamatory or otherwise offensive material.
- Students shall not conduct any activity that is in violation of School policy, the student code of conduct or local, state or federal law. Students shall also not use GPS systems to conduct for-profit business.
- Students shall not access or attempt to access material or systems on the network that the student is not authorized to access.

7. System Security

- Students are responsible for the use of their individual account if applicable and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a user provide their password to another person, except for teachers or other authorized School personnel who may require students to provide their passwords.
- Student users will immediately notify a teacher or other authorized School personnel if they identify a possible security problem (such as disclosure of their password to another person) and they will then immediately notify the technology team. Students should not attempt to uncover security problems because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- GPS will install and maintain anti-virus software on each computer, as required. Updates, typically referred to as "virus definitions," will be updated as the manufacturer recommends.

8. Inappropriate Language

All students should be aware that using inappropriate language electronically can be damaging to others and may lead to disciplinary action.

- Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.
- Students will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, abusive or disrespectful language.
- Students will not post information that could interfere with the educational process or cause a danger of disruption in the educational environment.
- Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Students will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a user is told by a person to stop sending them messages, they must stop.
- Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

- Students should not repost a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent them the message.
- Students should not post private information about another person.

9. Respecting Resource Limits

- Students will use the system for educational and professional activities.
- Students will refrain from downloading large files unless absolutely necessary. If necessary, students will download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used.
- Students will not post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is sending an annoying or unsolicited message to many people, except that an unsolicited message sent by a supervisor relating to work activity does not constitute spamming.
- Students will check their email frequently and delete unwanted messages.
- Students will not send e-mail containing commercial links unless the link is predominantly instructional in nature.
- Users will not use the system to engage in harming or bullying.
- Users should not expect assistance with exporting or importing their email for transference or archival.

10. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- Students will not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were original to the user.
- Students will respect the rights of copyright owners and not infringe on those rights. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies acceptable use of that work, the user should follow the expressed requirements. If the user is unsure whether or not she/he can use a work, she/he should request permission from the copyright owner.

11. Access to Inappropriate Material

- Students will not use the GPS system to access material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography), that advocates illegal or dangerous acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (e.g., hate literature). For students, a special exception may be made if the purpose is to conduct research and is approved by the teacher.
- If students inadvertently access such information, they should immediately disclose the inadvertent access in a manner specified by their school. This will protect students against an allegation that they have intentionally violated the Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy.

12. Other

- Students will not use the Internet for advertising, promotion, commercial purposes, or similar objectives.
- Students will not use the Internet to conduct for-profit business activities or to engage in religious activities. Students are also prohibited from engaging in any non-governmental related fund raising or public relations activities such as solicitation for religious purposes, lobbying for

political purposes, or soliciting votes. GPS is not responsible for this or any other commercial activity students engage in.

- Students will not rebroadcast or piggyback on existing systems to create personal micro wifi hotspots at the School.

Email Policy

Email resources are available to all GPS students. Every individual assigned a GPS email address will have the responsibility to use this resource in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner.

Email Acceptable Use Guidelines

“Acceptable” e-mail activities are those that conform to the purpose, goals, and mission of GPS and to each user's responsibilities. Students shall have no right to privacy while using GPS internet or e-mail system. The following actions are prohibited:

- Opening unknown email attachments or introducing computer worms or viruses. Students are prohibited from performing any activity that will or may cause the loss or corruption of data or the abnormal use of computing resources (degradation of system/network performance).
- Using e-mail services for private, commercial or business transactions and any activity meant to foster personal gain.
- Conducting non-GPS fundraising or public relations activities such as solicitation for religious and political causes or not-for-profit activities.
- Transmitting threatening, offensive harassing information (e.g. via messages or images) containing defamatory, abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually oriented, racially offensive, or otherwise biased, discriminatory, or illegal material.
- Attempting to subvert network security, impair functionality of the network, or bypass restrictions set by the network administrators; Assisting others in violating these rules by sharing information or passwords.
- Distributing "junk" mail, such as chain letters, advertisements, or unauthorized solicitations.

Account Termination

- Upon withdrawing from School, all student accounts will be deactivated, and data retained by GPS.
- Alumni (graduates) of GPS will retain access to their GPS email account.

REMINDER: GPS reserves the right to examine any/all e-mail or Internet correspondence for security and/or network management purposes. Violation of this e-mail policy may result in disciplinary action.

Device Use

The device resources of GPS are available to authorized students and families for educational, research, and administrative purposes. In order to maintain this policy, it is essential that the students themselves observe reasonable standards of behavior regarding the use of the devices. The following actions are prohibited:

- Any attempt to modify or damage a device, network, or software
- Any attempt to modify the original system configurations
- Improper use of the device equipment
- Installation or use of non-academic games on GPS systems
- Recreational game playing
- Unauthorized use of a GPS account belonging to another user
- Unauthorized reading, use of, or deletion of private files or email belonging to another user
- Sharing username and passwords with other students or any other person
- Any attempt to circumvent (hacking/bypassing) system protection and security features
- Knowingly using any system to produce system failure or degrade performance
- Engaging in unauthorized duplication, alteration or destruction of data, programs or software
- Transmitting or disclosing data, programs or software belonging to others or duplicating copyrighted materials
- Use of device resources for private purposes, including, but not limited to, the use of device resources for profit making or illegal purposes

GPS reserves the right to investigate any of the above abuses, as well as any other interference with the proper functioning of the GPS network or infringements upon another user's rights. Any violation will result in disciplinary action. Consequences vary but may include suggested payments for damages and or restorative practices if payment is limited or not possible. Replacement costs are listed below. The School's CEO and Principal will make the final decision.

Item	Cost	Repair/Replacement needed if...
Earbuds	\$1	Earbuds are lost/broken.
Charger	\$30	Charger is lost/broken.
Display Cable	\$20	Connection to the screen is damaged/Screen is separated from rest of tablet.
Screen	\$70	Screen is cracked.
Tablet	\$300	Original Tablet is not accepted for warranty due to exterior/water damage. Original Tablet is not able to be repaired and is decommissioned. Original tablet is lost.

Take Home Policy

Individual families can discuss policies for taking home tablets and chargers. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the academic need and desired improved outcomes as a result of taking the tablet and charger home. The Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy continues to be applied to all students and all devices, regardless of the location where the device is being used. The technology resources provided are intended for student learning, therefore the policies must be adhered to for both safety and

compliance. Families should note: while there is some content filtering that is part of the individual tablets, content filtering capabilities will vary and may be reduced depending on the non-GPS network(s) that tablets may connect to.

ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “Charter School”) believes that providing access to technology enhances the educational experience for students. However, student use of school computers, networks, and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. To make that experience successful for everyone, students must abide by the following terms and conditions:

1. **Security.** Students shall not impair the security of Charter School technology resources. Students shall:
 - a. Not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the GPS system or to any other computer system through the GPS system, or go beyond their authorized access. This prohibition includes intentionally seeking information about passwords belonging to other students, modifying passwords belonging to other students, illegally obtaining wireless passkeys, or attempting to login through another person's account. Further, students may not attempt to access, copy, or modify another user's files. These actions are not permitted and may be illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing."
 - b. Safeguard all personal passwords. Students should not share passwords with others. Students are expected to notify an administrator immediately if they identify a possible security problem.
2. **Authorized Use.** Students may use Charter School technology resources when directed by a teacher, when technology has been designated for open student use (e.g., computers in the library), and for other educational purposes.
3. **Protection Measures.** While the Charter School is able exercise reasonable control over content created and purchased by the Charter School, it has limited control over content accessed via the internet and no filtering technology is 100% effective and this technology may occasionally fail. Neither the Charter School nor its staff shall be responsible for the failure of any technology protection measures, violations of copyright restrictions, or user mistakes, misuse or negligence. The student and parent agree not to hold the Charter School or any Charter School staff responsible for the failure of any technology protection measures, violations of copyright restrictions, or user mistakes, misuse or negligence.
4. **Inappropriate Use.** Charter School technology, hardware, software and bandwidth are shared and limited resources and all users have an obligation to use those resources responsibly. Students are provided access to the Charter School technology primarily for educational purposes. Students shall not use Charter School technology or equipment for personal activities or for activities that violate school policy or local law. These include but are not limited to:
 - a. Attempting to subvert network security, impair the functionality of the network, or bypass restrictions set by network administrators.
 - b. Destroying data by spreading computer viruses or vandalizing data, software, or equipment.
 - c. Using hacking tools on the network or intentionally introducing malicious code or viruses into the School's network.
 - d. Installing software on Charter School equipment without the permission of a teacher or other authorized School staff person or using any software or proxy service to obscure either the student's IP address or the sites that the student visits.
 - e. Engaging in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of a person, etc.
 - f. Engaging in any activity that is harmful to other student(s), including the use of technology to harass, intimidate, bully or otherwise disrupt the educational process.
 - g. Downloading illegal music, books, video, software or other content in violation of licensing requirements, copyright or other intellectual property rights and without payment to the originator.

- h. Using software applications that have a continuous connection to the internet that is streaming steadily and consuming large amount of internet bandwidth (e.g. bit-torrent, etc.) for the purpose of obtaining illegal content.
 - i. Downloading, viewing or sharing inappropriate content, including pornographic, defamatory or otherwise offensive material.
 - j. Conducting any activity that is in violation of Charter School policy, the student code of conduct or local, state or federal law.
 - k. Conducting for-profit business.
 - l. Accessing or attempting to access material or systems on the network that the student is not authorized to access.
5. **No Expectation of Privacy.** Student acknowledges that GPS reserves the right to monitor the use of the Internet through its system, at all times. GPS will collect and store information about usage which includes, but may not be limited to, the date and time a user visits the site and information about the user's activities while online. Except as otherwise specified in this Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy, GPS will not use cookies to gather personal identifying information about any of its students. Personal identifying information includes, but is not limited to, names, home addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers. GPS students should have no privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the GPS system. GPS does not encourage students to store personal data on the GPS system - GPS cannot be responsible for the loss or damage of such data.
6. **Disruptive Activity.** Students should not intentionally interfere with the performance of the Charter School's network or intentionally damage any Charter School technology resources.
7. **Unauthorized Networks.** Students may not create unauthorized wireless networks to access the Charter School's network. This includes establishing wireless access points, wireless routers and open networks on personal devices.
8. **Inappropriate Language.** All students should be aware that using inappropriate language electronically can be damaging to others and may lead to disciplinary action.
9. **Consequences of Inappropriate Use.** Students who violate this Agreement will be subject to discipline, which may include loss of access to Charter School technology resources and/or other appropriate disciplinary or legal action in accordance with the Charter School policy and applicable laws.
10. **Technology Systems/Equipment Care.** Students are not permitted to have food or drink near computers/other technology and must keep equipment and assigned areas free of vandalism.

After reading the Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement, please complete this form to indicate that you agree with the terms and conditions provided. The signature of both the student and parent/guardian are mandatory before access may be granted to the technologies available. This document, which incorporates the Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy, reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties.

As a user of Charter School technologies, I have read Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy and hereby agree to comply with it and the Acceptable Use Agreement.

I understand that computer use is a privilege and not a right. I understand that if I violate this policy in any way, I will be subject to a referral and possible suspension. I understand that the parent or guardian of a minor student shall be liable for the replacement cost for property the Charter School loaned to the student that the student fails to return or that is willfully cut, defaced or otherwise damaged, up to an amount not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), adjusted annually for inflation. When the minor and parent are unable to pay for the damages, the Charter School will provide a program of voluntary work for the minor in lieu of the payment of monetary damages. A student over the age of majority shall be liable for the same. (Ed. Code 48904).

Student Name (please print): _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

For School Employees Only

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the Internet and Device Acceptable Use Policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement. I understand that the schools policies, procedures, rules, and regulations which apply to students also apply to me as an adult user of the schools technology, in addition to any separate policies governing employee use of technology.

Employee Signature: _____

Employee Name (Please Print) _____

INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

Board Policy #: 19; Adopted/Ratified: July 25, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The purpose of this policy is to govern the use of Independent Study for students who may be absent for an extended period of time. Independent Study requires approval from the Principal in writing. In an extenuating circumstance (i.e. serious illness or injury) the Principal may approve additional Independent Study days following conference with the parents and teacher.

Independent Study is conducted solely for the educational benefit of the students attending the School as a means to encourage daily engagement in school work even during times of extended absence. No student is required to request or participate in an Independent Study program during an extended absence. Parents are to give advance notice when possible of a request for Independent Study. In an extenuating circumstance (i.e. a serious illness, injury or family emergency), with Principal approval, a certificated staff member/teacher will work with the parent to implement an Independent Study program in an expedited manner with less than one (1) school day notice.

The Board of Directors has adopted the following statements in accordance with Education Code Section 51747: Subdivisions (d), (e), and (f) shall not apply to pupils that participate in an independent study program for fewer than 16 schooldays in a school year.” (Education Code Section 51747(i))

- Subdivision (d): tiered reengagement strategies
- Subdivision (e): synchronous instruction and live interaction
- Subdivision (f): plan to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously

Each student’s independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of an assigned certificated employee or employees.

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

- For pupils in kindergarten and grades one through three, **three (3) days**.
- For pupils in grades four through eight, **three (3) days**.

When special or extenuating circumstances justify a longer time for individual students, the director or their designee may approve a period not to exceed **seven (7) days**.

Missed Assignments and Level of Satisfactory Progress: When any student fails to complete **75%** of missed assignments during any period of **ten (10) school days** or fails to make satisfactory progress (as defined below) the school will conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain in independent study or to return to the regular school program. A written record of the findings of any evaluation made pursuant to this subdivision shall be maintained in the pupil's permanent record and 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.

Satisfactory educational progress shall be based on all of the following indicators, as applicable:

- Pupil achievement and engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- Statewide assessments that are part of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (a.k.a., “CAASPP”, or any other subsequent assessment as certified by the state board of education),
- The percentage of pupils that have successfully completed courses that satisfy the requirements for entrance to the University of California and California State University,
- The percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy the requirements for career technical education sequences or programs that align with state board-approved career technical education standards and frameworks,
- The percentage of pupils who have successfully completed both the university entrance and career technical courses specified above,
- The percentage of English learner pupils who make progress toward English proficiency as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (“ELPAC” or subsequent assessments of English proficiency certified by the state board),
- The English learner reclassification rate,
- The percentage of pupils who have passed an advanced placement exam with a score of “3” or higher, and
- The percentage of pupils who demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness).
- Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:
 - School attendance rates,
 - Chronic absenteeism rates,
 - Middle school dropout rates,
 - High school dropout rates, and
 - High school graduation rates.
- The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.
- Learning requirement concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
- Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

Academic Content: Independent study shall include the provision of content aligned to grade level standards that is provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.

Independent study shall include access to all courses offered by the School for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A-G admission criteria, as applicable.

Tiered Reengagement: For all pupils who are not generating attendance for more than three schooldays or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of their written agreement, the school shall have procedures including the following reengagement strategies:

- Verifying current contact information for the pupil,
- Notifying parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation,
- A plan for outreach from the school to determine pupil needs, including a connection with health and social services, as necessary,
- A clear standard requiring a pupil-parent-educator conference, as defined below, to review the pupil's written agreement, reconsider the independent study program's impact on the pupil's achievement and well-being, consistent with the school's policies regarding the maximum amount of time allowed between the assignment and completion of pupil's assigned work, satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study,

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

Opportunities for Live Interaction and Synchronous Instruction: The School shall plan to provide opportunities for live interaction and synchronous instruction as follows for all pupils engaged in independent study:

- For pupils in transitional kindergarten through grades 1 to 3 inclusive, the School shall plan to provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the year,
- For pupils in grades 4 to 8 inclusive, the School shall plan to provide opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the year,

For the purposes of this policy, "live interaction" means interaction between the pupil and certificated or non-certificated staff, and may include peers, provided for the purpose of maintaining school connectedness, including but not limited to wellness checks, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction. This live interaction may take place in-person, or in the form of internet or telephonic communication.

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

Return to In-Person Instruction: For pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study, the School shall allow the student to return expeditiously, and in no case later than five instructional days,

Written Agreements: (5 C.C.R. § 11702) A current written agreement for each independent study pupil shall be maintained on file for each participating student. Each agreement shall be signed, dated, and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for 15 school days or fewer, each written agreement shall be signed, during the school year in which the independent study program takes place, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as

having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable. The independent study agreement for a student will require and cover a study plan that represents the same amount of study that would be required of a student in the classroom and be consistent with the School curriculum and course of study of students participating in the regular classroom setting.

Agreement Content: Each independent study written agreement shall contain at least all of the following provisions:

- 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 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 for all pupils to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the academic program and complete assigned work.
- A statement of the policies adopted 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 prior to an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study. The level of satisfactory educational progress and missed assignments shall conform to the requirements specified above in this policy.
- The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for participating in independent study, recognizing that 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 elementary grades pupils, 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 as needed to be consistent with the student's individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), pupils in foster care, pupils 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.

For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for 15 school days or fewer, each written agreement shall be signed, during the school year in which the independent study program takes place, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable. Written agreements may be maintained electronically along with and may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts and assignment and work records. Written agreements may be signed using electronic signatures that comply with applicable state and federal standards and are intended by the signatory to have the same effect as a handwritten signature.

Before signing a written agreement pursuant to this section, and upon the request of the parent or guardian of a pupil, the School shall conduct a phone, videoconference, or in-person pupil-parent-educator conference or other school meeting during which the pupil, parent or guardian, and, if requested by the pupil or parent, an education advocate, may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the pupil in independent study, before making the decision about enrollment or disenrollment in the various options for learning.

- (a) For pupils in all grade levels offered by the School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work shall be 3 school days.
- (b) The assignment must be completed and returned to the teacher through a face to face meeting, facsimile, mail, or other credible method of meeting and reviewed upon completion of the Independent Study Program for all grades, unless extended by the Principal in consultation with the teacher.
- (c) An evaluation will be made by a committee made up of the student's teacher and the Principal as to whether it is in the student's best interest to participate in the Independent Study program during an absence upon the student missing three (3) assignments. A written record of the findings of this evaluation shall be placed in the student's permanent record and shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years from the date of the evaluation. If the student transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.
- (d) A written Independent Study master agreement for each student shall be maintained on file. Each agreement shall be signed and dated and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance ("ADA") pursuant to that agreement. The agreement shall contain all the items listed below:
 - The manner, time, frequency and place for submitting a student's assignments and for reporting his or her progress.
 - The objectives and methods of study for the student's work, and the methods utilized to evaluate that work.
 - The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the student.
 - A statement of the policies adopted herein regarding the maximum length of time allotted between the assignment and the completion of a student's assigned work, and the number of missed assignments allowed prior to an evaluation of whether or not the student should be allowed to continue in Independent Study.
 - The duration of the Independent Study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in Independent Study under the agreement. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one (1) 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 student upon completion.

- The inclusion of a statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a student who is referred or assigned to any school, class or program pursuant to Education Code Section 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the student through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.
 - Each written agreement shall be signed, prior to the commencement of Independent Study, by the student, the student’s parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated teacher/staff member who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and all other persons who have direct responsibility for providing instructional assistance to the student. For purposes of this paragraph "caregiver" means a person who has met the requirements of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 6550) of the Family Code.
- (e) Attendance Accounting: The School recognizes that families may not evenly distribute student’s work assignments over weekdays. However, due to strict State law requirements for charter school attendance, the School expects each student to be engaged in an educational activity required of them in the assignment on each weekday that the School is in session and asks that this “daily engagement” be documented on a daily basis in the student log by the parent/guardian. This should not be read to prohibit schoolwork on weekends and should not be read to dictate the manner in which a family distributes the assignments over the independent study period.

The School asks that a parent/guardian refrain from documenting any “daily engagement” on a day where a student did not engage in any educational activity required of them by the assignment. 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.

Limitations on Restraint and Seclusion of Students

Board Policy #:20; Adopted/Ratified: December 10, 2024; Revision Date: TBD

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) staff shall avoid the use of seclusion and behavioral restraint of students whenever possible. Seclusion or behavioral restraint may be used only to control student behavior that poses a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, which cannot be prevented by a response that is less restrictive. Seclusion and behavioral restraint of students shall not be used in any form as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation.

The Governing Board (“Board”) recognizes that any effort to change the behavior of another individual represents a degree of intrusion into that individual’s life. To justify that intrusion, reasonable assurances must be given that, as a result of the intervention, the individual’s behavior will change in a timely manner and that this change will benefit the individual. Therefore, in accordance with law, all efforts to change behavior must be based on effective techniques and the least intrusive procedure likely to be effective will be used.

Definitions

- “*Behavioral restraint*” includes mechanical restraint or physical restraint used as an intervention when a student presents an immediate danger to self or to others. Behavioral restraint does not include postural restraints or devices used to improve a student's mobility and independent functioning rather than to restrict movement.
- “*Mechanical restraint*” means the use of a device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. Mechanical restraint does not include the use of devices as prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, including, but not limited to, adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment; vehicle safety restraints during the transport of a student; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices which permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm. Mechanical restraint also does not include the use of devices by peace officers or security personnel for detention or for public safety purposes.
- “*Physical restraint*” means a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his or her torso, arms, legs, or head freely. “Physical restraint” does not include a physical escort, which means a temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location. “Physical restraint” also does not include the use of force by peace officers or security personnel for detention or for public safety purposes.
- “*Prone restraint*” means the application of a behavioral restraint on a student in a facedown position.
- “*Seclusion*” means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or an area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a timeout involving the

monitored separation of the student in an unlocked setting, which is implemented for the purpose of calming the student.

Prohibitions

Charter School staff shall not take any of the following actions:

1. Use seclusion or a behavioral restraint for the purpose of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation.
2. Use locked seclusion, unless it is in a facility otherwise licensed or permitted by state law to use as a locked room.
3. Use a physical restraint technique that obstructs a student's respiratory airway or impairs a student's breathing or respiratory capacity, including a technique in which a staff member places pressure on the student's back or places his/her body weight against the student's torso or back.
4. Use a behavioral restraint technique that restricts breathing, including, but not limited to, the use of a pillow, blanket, carpet, mat, or other item to cover a student's face.
5. Place a student in a facedown position with the student's hands held or restrained behind the student's back.
6. Use a behavioral restraint for longer than is necessary to contain the behavior that poses a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.
7. Utilize any amount of force that exceeds that which is reasonable and necessary under the circumstances.
8. Administer a drug that is not a standard treatment for a student's medical or psychiatric condition in order to control the student's behavior or restrict the student's freedom of movement.
9. Utilize any behavioral intervention that is designed to, or likely to, cause physical pain, including, but not limited to, electric shock.
10. Utilize any behavioral intervention that involves the release of noxious, toxic, or otherwise unpleasant sprays, mists, or substances in proximity to the face of the individual.
11. Utilize any behavioral intervention that denies adequate sleep, food, water, shelter, bedding, physical comfort, or access to bathroom facilities.
12. Utilize any behavioral intervention that is designed to subject, used to subject, or likely to subject, the individual to verbal abuse, ridicule, or humiliation, or that can be expected to cause excessive emotional trauma.
13. Utilize any behavioral interventions that employ a device, material, or objects that simultaneously immobilize all four extremities, including the procedure known as prone containment, except that prone containment or similar techniques may be used by trained personnel as a limited emergency intervention.
14. Utilize any behavioral intervention that precludes adequate supervision of the individual.

15. Utilize any behavioral intervention that deprives the individual of one or more senses.

Limited Use of Seclusion or Restraint

As stated above, Charter School staff shall avoid the use of seclusion and behavioral restraint of students whenever possible. Seclusion or behavioral restraint may be used only to control student behavior that poses a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, which cannot be prevented by a response that is less restrictive. No emergency intervention shall be employed for longer than is necessary to contain the behavior. A situation that requires prolonged use of an emergency intervention shall require the staff to seek assistance of the Charter School Executive Director and/or law enforcement as applicable to the situation.

If a student is put in seclusion, the student shall be under constant, direct observation of a staff member. Such observation may be through a window or another barrier through which the staff member is able to make direct eye contact with the student but shall not be made through indirect means such as a security camera or closed-circuit television.

If a student is restrained, staff shall afford the student the least restrictive alternative and the maximum freedom of movement, and shall use the least number of restraint points, while ensuring the physical safety of the student and others.

If a prone restraint technique is used on a student, a staff member shall observe the student for any signs of physical distress throughout the use of the restraint. Whenever possible, the staff member monitoring the student shall not be involved in restraining the student.

The Charter School Executive Director shall ensure that whenever possible Charter School staff who have obtained training and certification from a certified physical restraint training agency shall administer physical restraint on students and the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one (1) adult who does not participate in the restraint.

Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student demonstrates significant physical distress, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and Charter School staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.

Charter School staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student. Following the release of a student from a restraint, the Charter School shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow up is appropriate for the student or any student who witnessed the incident.

Special Education Reporting Requirements

For students with exceptional needs, the student's parent/guardian or shall be notified within one (1) school day if a restraint or seclusion is used or serious property damage occurs. A behavioral emergency report ("BER") shall immediately be completed and maintained in the student's file.

The BER shall include all of the following:

1. The name and age of the individual with exceptional needs.
2. The setting and location of the incident.
3. The name of the staff or other persons involved.
4. A description of the incident and the emergency intervention used, and whether the individual with exceptional needs is currently engaged in any systematic behavioral intervention plan.
5. Details of any injuries sustained by the individual with exceptional needs, or others, including staff, as a result of the incident.

All BERs shall immediately be forwarded to, and reviewed by, the Charter School Executive Director.

If a BER is written regarding an individual with exceptional needs who does not have a behavioral intervention plan (“BIP”), the Charter School Executive Director shall, within two (2) days, schedule an individualized education program (“IEP”) team meeting to review the BER, to determine the necessity for a functional behavioral assessment (“FBA”), and to determine the necessity for an interim plan. The IEP team shall document the reasons for not conducting the FBA, not developing an interim plan, or both, as applicable. If a BER is written regarding an individual with exceptional needs who has a BIP, and the incident involved a previously unseen serious behavior problem, or a previously designed intervention was ineffective, the IEP team will review the BER and determine if the incident constitutes a need to modify the BIP.

In the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child’s learning or that of others, the IEP team shall consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior.

Restraint administered to a student with a disability pursuant to a FBA, IEP, and BIP, developed in accordance with state and federal law to which the Charter School and the student’s parents or guardians have agreed, shall be deemed to meet the requirements of these procedures.

Documentation and Website Posting Requirement

The Charter School Executive Director or designee shall annually collect data on the number of times that seclusion, mechanical restraint, and physical restraint were used on students and the number of students subjected to such techniques.

The data shall be disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender, and reported for students with a Section 504 plan, students with an IEP, and all other students. This report shall be submitted to the California Department of Education (“CDE”) no later than three (3) months after the end of each school year and shall be available as a public record.

The data collected and reported in accordance with this section shall be available as a public record and posted annually on the Charter School’s internet website.

Monitoring and Training

Charter School shall continuously monitor the use of restraints and seclusions in an effort to prevent the inappropriate uses of these practices. Charter School shall adhere to the following:

1. Staff who implement BIPs for students with disabilities shall be properly trained, have access to the student's IEP, be knowledgeable about its contents, and understand the responsibilities for implementation.
2. A Behavioral Intervention Case Manager ("BICM") or Board Certified Behavior Analyst ("BCBA") shall train all staff working with a student with an IEP to appropriately implement the student's BIP and appropriate interventions.
3. Only staff trained in emergency interventions may use them.
4. Charter School shall keep a detailed record of the training provided to personnel who may utilize emergency interventions and update the information annually to ensure that personnel qualifications and training comply with Charter School and/or special education local plan area ("SELPA") policies.
5. Prior to contracting with a nonpublic school ("NPS") or a residential treatment center ("RTC") for placement of a student with an IEP, Charter School shall ensure that the NPS or RTC trains staff who will have contact or interaction with students during the schoolday in the use of evidence-based practices and interventions specific to the unique behavioral needs of the nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency's student population. If Charter School intends to place a student at a NPS or RTC serving students with significant behavioral needs or who are on behavioral intervention plans, the Charter School will ensure the NPS or RTC has an individual onsite during school hours who is qualified, and responsible for the design, planning, and implementation of behavioral interventions. Charter School shall comply with all other requirements for oversight and monitoring of the NPS or RTC pursuant to AB 1172.
6. If Charter School personnel suspect that improper restraint or seclusion practices have been used, Charter School shall immediately remove the student from the environment and conduct an investigation.

Student Study Team

Board Policy #:21; Adopted/Ratified: December 10, 2024; Revision Date: TBD

The Board of Directors of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes there are students who may need additional support within the classroom both academically and behaviorally.

A Student Study Team (“SST”) process utilizes a team of Charter School staff dedicated to identifying and supporting students who exhibit academic or behavioral problems by providing early systematic assistance to student and connect them to appropriate interventions and supports through the regular instructional setting.

An SST uses a systematic problem-solving approach to assist students with concerns which are interfering with success. The SST clarifies problems and concerns; develops strategies and organizes resources; provides a system for school accountability; and serves to assist and counsel the parent, teacher and student.

The SST process is a function of the general education program. All students can benefit from an SST, including but not limited to, those students achieving below or above grade level and students who have experienced emotional trauma, behavioral issues, or language issues.

Referral to an SST

A student may be referred to the SST process for any reason, including, but not limited to:

1. Lack of academic progress;
2. Increasing behavioral concerns;
3. Consideration for retention;
4. Attendance/truancy issues;
5. Parent concerns; and/or
6. Any other reason appearing to impact a student’s access to education.

Any GPS teacher or staff member who has a concern for a student can refer that student to the SST for consideration.

SST Meeting

The purpose of the SST is to discuss issues and concerns related to a student’s performance, identify intervention strategies which may help a student succeed, and monitor his or her progress to ensure learning and development. The team may suggest regular program interventions and/or support services available to all students. The SST may suggest and offer different supports that may include monitoring student progress, developing intervention plans, referring students to intervention services (e.g. reading or math specialists, counseling, etc.) and implementing increasing tiers of school-based intervention services, as necessary.

Anyone who is connected with the student can be included in the SST to provide information to share about the student’s strengths, concerns and strategies which have been used in the past. These people may include, but are

not limited to, teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, counselors, doctors, administration, social workers, and/or law enforcement. The meeting is designed to bring out the best in the people involved.

The GPS SST meeting steps include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Team members introduce themselves and their roles
2. Purpose and process of the meeting are stated
3. Timekeeper is appointed
4. Strengths of the student are identified
5. Concerns are discussed, clarified and listed
6. Pertinent information and modifications are listed
7. Concerns are synthesized with one or two chosen for focus
8. Strategies to deal with concerns are chosen; options are brainstormed
9. Team chooses best strategies to carry into actions
10. Individuals make commitments to actions
11. Person responsible and timelines for actions are recorded
12. Formalization of an SST intervention plan
13. Follow-up meeting date is set

Follow-up after an SST

After implementation of an SST intervention plan and follow up meeting, if the student continues to exhibit academic and/or behavioral concerns and/or should the student need additional supports, the SST may discuss making revisions to the student's intervention plan and/or providing the student with additional supports, or if necessary, the SST may refer the student for assessment for special education services and/or a Section 504 accommodation plan as applicable.

English Language Learners

Board Policy #:22; Adopted/Ratified: December 10, 2024; Revision Date: TBD

The Board of Directors (“Board”) of Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the education of students whose primary language is one other than English, referred to as “English Learners.” GPS adopts this Policy to ensure high-quality language instruction and access to education for all students identified as an English Learner as defined below.

Definitions

“English learner” (“EL”) means an individual aged 3 through 21 who is currently enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards, the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or the opportunity to participate fully in society. This includes an individual who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; an individual who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas and who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or an individual who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant.

“Designated English Language Development” means instruction during a time set aside in the regular school day for focused instruction on the state-adopted English language development (“ELD”) standards to assist English Learners to develop critical English language skills necessary for academic content learning in English.

“Integrated English Language Development” means instruction in which the state-adopted ELD standards are used in tandem with the state-adopted academic content standards. Integrated ELD includes specially designed academic instruction in English.

Identification and Assessment

At or before the time of a student’s initial California enrollment, the Charter School shall conduct, in writing, a home language survey to identify whether the primary or native language of the student is a language other than English. If a parent/guardian’s response indicates a primary or native language other than English, and the Charter School determines the student is eligible for initial assessment, the Charter School shall promptly notify the parent or guardian, in writing, prior to the administration of the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (“ELPAC”) initial assessment. Students in transitional kindergarten shall not be subject to the ELPAC.

Within thirty (30) calendar days of their initial enrollment, students who are identified as having a primary language other than English, as determined by the home language survey, and for whom there is no record of results from an English language development test shall be assessed using the ELPAC.

GPS shall notify parents/guardians of their child’s official results on the Initial ELPAC within thirty (30) calendar days following the GPS’s receipt of the results. This Notice must also include:

- a) The reasons for the identification of their child as an EL and in need of placement in a language instruction educational program.
- b) The child’s level of English proficiency, how such level was assessed, and the status of the child’s academic achievement.

- c) The methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is, or will be, participating and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how such programs differ in content, instructional goals, and the use of English and a native language in instruction.
- d) How the program in which their child is, or will be, participating will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child.
- e) How the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.
- f) The specific exit requirements for the program.
- g) In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the objectives of the individualized education program of the child.
- h) Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance on the following:
 - i. Detailing the right that parents have to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request.
 - ii. Detailing the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available.
 - iii. Assisting parents in selecting among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

For those students who have not been identified as ELs prior to the beginning of the school year, but are identified as ELs during such school year, the Charter School shall notify the parents within the first two (2) weeks of the student's placement in a language instruction educational program. Notice to parents shall meet requirements specified above.

Within ninety (90) days of initial enrollment, students identified as having limited English proficiency shall be further assessed for primary language proficiency in comprehension, speaking, reading and writing when assessment is available. The Executive Director or designee shall develop criteria for determining student needs on the basis of these assessments.

To oversee test administration, the Executive Director or designee shall annually designate a Charter School ELPAC coordinator and a site coordinator for each test site in accordance with 5 CCR §§ 11518.40-11518.45.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a disability shall take the ELPAC with the designated supports or accommodations for testing that the student has regularly used during instruction and classroom assessment as delineated in the student's individualized education program ("IEP") or Section 504 plan that are appropriate and necessary to address the student's individual needs. When a student's IEP team determines that the student has a significant cognitive disability such that the student is unable to participate in the initial or summative assessment, or a section of either test, even with resources, the student shall be assessed using the Alternate ELPAC, as specified in the student's IEP.

When a student's IEP or Section 504 plan specifies that the student has a disability that precludes assessment such that there are no appropriate accommodations for assessment in one or more of the domains (listening,

speaking, reading, and writing), the student shall be assessed in the remaining domains in which it is possible to assess the student.

Additional Assessments

Once identified as an English learner, a student shall be annually assessed for language proficiency until the student is reclassified based on criteria specified in the accompanying administrative regulation.

In addition, English learners' academic achievement in English language arts, mathematics, science, and any additional subject required by law shall be assessed using the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress. As necessary, the test shall be administered with testing variations in accordance with 5 CCR §§ 854.1-854.3. English learners who are in their first twelve (12) months of attending a school in the United States shall be exempted from taking the English language arts assessment to the extent allowed by federal law.

Formative assessments may be utilized to analyze student performance and appropriately adapt teaching methodologies and instructions.

Instruction

GPS intends to provide English learners with challenging curriculum and instruction that maximize the attainment of high levels of proficiency in English, advance multilingual capabilities, and facilitate student achievement in the Charter School's regular course of study.

English learners shall be provided differentiated English language development instruction which is targeted to their English proficiency level. Such instruction shall be based on sound instructional theory, be aligned with state content standards, emphasize inquiry-based learning and critical thinking skills, and be integrated across all subject areas.

Enhanced instruction must be provided, which may include:

- a) Identification, development, and acquisition of curricular materials, educational software, and technologies; Instructional services designed to assist the achievement of immigrant children and youth in United States schools, such as programs of introduction to the educational system and civics education; or
- b) Activities, coordinated with community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, private sector entities, or other entities with expertise in working with immigrants, to offer comprehensive community services to parents and families of immigrant children.

The Charter School must ensure that English Learner students are not denied participation in the standard instructional program, meaning they cannot be denied any of the following:

- a) Enrollment in the standard instructional program, which, at a minimum, consists of:
 - i. Core curriculum courses (reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science), and
 - ii. Courses required for middle school grade promotion.

- b) Enrollment in a full course load of courses that are part of the standard instructional program

However, an English learner may be denied participation in any such course if the student has been enrolled in a school in the United States for less than twelve (12) months or is enrolled in a program designed to develop the basic English skills of newly arrived immigrant students, and the course of study provided to the student is designed to remedy academic deficits incurred during participation and to enable the student to attain parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable length of time after the student enters the school system.

The Charter School must monitor student academic progress and provide additional and appropriate educational services to EL students for the purposes of overcoming language barriers in each subject matter. Action to overcome content academic barriers must be taken before the deficits become irreparable.

Language Acquisition Programs

GPS shall offer research-based language acquisition programs that are designed to ensure English acquisition as rapidly and as effectively as possible and that provide instruction to students on the state-adopted academic content standards, including the English language development standards.

At a minimum, the Charter School shall offer a structured English immersion program which includes designated and integrated English language development. In the structured English immersion program, nearly all of the classroom instruction shall be provided in English, but with the curriculum and presentation designed for students who are learning English.

For the purpose of determining the amount of instruction to be conducted in English in the structured English immersion program, “nearly all” means that all classroom instruction shall be conducted in English except for clarification, explanation, and support as needed.

In addition, language acquisition programs offered by the Charter School may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) A dual-language immersion program that provides integrated language learning and academic instruction for native speakers of English and native speakers of another language, with the goals of high academic achievement, first and second language proficiency, and cross-cultural understanding.
- b) A transitional or developmental program for English learners that provides literacy and academic instruction in English and a student's native language and that enables an English learner to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content and higher order thinking skills, including critical thinking, in order to meet state academic content standards.

In establishing the Charter School's language acquisition programs, the Executive Director or designee shall consult with parents/guardians and the community during the LCAP development process. The Executive Director or designee shall also consult with administrators, teachers, and other personnel with appropriate authorizations and experience in establishing a language acquisition program.

At the beginning of each school year or upon a student's enrollment, parents/guardians shall be provided information on the types of language acquisition programs available to students enrolled in the Charter School. (See Annual Notice below).

Reclassification/Redesignation

GPS shall continue to provide additional and appropriate educational services to English language learners for the purposes of overcoming language barriers until the English language learners have:

- a) Demonstrated English language proficiency comparable to that of the school's average native English language speakers; and
- b) Recouped any academic deficits which may have incurred in other areas of the core curriculum as a result of language barriers.

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

The following measures shall be considered to determine whether an English language learner shall be reclassified as fluent-English-proficient:

- a) Assessment of English language proficiency utilizing the ELPAC as the primary criterion, and objective assessment of the student's English reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Examples of additional assessment data include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Basic performance on the California Standards Test in English Language Arts
 - ii. Objective data on the student's overall academic performance in English
- b) Recommendations of the student's classroom teacher and any certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions
- c) Comparison of the performance of the student in basic skills against an observably established range of performance in basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient students of the same age, that demonstrates whether the student is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for students of the same age whose native language is English
- d) Parent/guardian participation and consultation.

Parent/guardians shall receive notice and a description of the redesignation process, including notice of their right to participate in the process. Parent/guardian participation in the process shall be encouraged.

The Executive Director or designee shall provide subsequent monitoring and support for redesignated students, including but not limited to monitoring for four years the performance of redesignated students in the core curriculum in comparison with their native-English speaking peers, monitoring the rate of redesignation, and ensuring correct classification and placement.

The Executive Director or designee shall develop a process to monitor the effectiveness of the Charter School's program for English language and academic success for each English language learner.

Documentation and Translation of Documents

GPS will maintain documentation of all assessments and evaluations, as well as all decisions and participants in those decisions in the student's permanent record.

GPS will translate certain records for those parents or guardians who speak a language group other than English representing fifteen (15) percent or more of the students enrolled in GPS, as determined from the CALPADS data for the preceding year. Specifically, GPS will provide all notices, reports, statements, or records sent to such parents or guardians in the primary language, in addition to being written in English, and parents or guardians may respond to GPS either in English or the primary language.

Inclusion in the Local Control Accountability Plan

GPS shall identify in its local control and accountability plan ("LCAP") goals to improve student outcomes, identified through the needs assessment, including those which address academic and language proficiency needs of EL students. The LCAP must include evidence-based strategies, specific actions or services to reach those goals.

Staff Qualifications and Training

The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that all staff employed to teach English learners possess the appropriate authorization from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

GPS shall provide high-quality effective professional development to teachers (including teachers in classroom settings that are not the settings of language instruction educational programs), administrators, and other school or community-based organization personnel to improve the instruction and assessment of English learners and enhance staff's ability to understand and use curricula, assessment, and instructional strategies for English learners. All professional development shall be based on scientifically based research demonstrating the effectiveness of the professional development in increasing children's English proficiency or substantially increasing the subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, and teaching skills of such teachers. Such professional development shall be of sufficient intensity and duration to produce a positive and lasting impact on teachers' performance in the classroom.

Staff development shall also address the sociocultural needs of English learners and provide opportunities for teachers to engage in supportive, collaborative learning communities.

To support students' English language development and assist parents and families in helping their children to improve their academic achievement and become active participants in their children's education, the Executive Director or designee may provide an adult literacy training program that leads to English fluency for parents/guardians and community members.

Outreach

The Executive Director or designee shall encourage parent/guardian and community involvement in the development and evaluation of programs for English learners. The Executive Director or designee may also provide an English development literacy training program for parents/guardians and community members so that they may better support students' English language development.

The Charter School shall implement an effective means of outreach to parents of ELs to inform the parents regarding how the parents can be involved in the education of their children and be active participants in assisting their children with the following:

- a) Attaining English proficiency;
- b) Achieving at high levels within a well-rounded education; and
- c) Meeting the challenging state academic standards expected of all students.

Implementing an effective means of outreach to parents shall include holding, and sending notice of opportunities for, regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from EL parents.

Program Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness of the GPS's educational program for English learners, the Executive Director or designee shall report to the Board, at least annually regarding:

- a) A description of the programs and activities conducted with Title III funds, including how such programs and activities supplemented programs funded primarily with state or local funds;
- b) The number and percentage of EL students making progress toward attaining English language proficiency, including EL students with a disability;
- c) Progress of English learners towards proficiency in English based on the SBE-approved ELPAC overall score of 4;
- d) The number and percentage of English learners reclassified each year;
- e) The number and percentage of students reclassified to fluent English proficient ("RFEP") that are meeting state grade-level content standards during each of the four years after reclassification, including EL students with a disability;
- f) The number and percentage of English learners who are or are at risk of being classified as long-term English learners in accordance with Education Code 313.1 and their date of first enrollment at the Charter School;
- g) The achievement of English learners on standards-based tests in core curricular areas;
- h) For any language acquisition program that includes instruction in a language other than English, student achievement in the non-English language in accordance with 5 CCR § 11309;
- i) Progress toward any other goals for English learners identified in the Charter School's LCAP;
- j) A comparison of current data with data from at least the previous year in regard to items #1-9 above;
- k) A comparison of data between the different language acquisition programs offered by the Charter School; and

Develop the next steps for program improvement based upon an analysis of the findings from items a- k above. The Executive Director or designee also shall provide the Board with regular reports regarding the effectiveness of the program.

Annual Notice

The annual notice of parent and guardian rights and responsibilities shall also notify parents of the language acquisition and language programs available in the Charter School. The annual notice must be distributed as required by *EC* sections 48980 and 48981. Parents of all students enrolling after the beginning of the academic school year shall be provided the notice of rights and responsibilities described above upon enrollment. The annual notice of parent and guardian rights and responsibilities shall include all of the following:

- a) A description of any language acquisition programs provided, including Structured English Immersion;
- b) Identification of any language to be taught in addition to English, when the program model includes instruction in another language;
- c) The information set forth in section 5 *CCR* Section 11309[c]:
 - i. Be designed using evidence-based research and include both Designated and Integrated ELD;
 - ii. Be allocated sufficient resources by the Charter School to be effectively implemented, including, but not limited to, certificated teachers with the appropriate authorizations, necessary instructional materials, pertinent professional development for the proposed program, and opportunities for parent and community engagement to support the proposed program goals; and
 - iii. Within a reasonable period of time, lead to:
 - 1. Grade-level proficiency in English, and, when the program model includes instruction in another language, proficiency in that other language; and
 - 2. Achievement of the state-adopted academic content standards in English, and, when the program model includes instruction in another language, achievement of the state-adopted academic content standards in that other language.
- d) The process to request establishment of a language acquisition program.

If the Charter School offers language programs, the notice shall specify the language(s) to be taught, and may include the program goals, methodology used, and evidence of the proposed program's effectiveness.

School Sponsored Field Trips and Cultural Excursions

Board Policy #:23; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

The Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “Charter School”) Board of Directors (the “Board”) recognizes and supports the concept of connecting our students with the broader community, both locally and globally, by providing field trips, cultural and art experiences, community service opportunities, and environmental education to fulfill the Charter School’s mission and philosophy. These activities help to promote tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of others, and enrich the educational experiences of the students, as well as meet the Charter School’s goal of creating passionate life-long learners. When a student is alert, observant, curious, reflective and respectful, learning and growth can occur anywhere, at any time, and, as educators, we must facilitate this dynamic process. There is no boundary to learning.

The safety and security of our students is a primary priority when planning or participating in field trips or excursions. These activities will be carried out in an appropriate manner to maximize and ensure student safety and to minimize the Charter School’s legal liability and financial cost.

The teaching team will continue to research and provide enriching learning opportunities to share with their students both within the classroom and out in the broader community.

Definition

A field trip or excursion is defined as students leaving Charter School grounds.

Monitoring Field Trips and Excursions

The teaching team is encouraged to plan, promote, and produce appropriate, effective, exciting and valuable educational field trips and excursions to expand student knowledge base and growth.

The CEO/Principal shall ensure that the field trips and excursions have an adequate number of adults attending and are monitored and are continually evaluated, thereby, ensuring that the activities promote the philosophy, goals and objectives of the Charter School’s educational program.

A first aid kit shall be in the possession of the sponsoring teacher or parent accompanying the GPS employee at all times during the student field trip or excursion.

Field Trip and Excursion Planning and Approval

The CEO/Principal will ensure that the following items will be adhered to for all Charter School field trips and excursions:

- 1.) The proposed field trip or excursion relates to the Charter School’s educational objectives
- 2.) The correct ratio of adult to students is met for supervision of the activity
- 3.) A means of transportation to and from the activity is provided
- 4.) Adequate restroom facilities, food and water will be available during the activity

Overnight field trips and excursions require both the above procedure and Board approval.

Even though we have a policy of inclusion, there may be a situation when the CEO/Principal must use his or her discretion to exclude a student from a field trip or excursion when that student's presence and participation would pose a safety or disciplinary risk.

The CEO/Principal shall not approve any activity that he/she considers to be inherently dangerous to students.

Permission Slips

In an effort to be efficient and environmentally sensitive, parents/guardians will have the option of signing one permission slip form at the beginning of each year authorizing their child(ren) to attend any field trip that is planned during the school year. Parents/guardians may instead, elect to receive and sign individual permission slips for each field trip or excursion throughout the year. Parents will be given advance notice of each field trip or excursion.

Notwithstanding any other portion of this policy, all overnight and out-of-state field trips require an individual permission slip.

The permission slip will include a waiver of all claims against the Charter School, its employees, and the State of California for injury, accident, illness or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion. Items that will be included on the permission slip are:

- 1.) An emergency phone number for the student
- 2.) Any medications the student is required to take with the time and dosage required
- 3.) Any medications the student is allergic to
- 4.) Any other medical information necessary to ensure the student's safety

A copy of a completed and signed permission slip will be kept on the Charter School site by the CEO/Principal and one copy will be given to the teacher to take on the field trip or excursion. These forms will be regularly updated to keep all information current.

Accident Insurance

The Charter School provides student accident insurance which covers medical expenses arising from student injuries on campus or while participating in a Charter School-sponsored off campus activity. The family's health insurance is primary, but if there is no health insurance, the Charter School's Student Accident Insurance becomes primary. Information and applications for student accident insurance are available from the CEO/Principal.

Supervision of Field Trips and Excursions

The teacher who coordinated the field trip will be present to supervise the field trip or excursion. The CEO/Principal will be designated as the emergency contact for the group on the field trip or excursion. Any injuries or unusual incidents occurring during the field trip or excursion will be documented in writing by the coordinating teacher and given to the Charter School's CEO/Principal.

GPS employees or volunteers shall not consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) while accompanying and supervising students on a field trip or excursion. Students are under the jurisdiction of the Board at all times during the field trip or excursion and Charter School rules are to be adhered to at all times. Horseplay, practical jokes, harassment, taunting, rough play, aggressive

or violent behavior, profanity, viewing of pornographic material, and use of alcohol and/or controlled substances during the field trip or excursion are strictly prohibited.

Parent or Guardian Participation in Field Trips and Excursions

As field trips and excursions are an integral part of the Charter School learning experience, parents are encouraged to participate in an assisting role with students. The CEO/Principal or the coordinating teacher will provide parents and guardians with specific supervisory guidelines prior to any Charter School group trip involving students. Topics to be included are: safety regulations, emergency responses, and responsibilities of the parent volunteers and language or behavior requirements of all attendees.

A parent or guardian will be assigned to a specific group of students to supervise and will be responsible for these students at all times during the field trip or excursion. Under no circumstances will a parent or guardian consume alcohol or use controlled substances (except for medications taken under a physician's orders) during a field trip or excursion. The parent or guardian will notify the coordinating teacher, in advance of the field trip or excursion, should he/she be under a physician's orders and using medications.

All parents or guardians volunteering to chaperone field trips and excursions are required to sign a waiver of all claims against the Charter School, its employees, and the State of California for injury, accident, illness or death occurring during or by reason of the field trip or excursion.

Transportation

At all times during the field trip or excursion, teachers, staff and parents will use the safest mode of transportation and the safest and most direct routes of travel. If travel is by van, the legal occupancy limit must not be exceeded, all speed notices must be strictly adhered to and students are to be seated with individual seat belts at all times.

The Charter School shall take reasonable precautions to ensure that all employees and volunteers who transport students are responsible and capable operators of the vehicles to be used and ensure compliance with the GPS Transportation Safety Plan.

Employee or volunteer drivers who offer to provide transportation for a field trip or excursion must provide a copy of the following:

- Proof of liability insurance for their vehicle with a minimum of \$100K/\$300K coverage,
- A copy of their Driver's License and Car Registration,
- A written statement acknowledging that their insurance carrier is the primary agent responsible for insurance during the field trip or excursion,
- A criminal background check conducted by the California Department of Justice ("DOJ"). Employees or volunteers whose DOJ report reveals a Driving Under the Influence conviction shall not be permitted to transport students or operate any vehicle on GPS business for ten (10) years from the date of the conviction. Any employee or volunteer convicted of a felony shall not be permitted to transport GPS students on Charter School business.
- A Department of Motor Vehicles record. Employees or volunteers with driving records with two (2) points or more shall not be permitted to transport students or operate any vehicle for Charter School field trips and excursions.

Each of these items will be provided to the CEO/Principal or coordinating teacher prior to driving on a field trip or excursion.

Under no circumstances shall students transport other students.

Rules for Parent/Volunteer Drivers on Day Field Trips

For the volunteer's safety and that of all the students in his/her car, the following rules apply:

1. All Charter School rules apply to students in the volunteer's car. Volunteer drivers are free to appropriately manage student behavior as necessary to maintain safety.
2. All California driving laws must be followed including child restraint laws: no texting or distracted driving, hands-free phone use only.
3. No movies may be shown in vehicles.
4. No side trips allowed, including gasoline stops. Please be sure to have enough gas before leaving on the trip.
5. Maps and directions from the teacher should be reviewed prior to leaving.
6. No purchases for students should be made on the field trip including food or treats for students in the car.
7. Call the Charter School office immediately if there is a problem.

Defraying Expenses of Field Trips and Excursions

GPS may charge a fee for field trips and excursions pursuant to section 35330 of the Education Code. However, GPS will endeavor to keep the costs of any field trips affordable for all students' families. In addition, parents or guardians of students may help defray the field trip and excursion costs through voluntary donations. In no event will a student be prevented from participating in the field trip or excursion due to lack of sufficient funds. In accordance with Education Code section 35330(b), GPS will coordinate the efforts of community service groups (including parents or guardians of other students) to supply funds for students in need.

GPS complies with AB 1575. Complaints regarding noncompliance with AB 1575 may be filed with the CEO under the Uniform Complaint Procedures.

Voluntary Participation

The coordinating teacher will provide alternative educational activities to those students who choose not to attend a specific field trip or excursion. Parents will have advance notice of any upcoming field trip or excursion and have the option to withdraw their permission for their child to attend that field trip or excursion.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Signaling Devices

Board Policy #:24; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “Charter School”) will permit students to possess but not use cell phones and other electronic signaling devices except outside of the school day. Students who possess these devices are to keep them turned off and out of view. However, no student shall be prohibited from possessing or using an electronic signaling device that is determined by a licensed physician and surgeon to be essential for the health of the student and use of which is limited to purposes related to the health of the student. All students are required to adhere to the following guidelines regarding cell phones and other electronic signaling devices:

Cell phones and other electronic signaling devices may be used:

- Off campus before or after school.
- When a state of emergency has been declared (verbally or in writing) by the Charter School Principal or designee.

Cell and other electronic signaling devices phones may not be used:

- During instructional classroom time, including assemblies, and any other school activity, which takes place during the regularly scheduled school day on or off campus,
- During break or lunch, or
- On field trips or School sponsored excursions.

Possession of a cell phone or other electronic signaling device is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy. All employees shall remove any cell phone or other electronic signaling device from possession of a student violating this policy. Parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up any confiscated cell phone or other electronic signaling device. All other applicable student discipline policies shall continue to apply in response to a student failing to abide by the terms of this policy.

Students who possess a cell phone or other electronic signaling device shall assume responsibility for its care. At no time shall the Charter School be responsible for preventing theft, loss or damage to cell phones or other electronic signaling devices brought onto campus.

Classroom Based Attendance Policy

Board Policy #:25; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Family Expectations

Every student's parent/ guardian is responsible for ensuring their student arrives on time to school every school day either by drop off, carpool, or other safe transit. Students should have a safe way to get home after school or when they are done with their afterschool activities.

To ensure the wellbeing of all our students, Growth Public Schools ("GPS" or "School") has a closed campus. Once students arrive they are expected to stay on school grounds until the end of the regularly scheduled school day. Students will only be excused during the day before dismissal if a parent or guardian picks them up from school directly or gives written permission for someone else to pick them up. Whoever picks up the students is expected to check in at the front desk and sign the student out. Parents picking up students at the end of the regularly scheduled school day do not need to sign their students out.

Excused Absences for Classroom Based Attendance

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law or Board policy.

A student's absence shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer;
3. Medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic appointments;
4. For the purpose of attending the funeral services or grieving the death of either a member of the pupil's immediate family, or of a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than five (5) days per incident. "Immediate family" means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.
5. For any of the following reasons, if an immediate family member of the pupil, or a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, has died:
 - a. To access services from a victim services organization or agency.
 - b. To access grief support services.
 - c. To participate in safety planning or to take other actions to increase the safety of the pupil or an immediate family member of the pupil, or a person that is determined by the pupil's parent or guardian to be in such close association with the pupil as to be considered the pupil's immediate family, including, but not limited to, temporary or permanent relocation.

Absences under this section shall not be excused for more than three (3) days per incident, unless extended on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the school administrator. "Immediate

family” means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.

6. Attendance at the student’s naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
7. Authorized parental leave for a pregnant or parenting student for up to eight (8) weeks, which may be extended if deemed medically necessary by the student’s physician.
8. A student who holds a work permit to work for a period of not more than five (5) consecutive days in the entertainment or allied industries shall be excused from school during the period that the student is working in the entertainment or allied industry for a maximum of up to five (5) absences per school year subject to the requirements of Education Code section 48225.5.
9. In order to participate with a not-for-profit performing arts organization in a performance for a public-school student audience for a maximum of up to five (5) days per school year provided the student’s parent or guardian provides a written note to the school authorities explaining the reason for the student’s absence.
10. For the purpose of participating in a cultural ceremony or event. "Cultural" for these purposes means relating to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people.
11. For the purpose of a middle school pupil engaging in a civic or political event as indicated below, provided that the pupil notifies the school ahead of the absence. A “civic or political event” includes, but is not limited to, voting, poll working, strikes, public commenting, candidate speeches, political or civic forums, and town halls.
 - i. A middle school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision is required to be excused for only one schoolday-long absence per school year.
 - ii. A middle school pupil who is absent pursuant to this provision may be permitted additional excused absences in the discretion of a school administrator.

In addition, a student's absence shall be excused for justifiable personal reasons such as:

1. Appearance in court;
2. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion;
3. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester.

Method of Verification

Where advanced notice is possible, a student’s parent/guardian must call 916-394-5007 to speak with the Office Manager, or other administrator regarding the date(s) and time(s) their student will not attend class. Where advanced notice is not possible, parents/guardians should call 916-394-5007 before school begins on the day the student will be absent for all or part of the school day. Students or families are expected to provide a note to the front desk upon the student returning to School. Students who are absent or tardy for other reasons and/or do not have a note signed by a parent/guardian will be marked as unexcused.

Returning to School after an Illness or Prolonged Absence

A student returning to school following a serious or prolonged illness, injury, surgery, or other hospitalization, must have written permission by a healthcare provider to attend school, including any recommendations regarding physical activity and exertion. A student returning to school with sutures, casts, crutches, or a wheelchair must have a physician’s written permission to attend school and must comply with any safety procedures required by the school administration. An excuse from physical activity may be granted if a student

is unable to participate in regular or modified curriculum for a temporary period of time due to illness or injury. A parent's written request for an excuse will be accepted for up to one day; thereafter, a written request is needed from the student's health provider.

Student Expectations

Students at GPS are expected to arrive on time to every class or meeting with their teachers and mentors, every day. This means being present and seated in their assigned seat for each class at the appropriate start time. Students know their class schedule, which room each class is in, and what time it starts and ends.

Students who arrive late to school are expected to sign in at the front desk and receive a tardy pass before going immediately to class. Upon entering, students will provide teachers with the tardy pass and join the class with minimal disruption to teaching and learning.

Process for Students Who Are Not in Attendance at the Beginning of the School Year

When students are not in attendance on the first five (5) days of school, the Charter School will attempt to reach the parent/guardian on a daily basis for each of the first five days to determine whether the student has an excused absence, consistent with the process outlined in this policy. If the student has a basis for an excused absence, parents must notify the school of the absence and provide documentation consistent with this policy. However, consistent with process below, students who are not in attendance due to an unexcused absence by the fifth day of school will be disenrolled from the school roster, as it will be assumed that the student has chosen another school option.

1. Students who are not in attendance on the first day of school will be contacted by phone to ensure their intent to enroll.
2. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll but have not attended by the third day will receive a letter indicating the student will be disenrolled after the fifth day of school if the student has not attended school without valid excuse.
3. Students who have indicated their intent to enroll but have not attended by the fifth day will receive a phone call reiterating the content of the letter.
4. Students who have not attended by the sixth day, and do not have an excused absence as defined above for not being in attendance will be disenrolled in accordance with the School's involuntary removal procedures.
5. The School will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian in the registration packet.
6. The School will send the Involuntary Removal Notice to the Parent/Guardian and follow the Involuntary Removal process described below.
7. Upon removal, the last known school district of residence will be notified of the student's failure to attend the Charter School and the disenrollment within thirty days of the disenrollment.

Excessive Absences or Tardies

If students struggle to meet our expectations of attendance, to embody our core values and to develop into responsible community members, GPS develops logical consequences where there is a focus on accountability, repairing harm and reintegrating students into the community.

The objective of our absence and truancy policy is for students to attend school consistently so that they are advancing towards their academic goals and are contributing members of our school community. Like our graduated discipline plan, we have increasing levels of interventions to support students and families in meeting this objective.

Note that in the table below, all counts of absences are for a single school year.

Trigger	Concern	School actions
3 unexcused Absences or more than 30 minutes late to school 3 times	First notification of truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send Truancy Letter #1, phone call or email to parent/guardian ● Record(s) of written warning for all following actions may be kept at the School for a period of not less than two years, or until the student graduates or transfers from School. If the student transfers, the record may be forwarded to any school receiving the student's school records. ● Student may be required to attend makeup classes conducted on one day of a weekend. ● School personnel must be available if families request a meeting. ● Mentor check-in about truancy and student's status.
6 unexcused Absences/tardies	Second notification of truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send Truancy Letter #2 to parent/guardian ● Hold a Truancy Meeting with student, family, and teachers. ● The student may be assigned by the School to an after-school or weekend study program located within the same county as GPS. If the student fails to successfully complete the assigned study program, the student shall be subject to classification as a habitual truant. ● Mentor check-in about truancy and student's status.
9 unexcused Absences/tardies	Third notification of truancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send Truancy Letter #3 to parent/guardian ● Student may be referred to a School Attendance Review Board ("SARB"); student, parent and referrer must attend. In order to refer, you must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral Form ● Documentation/Evidence of Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copy of letters ○ Meeting notes ○ Any other intervention ● Any other information that would help the case ● Reach out to the appropriate contacts and outline the student's case. ● Student may also be referred to a probation officer or district attorney mediation program pursuant. ● If the student does not successfully complete the truancy mediation program or other similar program, the student shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. ● Mentor check-in about truancy and student's status.

Involuntary Removal Process

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School 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 pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights including the right to request a

hearing before the effective date of the action. The hearing shall be consistent with the Charter School's 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 the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to Growth Public School's suspension and expulsion policy.

Upon parent/guardian request for a hearing, Growth Public School will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. 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 Growth Public School's 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 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.

A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent Growth Public School from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy continue or reoccur.

Involuntary Removal for Truancy

As charter schools are schools of choice and as a charter school student who fails to attend school is potentially depriving another student of their opportunity to enroll, a student may be involuntarily removed as described within Growth Public School's Board adopted Attendance Policy for truancy and only after Growth Public School follows the requirements of the Attendance Policy and only in accordance with the policy described above which requires notice and an opportunity for a parent, guardian, educational rights holder to request a hearing prior to any involuntary removal. Students who are involuntarily removed for truancy will be given a rehabilitation plan and will be subject to the readmission procedures set forth herein.

Voluntary Dis-Enrollment Policy

GPS values the contributions to community by each family and student. GPS would like all students to remain enrolled and to address any concerns. If parents/guardians are considering withdrawal of their student, we ask that they reach out to both their child's homeroom teacher or Family Group Mentor as well as the Principal and/or the CEO.

If parents/guardians have decided that unenrolling their student is the best option, GPS' office manager will facilitate this process. To complete this process, parents/guardians must dis-enroll their student in person at the school site and sign a withdrawal form. Parents/guardians are responsible to enroll their student in another age appropriate educational program, and GPS can help supply the necessary records upon request from the student's new school.

Classroom and School Volunteer, Visitation, and Removal Policy

Board Policy #:26; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or “School”) welcomes visitors and volunteers to our schools. We are also committed to the security of our sites. Visitors include any person who is not a GPS student, GPS employee, or registered volunteer.* This includes families, non-registered volunteers, community members, vendors and service providers, and other partners.

Volunteering

Parents volunteering in the classroom can be extremely helpful to our teachers and valuable to our students. We thank all parents for their willingness to volunteer in this manner. Nevertheless, to ensure the safety of students and staff as well as to minimize interruption of the instructional program, GPS has established the following procedures, to facilitate volunteering during regular school days.

Parents or guardians who are interested in volunteering in the classroom must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be (1) fingerprinted and (2) receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.
2. A volunteer shall also have on file with GPS a certificate showing that, upon initial volunteer assignment, the person submitted to a tuberculosis risk assessment and, if tuberculosis risk factors were identified, was examined and found to be free of infectious tuberculosis. If no risk factors are identified, an examination is not required. At the discretion of the GPS Board of Directors, this paragraph shall not apply to a volunteer whose functions do not require frequent or prolonged contact with pupils.
3. Volunteering must be arranged with the classroom teacher and Principal or designee, at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.
4. Prior to volunteering in the classroom, the volunteer should communicate with the teacher to discuss the expectations for volunteering needs. Classroom volunteers are there to benefit the entire class and are not in class solely for the benefit of their own child. Classroom volunteers must follow the instructions provided by the classroom teacher or aide. Classroom rules also apply to volunteers to ensure minimal distraction to the teacher. If a volunteer is uncomfortable following the direction of the teacher or aide the volunteer may leave their volunteer position for that day.
5. Information gained by volunteers regarding students (e.g. academic performance or behavior) is to be maintained in strict confidentiality.
6. Volunteers shall follow and be governed by all other guidelines indicated elsewhere in this Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, the process of registering and signing out of the campus at the front desk as indicated above.
7. This Policy does not authorize GPS to permit a parent/guardian to volunteer or visit the campus if doing so conflicts with a valid restraining order, protective order, or order for custody or visitation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Visitation

To help ensure the wellbeing of our students and staff, visitors must comply with the following requirements and procedures:

- Immediately upon entering any school building or grounds during regular school hours, visitors will report their presence and reason for visiting the school to the front office.
- Visitors will provide his/her name, address, occupation, age (if under 21), his/her purpose for entering school grounds, and proof of identification, e.g., driver's license, and sign in using a log that is kept at the front desk. Logs shall be kept on file for the full school year.
- If the visitor is a government officer/official (including but not limited to local law enforcement officers, immigration enforcement officers, social workers, district attorneys, or U.S. attorneys) the officer/official will also be asked to produce any documentation that authorizes school access. GPS shall make reasonable efforts to notify parents or guardians prior to permitting a student to be interviewed or searched, consistent with the law and/or any court order, warrant or instructions from the officer/official. A copy of the documentation provided by the officer and notes from the encounter may be maintained by GPS, consistent with the law. The GPS Board and Bureau of Children's Justice in the California Department of Justice, at BCJ@doj.ca.gov, will be timely informed regarding any attempt by a law-enforcement officer to access a school site or a student for immigration-enforcement purposes, as recommended by the Attorney General.
- An office staff member will provide identification, e.g., a visitor badge, to be used by all visitors at all times while on school premises. The visitor will make this identification visible at all times during the visit.
- Visitors will engage with students and faculty respectfully in ways that maintain community and do not interrupt teaching and learning. Visitors will enter and leave classrooms as quietly as possible, not converse with any student, teacher, or other instructional assistant unless permitted, and not interfere with any school activity.
- At time of departure, visitors will sign out on the log at the front desk.
- Any individual who disrupts the school site or fails to follow school rules and/or procedures is subject to removal from the school site and may be further restricted from visiting the school.
- The Principal, or designee, may refuse to register a visitor or volunteer if it is believed that the presence of the visitor or volunteer would cause a threat of disruption or physical injury to teachers, other employees, or students.
- The Principal or designee may withdraw consent to be on campus even if the visitor has a right to be on campus whenever there is reason to believe that the person has willfully disrupted or is likely to disrupt GPS' orderly operation. If consent is withdrawn by someone other than the Principal, the Principal may reinstate consent for the visitor if the Principal believes that the person's presence will not constitute a disruption or substantial and material threat to GPS' orderly operation. Consent can be withdrawn for up to fourteen (14) days.
- The Principal or designee may request that a visitor who has failed to register, or whose registration privileges have been denied or withdrawn, promptly leave school grounds. When a visitor is directed to leave, the Principal or designee shall inform the visitor that if he/she reenters the school without following the posted requirements he/she will be guilty of a misdemeanor.
- Employees should at all times watch for strangers on school premises. Employees who encounter a visitor not displaying the appropriate identification should ask the visitor whether he or she has registered. Employees and volunteers should immediately inform school leaders of any visitor who refuses to comply with registration requirements.

Penalties

- Pursuant to the California Penal Code, if a visitor does not leave after being asked or if the visitor returns without following the posted requirements after being directed to leave, he/she will be guilty of a crime as specified which is punishable by a fine of up to \$500.00 (five hundred dollars) or imprisonment in the County jail for a period of up to six (6) months or both.

- Under California Education Code section 44811, disruption by a parent, guardian or other person at a school or school sponsored activity is punishable, upon the first conviction by a fine or no less than \$500.00 (five hundred dollars) and no more than \$1,000.00 (one thousand dollars) or by imprisonment in a County jail for no more than one (1) year, or both the fine and imprisonment.
- Disruptive conduct may lead to GPS' pursuit of a restraining order against a visitor, which would prohibit him/her from coming onto school grounds or attending school activities for any purpose for a period of up to three (3) years.

** Registered volunteers are volunteers who are on site 2-3 times every week and have LiveScan and TB clearance.*

Professional Boundaries: Student-Staff Interaction Policy

Board Policy #:27; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

GPS 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 sincere, competent 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 a school 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 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 Principal 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.

General Complaints Policy and Procedures

Board Policy #:28; Adopted/Ratified: September 24, 2024; Revision Date: N/A

Most complaints can be resolved through the Conflict Resolution Procedure or by informal discussions between the complainant and the employee or the Principal. For complaints regarding harassment or perceived violations of state or federal laws, please refer to Growth Public School's Title IX, Harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, and Bullying Policy and/or Growth Public School's Uniform Complaint Procedures. For all other complaints, the General Complaint form and accompanying procedures will be appropriate as follows:

- A. Any complaint shall be put in writing using the "Complaint Form" (available in the school office or by contacting the Principal) and addressed to the Principal. A written complaint shall include:
 1. The full name of each person involved
 2. A brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it
 3. A specific description of any prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the person and the failure to resolve the matter
- B. The Principal shall investigate the complaint as necessary and shall promptly mail a written notice to the Complainant of the date, time, and place of a meeting between the Complainant and the Principal, which shall occur no later than twenty (20) school days following the receipt of complaint.
- C. If no resolution can be agreed upon between the Principal and the Complainant, the Principal shall submit the complaint to the Board.
- D. The Board may seek additional investigation by the Principal as it deems necessary.
- E. The Board shall make recommendations and address the recommendations at the next Regular Board meeting.
- F. The Board will make the final determination regarding the dispute and shall notify the Complainant of the Board's determination within ten (10) school days of the determination.

This procedure, which we believe is important for both you and the School, cannot guarantee that every problem will be resolved to your satisfaction. However, the School values your observations and you should feel free to raise issues of concern, in good faith, without the fear of retaliation.

Policy for Complaints Against Employees

The School requires all employees to observe the highest standard of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the School, employees must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with School policies noted in the Employment Guidelines and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Policy.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the complainant will be provided information concerning the applicable policy and procedures to be followed. If there is no applicable policy or procedures, the Principal (or designee) shall encourage the parties involved to seek an informal resolution of the issues. If this is not possible due to the nature of the complaint or if informal resolution has been unsuccessfully attempted, the Principal (or designee) shall undertake a responsible inquiry into the complaint to ensure it is reasonably and swiftly addressed. When appropriate, a written statement of the complaint will be obtained from the complainant.

If the complainant files a written complaint and no other school policy or procedure is applicable, the Principal (or designee) shall abide by the following process:

1. Within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the complaint, the Principal or designee shall use his or her best efforts to talk with the parties identified in the complaint and to ascertain the facts relating to the complaint.
2. In the event that the Principal (or designee) finds that a complaint against an employee is valid, the Principal (or designee) may take appropriate disciplinary action against the employee. As appropriate, the Principal (or designee) may also simply counsel/reprimand employees as to their conduct without initiating formal disciplinary measures.
3. The Principal's (or designee's) decision relating to the complaint shall be final unless it is appealed to the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Confidentiality

Complainants will be notified that information obtained from the complainants and thereafter gathered will be maintained in a manner as confidential as possible, but in some circumstances absolute confidentiality cannot be assured.

Non-Retaliation

Complainants will be advised that they will be protected against retaliation as a result of the filing of any complaints or participation in any complaint process.

Resolution

The administration will investigate complaints appropriately under the circumstances and pursuant to the applicable procedures, and if necessary, take appropriate remedial measures to ensure effective resolution of any complaint.

COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you have a complaint against: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur?

Please describe the circumstances, events, or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements; what did you do to avoid the situation, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I hereby authorize Charter School to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation. I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I further understand providing false information in this regard could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Signature of Complainant Date: _____

Print Name

To be completed by Charter School:

Received by: _____ Date: _____

Human Trafficking Prevention Policy

Board Policy #:29; Adopted/Ratified: December 10, 2024; Revision Date: TBD

California has the highest number of incidents of human trafficking in the U.S. Growth Public Schools (“GPS” or the “Charter School”) is committed to reducing the vulnerability of all children in California to incidents of commercial labor or sexual exploitation.

Student Instruction

In accordance with the California Healthy Youth Act, GPS will provide age-appropriate instruction on the prevention of human trafficking, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment. Such instruction shall inform students about (1) prevalence, nature of and strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely seek assistance, and (2) how social medial and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.

Parents have the right to excuse their child from all or part of the instruction on the prevention of human trafficking. An opt-out form is available by contacting the School Principal. Parental consent for this instruction is NOT required. If GPS does not receive a parent/guardian written request to excuse a student, the student will be included in the instruction.

Information to Parents/Guardians

Information and materials for parents/guardians about the curriculum and resources on prevention of human trafficking and abuse, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment are available on GPS’s website for review.

Staff Training

Training shall be available and conducted periodically to enable GPS personnel to learn about new developments in the understanding of abuse, including sexual abuse, and human trafficking, and to receive instruction on current prevention efforts and methods. GPS may include training on early identification of abuse, including sexual abuse, and human trafficking of pupils and other minors.

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Policy

Board Policy #:30; Adopted/Ratified: December 10, 2024; Revision Date: TBD

This policy of Growth Public Schools (the “Charter School”) Board of Directors (“Board”) has been adopted to meet the Legislative intent of the California Healthy Youth Act (“CHYA”) as follows: (1) to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect their sexual and reproductive health from human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) and other sexually transmitted infections and from unintended pregnancy;(2) to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to develop healthy attitudes concerning adolescent growth and development, body image, gender, sexual orientation, relationships, marriage, and family; (3) to promote understanding of sexuality as a normal part of human development; (4) to ensure students receive integrated, comprehensive, accurate, and unbiased sexual health and HIV prevention instruction and provide educators with clear tools and guidance to accomplish that end; and (5) to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to have healthy, positive, and safe relationships and behaviors.

Definitions

1. *“Age appropriate”*: topics, messages, and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age group.
2. *“Comprehensive sexual health education”*: education regarding human development and sexuality, including education on pregnancy, contraception, and sexually transmitted infections.
3. *“English Learner”*: a pupil who is “limited English proficient” as that term is defined in the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 7801(25)).
4. *“HIV prevention education”*: instruction on the nature of human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (“AIDS”), methods of transmission, strategies to reduce the risk of HIV infection, and social and public health issues related to HIV and AIDS.
5. *“Instructors trained in the appropriate courses”*: instructors with knowledge of the most recent medically accurate research on human sexuality, healthy relationships, pregnancy, and HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.
6. *“Medically accurate”*: verified or supported by research conducted in compliance with scientific methods and published in peer-reviewed journals, where appropriate, and recognized as accurate and objective by professional organizations and agencies with expertise in the relevant field.

Instruction to Students

The CHYA requires that comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education be provided to all Charter School students in grade 7, at least once in middle school or junior high school and once in high school.

In compliance with the CHYA, Charter School will ensure that all students in grade 7, are provided the following instruction:

1. Information on the nature of HIV, as well as other sexually transmitted infections, and their effects on the human body.

2. Information on the manner in which HIV and other sexually transmitted infections are and are not transmitted, including information on the relative risk of infection according to specific behaviors, including sexual activities and injection drug use.
3. Information that abstinence from sexual activity and injection drug use is the only certain way to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only certain way to prevent unintended pregnancy. This instruction shall provide information about the value of delaying sexual activity while also providing medically accurate information on other methods of preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy.
4. Information about the effectiveness and safety of all federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) approved methods that prevent or reduce the risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including use of antiretroviral medication, consistent with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
5. Information about the effectiveness and safety of reducing the risk of HIV transmission as a result of injection drug use by decreasing needle use and needle sharing.
6. Information about the treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including how antiretroviral therapy can dramatically prolong the lives of many people living with HIV and reduce the likelihood of transmitting HIV to others.
7. Discussion about social views on HIV and AIDS, including addressing unfounded stereotypes and myths regarding HIV and AIDS and people living with HIV. This instruction shall emphasize that successfully treated HIV-positive individuals have a normal life expectancy, all people are at some risk of contracting HIV, and the only way to know if one is HIV-positive is to get tested.
8. Information about local resources, how to access local resources, and students’ legal rights to access local resources for sexual and reproductive health care such as testing and medical care for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy prevention and care, as well as local resources for assistance with sexual assault and intimate partner violence.
9. Information about the effectiveness and safety of all FDA-approved contraceptive methods in preventing pregnancy, including, but not limited to, emergency contraception. Instruction on pregnancy shall include an objective discussion of all legally available pregnancy outcomes, including, but not limited to, all of the following:
 - a. Parenting, adoption, and abortion.
 - b. Information on the law on surrendering physical custody of a minor child 72 hours of age or younger., pursuant to Section 1255.7 of the Health and Safety Code and Section 271.5 of the Penal Code.
 - c. The importance of prenatal care.
10. Information about sexual harassment, sexual assault, 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.

- b. Information on how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.
11. Information about adolescent relationship abuse and intimate partner violence, including the early warning signs thereof.
 12. Information regarding the potential risks and consequences of creating and sharing sexually suggestive or sexually explicit materials through cellular telephones, social networking Internet Web sites, computer networks, or other digital media.

Further, Charter School shall ensure that all instruction satisfies the following criteria:

1. Instruction and materials shall be age appropriate.
2. All factual information presented shall be medically accurate and objective.
3. All instruction and materials shall align with and support the purposes of Education Code Section 51930(b)(1)-(5) as stated in this Policy and shall:
 - a. Be appropriate for use with students of all races, genders, sexual orientations, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds, students with disabilities, and English learners.
 - b. Be made available on an equal basis to a pupil who is an English learner, consistent with the existing curriculum and alternative options for an English learner pupil as otherwise provided pursuant to applicable law.
 - c. Be accessible to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the provision of a modified curriculum, materials and instruction in alternative formats, and auxiliary aids.
 - d. Not reflect or promote bias against any person on the basis of any category protected by Education Code Section 220.
 - e. Affirmatively recognize that people have different sexual orientations and, when discussing or providing examples of relationships and couples, shall be inclusive of same-sex relationships.
 - f. Teach students about gender, gender expression, gender identity, and explore the harm of negative gender stereotypes.
 - g. Encourage a student to communicate with his or her parents, guardians, and other trusted adults about human sexuality and provide the knowledge and skills necessary to do so.
 - h. Teach the value of and prepare students to have and maintain committed relationships such as marriage.
 - i. Provide students with knowledge and skills they need to form healthy relationships that are based on mutual respect and affection, and are free from violence, coercion, and intimidation.
 - j. Provide students with knowledge and skills for making and implementing healthy decisions about sexuality, including negotiation and refusal skills to assist students in overcoming peer pressure and using effective decision making skills to avoid high-risk activities.
 - k. Not teach or promote religious doctrine.

In-Service Training

Charter School shall cooperatively plan and conduct in-service training for all Charter School personnel that provide HIV prevention education, through regional planning, joint powers agreements, or contract services.

In developing and providing in-service training, Charter School shall cooperate and collaborate with the teachers of the Charter School who provide HIV prevention education and with the department.

In-service training shall be conducted periodically to enable Charter School personnel to learn new developments in the scientific understanding of HIV. In-service training shall be voluntary for Charter School personnel who have demonstrated expertise or received in-service training from the department or federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Charter School may expand HIV in-service training to cover the topic of comprehensive sexual health education in order for Charter School personnel who provide comprehensive sexual health education to learn new developments in the scientific understanding of sexual health.

Guest Speakers

Charter School may contract with outside consultants or guest speakers, including those who have developed multilingual curricula or curricula accessible to persons with disabilities, to deliver comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education or to provide training for Charter School personnel.

All outside consultants and guest speakers shall have expertise in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education and have knowledge of the most recent medically accurate research on the relevant topic or topics covered in their instruction.

Parental Consent

Charter School encourages students to communicate with their parents or guardians about human sexuality and HIV and to respect the rights of parents or guardians to supervise their children's education on these subjects. Charter School intends to create a streamlined process to make it easier for parents and guardians to review materials and evaluation tools related to comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education, and, if they wish, to excuse their children from participation in all or part of that instruction or evaluation. Charter School recognizes that while parents and guardians overwhelmingly support medically accurate, comprehensive sex education, parents and guardians have the ultimate responsibility for imparting values regarding human sexuality to their children.

A parent or guardian of a pupil has the right to excuse their child from all or part of comprehensive sexual health education, HIV prevention education, and assessments related to that education through a passive consent ("opt-out") process. Charter School shall not require active parental consent ("opt-in") for comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education.

Notwithstanding Education Code section 51513, anonymous, voluntary, and confidential research and evaluation tools to measure students' health behaviors and risks, including tests, questionnaires, and surveys containing age-appropriate questions about the pupil's attitudes concerning or practices relating to sex, may be administered to any pupil in grade 7-8. A parent or guardian has the right to excuse their child from the test, questionnaire, or survey through a passive consent ("opt-out") process. Charter School shall not require active parental consent ("opt-in") for these tests, questionnaires, or surveys. Parents or guardians shall be notified in writing that this test, questionnaire, or survey is to be administered, given the opportunity to review the test,

questionnaire, or survey if they wish, notified of their right to excuse their child from the test, questionnaire, or survey, and informed that in order to excuse their child they must state their request in writing to Charter School.

Annual Notice

At the beginning of each school year, or, for a pupil who enrolls in a school after the beginning of the school year, at the time of that pupil's enrollment, Charter School shall notify the parent or guardian of each pupil about instruction in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education and research on pupil health behaviors and risks planned for the coming year. The notice shall do all of the following:

1. Advise the parent or guardian that written and audiovisual educational materials used in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education are available for inspection.
2. Advise the parent or guardian whether the comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education will be taught by Charter School personnel or by outside consultants. Charter School may provide comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education, to be taught by outside consultants, and may hold an assembly to deliver comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education by guest speakers, but if it elects to provide comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education in either of these manners, the notice shall include the date of the instruction, the name of the organization or affiliation of each guest speaker, and information stating the right of the parent or guardian to request a copy of this Policy. If arrangements for this instruction are made after the beginning of the school year, notice shall be made by mail or another commonly used method of notification, no fewer than fourteen (14) days before the instruction is delivered.
3. Include information explaining the parent's or guardian's right to request a copy of this Policy and/or Education Code sections 51930-51939.
4. Advise the parent or guardian that the parent or guardian has the right to excuse their child from comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education and that in order to excuse their child they must state their request in writing to Charter School.

For Students who Opt-Out

A pupil may not attend any class in comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education, or participate in any anonymous, voluntary, and confidential test, questionnaire, or survey on pupil health behaviors and risks, if Charter School has received a written request from the pupil's parent or guardian excusing the pupil from participation.

A pupil may 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 or to participate in anonymous, voluntary, and confidential tests, questionnaires, or surveys on pupil health behaviors and risks.

While comprehensive sexual health education, HIV prevention education, or an anonymous, voluntary, and confidential test, questionnaire, or survey on pupil health behaviors and risks is being administered, an alternative educational activity shall be made available to students whose parents or guardians have requested that they not receive the instruction or participate in the test, questionnaire, or survey.