



3425 Brush Street/P.O. Box 1648 • Cottonwood, CA 96022 • 530-347-7200

# **Student and Parent Handbook 2019-2020**

**“Working Together With Families”**

*Welcome to The Creek*  
*Cottonwood Creek Charter School*  
*Home of the “Rattlers”!*

This ***Student and Parent Handbook*** contains information about our school, general procedures & policies, campus procedures & policies, educational procedures & policies, opportunities for family involvement, extracurricular activities and school safety & wellness procedures.

After both the student(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s) have read this Handbook, please sign the last page and return only the last page to the charter school. Please have all Cottonwood Creek Charter School students living in the same household sign the form along with the parent(s) or guardian(s). Multiple signature lines are provided to accommodate our families. If you have more than 5 students attending Cottonwood Creek Charter School, please use the space at the bottom of the page for additional signatures. Only one form per family is required.

It is important that you keep this ***Student and Parent Handbook*** for reference throughout the school year.

*Welcome to the “Rattler” Family!*

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## BASIC INFORMATION

### About Cottonwood Creek Charter School

Our vision is for the students of Cottonwood Creek Charter School (CCCS) to become well rounded participants in their community today as well as in the future. We will use a blended learning model that combines both site based classes and *Personalized Learning* to develop an individualized program of study for every student, melding "hands-on" educational opportunities through technological resources, educational field trips, local experts and a dedicated, committed staff of talented teachers and parents.

A charter school is a free public school initiated by teachers, parents, and community members. Teachers must hold full California Teaching Credentials. Charter schools are held to higher accountability standards in exchange for flexibility in the design of their program. Teachers, administrators, and parents work closely to set the direction of the school, and a feeling of shared responsibility provides a sense of commitment, which many times can be missing from larger, traditional public schools. It is sponsored by a public school district, but is largely independent. CCCS is sponsored by the Cottonwood Union School District, but operates under the guidance of its own school board and administration. The emphasis of our school is a *blended model* of site based instruction (site classes/four days a week) with Personalized Learning (Homeschool). With our modified weekly schedule, this allows our students to participate in a number of enrichment and elective classes in the afternoon.

CCCS offers a quality, tuition free education to K -8 students. Our family-friendly school schedules are independent study based. This allows parents to have the option of homeschooling their students or sending them to our site based classrooms for a more traditional classroom education. This model ensures that each student, whether home schooled or attending site classes, receives a personalized learning plan that focuses on his/her educational strengths and needs. Our site based classes are small in order to optimize learning and teacher/student interaction.

### Staff

Mark Boyle	Charter School Director / Principal
Laura Merrick	Charter School Business Manager
Patrick Bloom	8 <sup>th</sup> grade site class home room, Jr. High English and Language Arts
Alyssa Clare	7 <sup>th</sup> grade site class home room, Jr. High Math
Greg McKinley	6 <sup>th</sup> grade site class home room, Jr. High Science
Michelle Reginato	5 <sup>th</sup> grade site class home room sub/homeschool coordinator
J. Scott Clare	4 <sup>th</sup> grade site class
Sarah Fitch	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade site class
Elizabeth Boyle	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade site class
Marie Thompson	1 <sup>st</sup> grade site class
Elayne Brindley	Kindergarten site class
MaryAnn Keeline	Homeschool Coordinator/Teacher, K-8 <sup>th</sup> grades
Kayla Ritcheson	Special Education Teacher, Homeschool Teacher, K-8 <sup>th</sup> grades
Ben Keeline	Technology Teacher
Sharon Hatcher	Instructional Aide/ Reading Resource Specialist
Brenda Porter	Instructional Aide
Natalie Roeschlaub	Instructional Aide
Ellice Vai	Instructional Aide
Clarissa McGowan	School Secretary
Judy Vazquez	Administrative Assistant
Jim Coonfield	Maintenance
Gabriella Nieves	Custodian

## Board of Directors

Brian Heese	Community Representative
Lynn Peebles	Community Representative
Jeff Larceval	Parent Representative
Christopher Lynn	Parent Representative
Toni McNulty	Parent Representative

The Board of Directors meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, except July.

## Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:00pm-3:30pm  
Friday 8:00am-12:00pm  
Office closed first 3 weeks of July  
Office closed for all school holidays

## School Calendar

There are 175 instructional days per school year.

The following holidays will be observed and school will not be held on these days:  
Labor Day, Veterans Day, and M.L. King Jr. Day.

In addition, a one week break from school will be observed during Thanksgiving week, President's week in February and Spring week around Easter. A two-week Winter Break from school will be observed over the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

## Daily Bell Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. . . . . Hallway Doors Open / Playground Open
- 8:13 a.m. . . . . 1<sup>st</sup> Morning Bell / Playground Closed
- **8:15 a.m. . . . . Classes Begin** - Attendance & Lunch count taken the first 5 minutes of Homeroom class

### Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> Grades

- 8:15 – 9:50 a.m. . . . K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes
- 9:50 – 10:05 a.m. . . K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade recess
- 10:05 a.m. . . . . K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes resume
- 1<sup>st</sup> Lunch: 11:30 a.m – 12:15 p.m. K – 1<sup>st</sup> grade lunch & recess
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Lunch: 12:00 noon–12:40 p.m. 2<sup>nd</sup> –4<sup>th</sup> grade lunch & recess
- 12:40 p.m. . . . . Classes resume for 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grades

### 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades

- 8:15 – 9:25 a.m. . . . . Period 1  
Homeroom
- 9:30 – 10:35 a.m. . . . . Period 2
- 10:35 – 10:50 a.m. . . . . RECESS
- 10:55 a.m. – 12:05 p.m. . . Period 3
- 12:05 – 12:40 p.m. . . . . Lunch
- 12:45 – 1:30 p.m. . . . . Period 4

### Bloom

### Clare

### McKinley

### Reginato

ELA	MATH	SCIENCE	
8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
6 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Homeroom for Social Studies			5 <sup>th</sup>
8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	

- **1:30 p.m. . . . . Dismissal** All students not enrolled in an elective class must exit the school grounds
- 1:35 – 2:30 p.m. . . . After School Elective Classes All Grades: Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade

# GENERAL PROCEDURES & POLICIES

## Emergency Procedures

Should an emergency or disaster situation ever arise in our area while school is in session, we want you to be aware that the school has made preparations to respond effectively. Should we have a major earthquake or disaster during school hours, your student(s) will be cared for at the school. Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency. Please do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication.

In the event of a serious earthquake or disaster, students will be kept at the school until an adult who has been identified on the emergency contact list picks them. Please instruct your student to remain at school until you or a designee arrives.

## Nondiscrimination & Confidentiality

CCCS will be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. CCCS will not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in California Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived) race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, immigration status or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes as set forth in Section 422.55 of the California Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics. CCCS will not charge tuition. In addition, there will be no fees charged or materials required of students or parents in order to enroll in the school. Any fees charged in subsequent operation of the school would be consistent with fees permissible by public schools in the operation of programs such as, but not limited to: enrichment, athletic, laboratory, or technology activities.

The Board of Trustees, CCCS staff, independent contractors and school volunteers will uphold all applicable laws and regulations and internal policies regarding confidentiality, including but not limited to personnel issues, student records, student discipline and student achievement.

## Enrollment

Open enrollment for the school start date in the fall of the same year will occur each year from March 1<sup>st</sup> to the last business day in April. CCCS will admit all pupils who wish to attend the school, as required by law.

Returning students receive a Returning Students form to update important information: address, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, contact information, etc. Students are requested to return the form by the end of April.

Siblings of current students must complete and return an Application for Admittance by the April deadline. Siblings are not guaranteed admittance however they will have priority for admission for the next school year at the Public Lottery in the same program option that the current charter school sibling is enrolled in. All new admissions are subject to availability of space in the site class as well as the home school program.

New students wishing to attend Cottonwood Creek Charter School must complete and return an Application for Admittance by the April deadline to participate in the Public Lottery that is held in May. The Public Lottery is conducted by grade level for the Site-Based Class option and as a single group for the Home School option. As students are selected from the lottery pool, they will be assigned a Wait List placement number based upon the order that they are drawn from the lottery pool. Applicants will be offered admittance to CCCS based upon the assigned Wait List order as space is available in CCCS.

Applications for Admittance received after the April deadline will be placed on the Wait List with a position coming after those applicants who participated in the Public Lottery.

The Wait List from one school year does NOT carry over to the next school year. Applicants who remain on the Wait List must reapply if they wish to be considered for the next school year.

## Attendance

### Attendance policy for site based classes

Students enrolled in site based classes are expected to be in the classroom when class is scheduled to begin. Families are expected to plan their time effectively so that they may arrive to school and classes in a timely manner on all scheduled site class days. A student who misses a scheduled day of site classes will be given an unexcused absence. A student may be excused from a scheduled site class day for the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Doctor, dentist or court appointment
3. Family emergency
4. Pre-Authorized, short-term independent study. Teachers MUST be notified at least 1 week prior to the absence.

For an absence to be excused (#1 & #2 above), the parent/guardian must call the school office on the day of the absence. For an absence (#3 above), please call the school office as soon as possible.

Unexcused absences will result in the following actions:

- 1<sup>st</sup> unexcused absence of the semester: Friendly reminder to student and parent/guardian
- 2<sup>nd</sup> unexcused absence of the semester: Reminder letter home to the parent/guardian
- 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused absence of the semester: Parent/guardian conference with the School Director
- 4<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence of the semester: Loss of Site-Based Classroom privilege and mandatory Homeschool option for the rest of the semester. In order for the student to be part of the site-based classes in the future, he/she would be placed on the Wait List for Site-Based Classes.

If a student misses a significant number of days during a learning period or a semester, whether the days were excused or not, the parent/guardian will be asked to meet with the School Director to discuss the best program placement for the student.

### Tardy policy for site based classes

A student who arrives on campus after the 8:15 am bell will need to sign in at the office and they will be considered tardy. Such a tardy may be excused with valid note written by the parent/guardian only, or if a parent/guardian accompanies the student to the school office with a valid excuse. Tardies to school will be excused if the student presents a note from the doctor indicating a morning appointment. Appointments for court will also be waived and counted as an excused absence. All other excuses will be counted as unexcused unless approved by the CCCS School Director.

Unexcused tardies will result in the following actions:

- 1<sup>st</sup> tardy of semester: Friendly reminder to student
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tardy of semester: Friendly reminder to student and parent/guardian
- 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy of semester: Parent/guardian Conference with the School Director
- 4<sup>th</sup> tardy of semester: Loss of site-based classroom privilege and mandatory Homeschool Option for the remainder of the semester. In order for the student to be part of the Site-Based Classes in the future, the student would be placed on the Wait List for the Site-Based Class Option.

If it is necessary for a student to be picked up early from site classes, the parent/guardian must complete the sign out form in the charter school office.



## Health

CCCS is dedicated to taking appropriate preventative or remedial measures to minimize student accidents or illness. For this reason, parents will provide updated and current emergency information to the office staff. All teachers are certified in First Aid and CPR.

Screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis will be provided for students at CCCS for the appropriate grade levels.

To prevent the spread of head lice, CCCS employees will report all suspected cases to the office staff. If there is a positive case of head lice, notification will be sent home to parents. Staff will maintain privacy of students identified as having head lice.

California state law requires that all students attending site based classes must be current on their immunizations. Therefore, CCCS requires a written, verified immunization record from a doctor or immunization clinic for all students attending site classes. Students with a verified medical reason exempting them from immunizations must provide a signed doctor's statement identifying the specific nature and duration of the medical condition.

School personnel will not administer any medication without an "Authorization to Administer Medication" form on file with the office. The form must be completed for a specific medication prescribed by a physician. This includes all over the counter medications. The office staff is responsible for monitoring student medications carefully for the safety of administration.

If a student becomes ill while at school, an office staff member is able to take a child's temperature with a thermometer. If a student has a temperature which we define as 100°F or higher, or is vomiting, the parent(s) will be called and asked to pick up their child.

If a student attending site classes is ill before school starts on a school day, we rely on the parents' discretion as to whether or not the student is well enough to attend school that day. It is recommended that students with fevers and students with contagious illnesses remain at home until after the fever is gone and they are contagion free for 24 hours.

## Tobacco/Alcohol/Drugs

CCCS is a 100% tobacco, drug, and alcohol free school. This prohibits all tobacco, drug, and alcohol use by everyone, everywhere on campus, at all times – including school events after regular school hours.

## Student Discipline

The purpose of discipline is to both facilitate learning in the classroom and to teach students self-regulation skills that will serve them in all areas of their lives. When a student violates classroom rules teachers use interventions, such as verbal reminders, moving a student's seat, one on one after class conversations or a phone call home. If a violation of classroom rules persists, the CCCS director will be contacted for further involvement with the student and/or parent.

If there is a conflict between students and direct discussion cannot resolve the conflict, students will be expected to follow the conflict resolution techniques taught in the classrooms and on the playground. The conflict resolution structure asks students to be responsible for their own choices and gives students various choices to act upon when in a conflict. These choices range from walking away from a situation, talking it

over with his/her peer, actively listening to the other student(s), and/or reaching a consensus amongst the students. Staff will incorporate these techniques into problem-solving situations as a regular practice. If students are unable to resolve the conflict they will be expected to ask a teacher for assistance in resolving the conflict. If the teacher is unable to resolve the conflict, the Director will facilitate a dispute resolution process.

For highly disruptive or unsafe behaviors, students will receive an immediate referral to the director. More serious school violations, including but not limited to physical violence, threatening others, vandalism, jeopardizing the safety of others, theft, and any other illegal or dangerous activities. These violations may result in immediate suspension or referral for expulsion. A comprehensive list of offenses resulting in suspension or expulsion and the Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy is available in the office.

### **Complaint Process and Dispute Resolution**

If a parent has a conflict, the parent should contact the Director for assistance in resolving the conflict. If the conflict involves the Director, the parent should request a formal mediation through the Board of Directors.

To address all complaints which allege that the Charter School has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs, a Uniform Complaint Procedure Form must be completed. Compliance Officers shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions. All parties involved in allegations shall be notified when a complaint is filed, when a complaint meeting or hearing is scheduled, and when a decision or ruling is made.

### **Use of Student Images and Work**

CCCS may use photographs of children's work to document the life and growth of our school. There may be occasions when photographs of children performing or on field trips are part of that documentation. Please be aware that images of your child or their work might be shared with the state or other schools as part of our effort to demonstrate the efficacy of our curriculum. Images may also be used on the school website or social media outlets. If you do not wish for pictures of your child to be used, please contact the office.

# CAMPUS PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

## Drop Off, Pick Up, Parking

Students are to remain on campus during all school hours, including recesses and lunch break, unless checked out by a parent or guardian at the office.

Site based classes begin at 8:15 am. School doors are unlocked at 8:00 am. Please do not drop off a student before 8:00 am.

Site based classes end at 1:30 pm. Students must be picked up at 1:30 unless they are attending elective classes.

Elective classes are from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm. Students attending elective classes must be picked up at 2:30 pm.

When dropping off or picking up students, please park in a designated parking spot, or across the street in the empty lot at the corner of Brush Street and Third Street.

## Dress Code

Good appearance and good grooming add to the effectiveness of a student in school and are very conducive to a good learning environment. Students are expected to attend site classes and elective classes in neat, clean, appropriate clothing with their bodies appropriately covered. Parents are expected to enforce the dress code standards before children leave for school each morning.

If students are unsuitably dressed, or their appearance is disruptive or distracting in nature, students will call home and have appropriate clothing brought to them. In areas not covered by the dress code, the onsite administrator shall make judgments at his/her own discretion.

1. No wearing undergarments as shirts or shorts.
2. No torn clothing that exposes skin above the 4-inch to 5-inch inseam line.
3. Pants and shorts must be worn at waist level, no sagging.
4. No spaghetti straps, halter tops or strapless tops. Wide shoulder strap tank tops (3 finger width) are acceptable.
5. No tops that are so short they cannot be tucked in.
6. No undergarments showing or cleavage showing.
7. No blouses or shirts of a transparent or mesh material.
8. Clothing, jewelry and accessories with logos or words that promote alcohol, drugs, tobacco or tobacco related products, gambling, gangs, violence, bigotry or sexual connotations are not permitted.
9. Tights, leggings, spandex and other types of form fitting clothing must be accompanied by skirts, shorts, tops/shirts or dresses of appropriate length.
10. No hats inside the classrooms, except for religious purposes.
11. No sunglasses inside the building.
12. No ink writing on bodies or garments.
13. Shorts must have at least a 4-inch to 5-inch inseam.
14. Skirts and dresses may not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
15. No pajamas of any kind except on school spirit days.
16. Shoes must be worn at all times.

## **Electronic Devices**

CCCS will permit students to possess but not use cell phones and other electronic signaling devices from 8:00 am to 2:30 pm. Students who possess these devices are to keep them turned off and out of view. Cell and other electronic signaling devices phones may not be used during instructional classroom time or during recess, lunch or electives. Cell phones and other electronic signaling devices may be used off campus before or after school or when a state of emergency has been declared (verbally or in writing) by the school Director.

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. Upon request of any school official, inclusive of teachers, administrators and teacher aides, students may be asked to relinquish cell phones for the remainder of the day if they are seen using, viewing, or showing their device on school grounds. If repeated offenses of cell phone use or display occur, students may, at the discretion of the Director, be prohibited from carrying a cell phone on the campus for the remainder of the semester or academic year. Students who possess a cell phone or other electronic signaling device shall assume responsibility for its care. At no time shall CCCS be responsible for preventing theft, loss or damage to cell phones or other electronic signaling devices brought onto campus.

## **Lunch**

Site class students will have a designated lunch period each school day. Students can bring a lunch from home or purchase a school lunch which will consist of a main dish, side dish, fruit/veggie bar and milk. Students who qualify can receive free meals (no charge) or reduced meals (.40). A Free & Reduced Meal Application must be filled out and returned every year. Only one application per household is needed. Microwaves and refrigerators will not be available to students. Due to the possibility of severe allergic reactions a separate “peanut free” table is available in the lunch area. If your student has a food allergy, please notify the main office and note it on the emergency card.

## **School Cancellation**

If designated site classes must be cancelled for an unforeseen reason (snow, flooding, etc.), Aeries Communication is our main way of contacting parents/guardians. Messages will be sent out via e-mail, phone call, text or all three. Local news outlets may also have a list of school closures during weather events or other emergencies.

## **Visitors to the Campus**

While CCCS encourages parents and interested members of the community to visit the campus and view the educational program, CCCS also endeavors to create a safe environment for students and staff. All visitors are required to register at the office immediately when entering the campus.

## **Prohibited Items**

The following items are prohibited on campus: tobacco, drugs, alcohol, matches, lighters, firecrackers, explosives, knives, guns (including paintball and airsoft), stun guns, anything considered a weapon, skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates.

# EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

## Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to complete all course work as assigned by teachers. Students will meet on a scheduled basis with their teachers, either in site classes or in scheduled meetings with the homeschool teacher.

Students are to participate in both their school work and homework with a positive attitude and willingness to learn.

Students will behave in a safe, reasonable, and respectful manner while on campus. Participation in site classes and elective classes is a privilege.

## Teacher Responsibilities

Teachers will work with parents and students to strive for the best setting in which to teach students and help them achieve their goals. Teachers will be available to meet with students and parents to answer questions or concerns regarding students.

CCCS teachers will ensure that California State Standards are being met. Teachers will assign all coursework and assign grades and credits earned for that coursework.

## Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Family support and active participation in their child's learning is critical for students' success.

Parents/guardians at CCCS will:

- Attend the Parent Orientation
- Ensure that student arrives and is picked up on time daily
- Provide a lunch every day
- Provide adequate time, effort, environment and support for student to complete all schoolwork and homework to the best of his/her ability
- Keep informed of all school and classroom happenings by reading the CCCS Newsletter, Teacher Newsletters, and school emails
- Promptly sign and return all coursework documentation paperwork (i.e. Master Agreements, Attendance Record Sheet, Assignment & Work Record, Progress Reports) to the teacher
- Arrange transportation for their child to and from voluntary field trips

## Homework

Students enrolled in site classes can expect 20-90 minutes of homework each night. Homework completion is expected according to classroom guidelines. Homework may include:

- Individual assignments
- Class work not completed
- Project work
- AR Reading

It is extremely important in developing good study habits that a quiet, well lit place to do work be provided at home for student success.

Parents may help their student by checking their class work and homework assignments on a daily basis. When a student is absent, homework may be requested.

## California State Testing

CCCS is a California public charter school and therefore participates in California State testing. Students are expected to participate in the yearly testing which takes place each Spring Semester. Homeschool students will also participate in state testing on campus on the days designated each year.

## Special Education

While charter schools may operate in a unique fashion in comparison to non-charter schools, students requiring special education programs and services must be assured a free and appropriate education under federal law. If your student has an active IEP or is suspected of needing special education services, please work with CCCS staff prior to enrollment.

CCCS believes students with disabilities benefit educationally, socially, and emotionally from the opportunity to receive designated instructional and related services consistent with the students' Individualized Education Plan in the least restrictive environment with an inclusive model. Students with disabilities are fully included within the general education classroom with supports, services, accommodations and modifications.

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA").

## Academic Honesty

It is our expectation that students take responsibility for their learning and experience the pride that accompanies academic achievement. This ensures a positive learning environment that emphasizes intellectual integrity. Plagiarism and Cheating impedes a student's academic progress and compromises the trust between teacher and student, which is fundamental to the learning process. Students who cheat will be given no credit for the assignment and parents will be notified. If continued cheating occurs, the student will be referred to the director for further action. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Receiving or providing information during a test or for a test given in an earlier period
- Using material on tests when the teacher has not given permission to do so
- Violating the teacher's testing rules and procedures
- Using somebody else's writing, word for word—or almost word for word, and using it as your own (Plagiarism) or using somebody else's ideas and saying they are your own and not giving credit
- Using or copying another student's assignment to turn in as your own work
- Allowing other students to use your work on assignments with the exception of specific group, lab, or collaborative projects.

## Library

It is a privilege to use the CCCS library. Students will follow the library rules.

1. Books may be checked out for one week initially. They must be renewed weekly or checked back in.
2. Damaged books must be shown to the librarian.
3. If a book is lost or damaged beyond repair, the parent/guardian of the child is responsible for the replacement cost.
4. Make sure your hands are clean and dry before handing library books.
5. Never write on or fold the pages or cover of a library book.
6. Keep books in a special place away from food, drinks, pets, and small children.
7. Do not let friends borrow a library book. The student who checked it out is ultimately responsible for checking it back in.

## Learning Periods

CCCS uses an independent study model for instruction in both the site classes and homeschool program. As per California State law, paperwork detailing the learning period must be filled out by the teacher of record and signed by the parent and student every 20 school days. This paperwork must be promptly returned to the school.

## Aeries

CCCS uses Aeries Student Information System to track progress in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade site classes. Parents are encouraged to log in to Aeries to see the status of their child's completed work and grades in all classes. This access is updated regularly and available to parents via the CCCS website at all times.

### GETTING INTO AERIES GRADING SYSTEM / grades 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

- Log onto the charter school webpage at: [www.cottonwoodcreekcharter.com](http://www.cottonwoodcreekcharter.com)
- On the homepage, click on the Aeries portal tab in the middle of the page
- Enter your e-mail address and your password (This is the e-mail address you have on file with the Charter School – from your student's Registration Form).
- If you forgot your password (or have not created one yet) click on Forgot your password.
  1. In the next page enter your e-mail address, then click "GO"
  2. Go check your e-mail and look for an e-mail from [abi@cwusd.com](mailto:abi@cwusd.com)
  3. Click on the link in the e-mail; this will send you back into Aeries and allow you to update your password
  4. After entering your new password, click enter. Your password has now been changed. Select the "click here".
  5. Enter your e-mail address and your newly created password.

## Graduation

Students wanting to graduate and receive a diploma must meet the following requirements:

- No more than 3 failing semester grades during the entire school year.
- No more than 2 failing semester grades during the second semester.

Students wanting to graduate, participate in the graduation ceremony, and attend the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip must meet the following requirements:

- No more than 3 failing semester grades during the entire year.
- No more than 2 failing semester grades during the second semester.
- No major behavioral violations or more than 1 suspension during the school year.
- Be present for graduation practices and attend school the day of graduation.

## Internet and Email

CCCS is pleased to offer students access to the internet through "ShastaLink", a service offered and maintained by the Shasta County Office of Education. To gain access to email and the internet, all students must obtain parental permission and must sign and return the Acceptable Use Policy.

Many of our classrooms use Google Docs for various assignments. In order to use this service, your child will be assigned an email address for school use.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

There are many ways families can become further connected to our school. Family involvement is encouraged at all levels.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Volunteering at CCCS is easy. Here are some ways to be involved:

- Volunteer in a classroom
- Serve on the CCCS Board of Directors
- Attend Parent Club Meetings
- Help beautify our campus during Community Workdays
- Assist teachers when requested
- Assist with field trips
- Assist with an elective class

### **Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Parents will meet with the teacher prior to the start of the school year to sign the Master Agreement. Parents may request a meeting with their child's teacher at any time and are encouraged to do so if they have any questions or concerns. Please contact the teacher directly to schedule a meeting.

### **Parent Club**

All parents are welcome to join the CCCS Parent Club. The Parent Club supports the CCCS by running the reading incentive program and by fundraising in many different ways to supplement the classroom and school activities. If you would like to be a part of the Parent Club, more information is available in the office.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

### **Field Trips**

Field trips supplement your child's education. Field trips are offered on many Fridays and will vary from year to year. Examples of Field trips include Water Works Park, Shasta Dam, Hawes Farm, ice skating, Colman Fish Hatchery, and Mt. Shasta Ski park. At times field trips will include a fee. Parents are responsible to pay this fee to the office and turn in the release form before each excursion. Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from all field trips.

### **Electives**

CCCS is proud to offer after optional school electives for student academic, physical, and artistic enrichment. Electives are offered quarterly and by semester. Elective classes are held from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm and are available to both site class students and homeschool students. There is a fee for each elective class to be paid by the child's parent at the beginning of each semester. The only exception is Study Hall. Study Hall has no fee and is offered Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

### **Music Lessons**

A variety of music lessons will be offered on site and off site after school hours. Students wishing to participate in music lessons on site will do so by filling out the Music Lesson section on the Elective Sign Up form each semester. CCCS will pay for half of each music lesson, and the parent is responsible for paying for half.



## **Sports**

CCCS has the following sports teams:

Running Club: grades K-3  
Cross Country: grades 4-8  
Co-Ed Soccer: grades 6-8  
Girls Volleyball: grades 5-8  
Girls Basketball: grades 6-8  
Boys Basketball: grades 6-8  
Co-Ed Softball: grades 7-8

Students must be in good standing with both their behavior and grades to participate on sports teams. Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from sporting practices and all sporting events.

In order to participate on a sports team, students must have either proof of medical insurance, or enroll in the school's medical insurance for students.

## **Student Government**

CCCS Student Council consists of members in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades that are elected by students. The overall goal of the student council is to represent their school as a whole and provide leadership for the student body. Student council members are expected to be in good standing in their classes and must strive to avoid behavioral issues. The student council is responsible for organizing events that promote school spirit and raising funds for school activities. Student council members will attend meetings of the student council. Officer positions are President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian.

# SCHOOL SAFETY AND WELLNESS

## Mandatory Reporting

CCCS employees are required by law to report any suspected child abuse to the Department of Children and Family Services for investigation. These reports are confidential and staff cannot provide any specific information regarding reports to parents. Complaints filed by parents will be referred to local law enforcement for investigation.

## Suicide Prevention and Awareness

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all district students by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The district:

1. recognizes that physical, behavioral, and emotional health is an integral component of a student's educational outcomes,
2. further recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people,
3. has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide, and
4. acknowledges the school's role in providing an environment which is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide and one which helps to foster positive youth development.

Toward this end, the policy is meant to be paired with other policies supporting the emotional and behavioral health of students more broadly. Specifically, this policy is meant to be applied in accordance with the district's Child Find obligations.

### DEFINITIONS

1. **At Risk.** A student who is defined as high risk for suicide is one who has made a suicide attempt, has the intent to die by suicide, or has displayed a significant change in behavior suggesting the onset or deterioration of a mental health condition. The student may have thought about suicide including potential means of death and may have a plan. In addition, the student may exhibit feelings of isolation, hopelessness, helplessness, and the inability to tolerate any more pain. This situation would necessitate a referral, as documented in the following procedures.
2. **Crisis Team.** A multidisciplinary team of primarily administrative, mental health, safety professionals, and support staff whose primary focus is to address crisis preparedness, intervention/response and recovery. These professionals have been specifically trained in crisis preparedness through recovery and take the leadership role in developing crisis plans, ensuring school staff can effectively execute various crisis protocols, and may provide mental health services for effective crisis interventions and recovery supports.
3. **Mental Health.** A state of mental and emotional being that can impact choices and actions that affect wellness. Mental health problems include mental and substance use disorders.
4. **Postvention.** Suicide postvention is a crisis intervention strategy designed to reduce the risk of suicide and suicide contagion, provide the support needed to help survivors cope with a suicide death, address the social stigma associated with suicide, and disseminate factual information after the suicide death of a member of the school community.

5. **Risk Assessment.** An evaluation of a student who may be at risk for suicide, conducted by the appropriate school staff (e.g., school psychologist, school counselor, or school social worker). This assessment is designed to elicit information regarding the student's intent to die by suicide, previous history of suicide attempts, presence of a suicide plan and its level of lethality and availability, presence of support systems, and level of hopelessness and helplessness, mental status, and other relevant risk factors.
6. **Risk Factors for Suicide.** Characteristics or conditions that increase the chance that a person may try to take his or her life. Suicide risk tends to be highest when someone has several risk factors at the same time. Risk factors may encompass biological, psychological, and or social factors in the individual, family, and environment.
7. **Self-Harm.** Behavior that is self-directed and deliberately results in injury or the potential for injury to oneself. Can be categorized as either non-suicidal or suicidal. Although self-harm often lacks suicidal intent, youth who engage in self-harm are more likely to attempt suicide.
8. **Suicide.** Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior. Note: The coroner's or medical examiner's office must first confirm that the death was a suicide before any school official may state this as the cause of death.
9. **Suicide Attempt.** A self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person had at least some intent to kill himself or herself. A suicide attempt may result in death, injuries, or no injuries. A mixture of ambivalent feelings such as wish to die and desire to live is a common experience with most suicide attempts. Therefore, ambivalence is not a sign of a less serious or less dangerous suicide attempt.
10. **Suicidal Behavior.** Suicide attempts, intentional injury to self-associated with at least some level of intent, developing a plan or strategy for suicide, gathering the means for a suicide plan, or any other overt action or thought indicating intent to end one's life.
11. **Suicide Contagion.** The process by which suicidal behavior or a suicide influences an increase in the suicidal behaviors of others. Guilt, identification, and modeling are each thought to play a role in contagion. Although rare, suicide contagion can result in a cluster of suicides.
12. **Suicidal Ideation.** Thinking about, considering, or planning for self-injurious behavior which may result in death. A desire to be dead without a plan or intent to end one's life is still considered suicidal ideation and should be taken seriously.

## SCOPE

This policy covers actions that take place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops, and at school sponsored out-of-school events where school staff are present. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school and district staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers. This policy will also cover appropriate school responses to suicidal or high risk behaviors that take place outside of the school environment.

## PREVENTION

1. **District Policy Implementation** A district level suicide prevention coordinator shall be designated by the Superintendent. This may be an existing staff person. The district suicide prevention coordinator will be responsible for planning and coordinating implementation of this policy for the school district. Each school principal shall designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. This may be an existing staff person. All staff members shall report students they believe to be at elevated risk for suicide to the school suicide prevention coordinator.
2. **Staff Professional Development** All staff will receive annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention. The professional development will include additional information regarding groups of students at elevated risk for suicide, including those living with mental and/ or substance use disorders, those who engage in self harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings, those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities. Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention will be provided to school employed mental health professionals and school nurses.
3. **Youth Suicide Prevention Programming** Developmentally-appropriate, student-centered education materials will be integrated into the curriculum of all K-12 health classes. The content of these age-appropriate materials will include:
  - a. the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies,
  - b. how to recognize risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others,
  - c. help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. In addition, schools may provide supplemental small group suicide prevention programming for students.
4. **Publication and Distribution** This policy will be distributed annually and included in all student and teacher handbooks and on the school website.

## ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL

When a student is identified by a staff person as potentially suicidal, i.e., verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors such as agitation or intoxication, the act of self-harm occurs, or a student self-refers, the student will be seen by a school employed mental health professional within the same school day to assess risk and facilitate referral. If there is no mental health professional available, a school nurse or administrator will fill this role until a mental health professional can be brought in. For youth at risk:

1. School staff will continuously supervise the student to ensure their safety.
2. The principal and school suicide prevention coordinator will be made aware of the situation as soon as reasonably possible.
3. The school employed mental health professional or principal will contact the student's parent or guardian, as described in the Parental Notification and Involvement section, and will assist the family with urgent referral. When appropriate, this may include calling emergency services or bringing the student to the local Emergency Department, but in most cases will involve setting up an outpatient mental health or primary care appointment and communicating the reason for referral to the healthcare provider.
4. Staff will ask the student's parent or guardian for written permission to discuss the student's health with outside care, if appropriate.

## **IN SCHOOL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS**

In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the health and safety of the student is paramount. In these situations:

1. First aid will be rendered until professional medical treatment and/or transportation can be received, following district emergency medical procedures.
2. School staff will supervise the student to ensure their safety.
3. Staff will move all other students out of the immediate area as soon as possible.
4. If appropriate, staff will immediately request a mental health assessment for the youth.
5. The school employed mental health professional or principal will contact the student's parent or guardian, as described in the Parental Notification and Involvement section.
6. Staff will immediately notify the principal or school suicide prevention coordinator regarding in-school suicide attempts.
7. The school will engage as necessary the crisis team to assess whether additional steps should be taken to ensure student safety and well-being.

## **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS**

If a staff member becomes aware of a suicide attempt by a student that is in progress in an out-of-school location, the staff member will:

1. Call the police and/or emergency medical services, such as 911.
2. Inform the student's parent or guardian.
3. Inform the school suicide prevention coordinator and principal.

If the student contacts the staff member and expresses suicidal ideation, the staff member should maintain contact with the student (either in person, online, or on the phone). The staff member should then enlist the assistance of another person to contact the police while maintaining verbal engagement with the student.

## **RE-ENTRY PROCEDURES**

For students returning to school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization), a school employed mental health professional, the principal, or designee will meet with the student's parent or guardian, and if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and appropriate next steps to ensure the student's readiness for return to school.

1. A school employed mental health professional or other designee will be identified to coordinate with the student, their parent or guardian, and any outside mental health care providers.
2. The parent or guardian will provide documentation from a mental health care provider that the student has undergone examination and that they are no longer a danger to themselves or others.
3. The designated staff person will periodically check in with student to help the student readjust to the school community and address any ongoing concerns.

## **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

In situations where a student is assessed at risk for suicide or has made a suicide attempt, the student's parent or guardian will be informed as soon as practicable by the principal, designee, or mental health professional. If the student has exhibited any kind of suicidal behavior, the parent or guardian should be counseled on "means restriction," limiting the child's access to mechanisms for carrying out a suicide attempt. Staff will also seek parental permission to communicate with outside mental health care providers regarding their child. Through discussion with the student, the principal or school employed mental health professional will assess whether there is further risk of harm due to parent or guardian notification. If the principal, designee, or mental health professional believes, in their professional capacity, that contacting the parent or guardian would endanger the health or well-being of the student, they may delay such contact as appropriate. If contact is delayed, the reasons for the delay should be documented.

## POSTVENTION

1. Development and Implementation of an Action Plan: The crisis team will develop an action plan to guide school response following a death by suicide. A meeting of the crisis team to implement the action plan should take place immediately following news of the suicide death. The action plan may include the following steps:
  - a. Verify the death. Staff will confirm the death and determine the cause of death through communication with a coroner's office, local hospital, the student's parent or guardian, or police department. Even when a case is perceived as being an obvious instance of suicide, it should not be labeled as such until after a cause of death ruling has been made. If the cause of death has been confirmed as suicide but the parent or guardian will not permit the cause of death to be disclosed, the school will not share the cause of death but will use the opportunity to discuss suicide prevention with students.
  - b. Assess the situation. The crisis team will meet to prepare the postvention response, to consider how severely the death is likely to affect other students, and to determine which students are most likely to be affected. The crisis team will also consider how recently other traumatic events have occurred within the school community and the time of year of the suicide. If the death occurred during a school vacation, the need for or scale of postvention activities may be reduced.
  - c. Share information. Before the death is officially classified as a suicide by the coroner's office, the death can and should be reported to staff, students, and parents/guardians with an acknowledgement that its cause is unknown. Inform the faculty that a sudden death has occurred, preferably in a staff meeting. Write a statement for staff members to share with students. The statement should include the basic facts of the death and known funeral arrangements (without providing details of the suicide method), recognition of the sorrow the news will cause, and information about the resources available to help students cope with their grief. Public address system announcements and school-wide assemblies should be avoided. The crisis team may prepare a letter (with the input and permission from the student's parent or guardian) to send home with students that includes facts about the death.
  - d. Avoid suicide contagion. It should be explained in the staff meeting described above that one purpose of trying to identify and give services to other high risk students is to prevent another death. The crisis team will work with teachers to identify students who are most likely to be significantly affected by the death. In the staff meeting, the crisis team will review suicide warning signs and procedures for reporting students who generate concern.
  - e. Initiate support services. Students identified as being more likely to be affected by the death will be assessed by a school employed mental health professional to determine the level of support needed. The crisis team will coordinate support services for students and staff in need of individual and small group counseling as needed. In concert with parents or guardians, crisis team members will refer to community mental healthcare providers to ensure a smooth transition from the crisis intervention phase to meeting underlying or ongoing mental health needs.
  - f. Develop memorial plans. The school should not create on-campus physical memorials (e.g. photos, flowers), funeral services, or fly the flag at half-mast because it may sensationalize the death and encourage suicide contagion. School should not be canceled for the funeral. Any school-based memorials (e.g., small gatherings) will include a focus on how to prevent future suicides and prevention resources available.

2. External Communication: The school principal or designee will be the sole media spokesperson. Staff will refer all inquiries from the media directly to the spokesperson. The spokesperson will:
  - a. Keep the district suicide prevention coordinator and superintendent informed of school actions relating to the death.
  - b. Prepare a statement for the media including the facts of the death, postvention plans, and available resources. The statement will not include confidential information, speculation about victim motivation, means of suicide, or personal family information.
  - c. Answer all media inquiries. If a suicide is to be reported by news media, the spokesperson should encourage reporters not to make it a front-page story, not to use pictures of the suicide victim, not to use the word suicide in the caption of the story, not to describe the method of suicide, and not to use the phrase “suicide epidemic” – as this may elevate the risk of suicide contagion. They should also be encouraged not to link bullying to suicide and not to speculate about the reason for suicide. Media should be asked to offer the community information on suicide risk factors, warning signs, and resources available.



I have read and understood the Cottonwood Creek Charter School *Student and Parent Handbook* and agree to abide by its contents.

**Please sign and return this page only to the charter school.**

All charter school students living in the same household sign this form along with the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Keep this *Student and Parent Handbook* for reference throughout the school year.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Only one form per family is required. Multiple signature lines are to provide for all Cottonwood Creek Charter School students in your household.**

If you have more than 5 students enrolled in Cottonwood Creek Charter School, please use the space below for additional signatures.