

CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth Program (AEDY)

STUDENT HANDBOOK AND CODE OF CONDUCT
2026-2027 ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR



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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Dr. Laura Jacob, Superintendent

Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, Director of Student Services/AEDY Program Supervisor

Dear California Area School District Students and Families,

As the new school year approaches, we want to extend a warm welcome to you and your child to what promises to be an exciting and enriching academic journey. Our entire school and district administration is thrilled to have the privilege of serving your family and working together to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all our students.

Our district handbook has been tailored to support students enrolled in the California Area School District's Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) program. The AEDY program is designed to provide targeted academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support for students who have demonstrated disruptive behaviors as defined under Chapter 19 of the Pennsylvania School Code. The primary goal of the program is to help students develop leadership skills, make meaningful progress, and successfully transition back to the regular education environment.

With the start of a new school year comes the opportunity for growth, learning, and achievement. As we embark on this journey together, we encourage you to take some time to review our student handbook with your child. The student handbook is a valuable resource that outlines our school's policies, procedures, expectations, and code of conduct. It serves as a guide to ensure that every student has a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities while at school.

By reviewing the Student Handbook together, you and your child will have the opportunity to:

- Familiarize yourselves with the school's rules and guidelines, fostering a sense of respect and responsibility within the school community.
- Discuss the importance of adhering to the school's behavioral expectations and treating peers, teachers, and staff with kindness and empathy.
- Understand the procedures for addressing any concerns or questions that may arise throughout the school year.
- Build a strong partnership between home and school, working collaboratively to create a positive and productive educational experience.
- We believe that an informed and engaged community is essential for the success of our students, and we encourage you to take an active role in your child's education. As you review the Student Handbook, please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or require further clarification. We are here to support you every step of the way.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to our shared educational mission. We look forward to an outstanding school year ahead!

Warm regards,

Dr. Laura Jacob, Superintendent of Schools

Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, Director of Student Services/AEDY Program Supervisor

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INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

California Area School District is dedicated to providing diverse learning experiences for every child to thrive in their community to build a better future in the world.

District Vision

We believe that all children can succeed and it is our responsibility to develop diverse learning environments to allow children to thrive. We believe education is the great equalizer and our responsibility is to provide children with the experiences to engage in their community and world to create a better future.

Supports to Promote Positive Behavior

The faculty, staff, administration, and School Board of Directors at California Area School District have established the following support to encourage positive behaviors in students.

Self-Discipline and School Expectations:

Students are expected to practice self-discipline. This means that each person is responsible for their individual behavior. This behavior should be in line with expectations and regulations that are established by the California Area School District. Common sense should govern students' behavior at all times. If students are not sure about a rule, they should ask one of the school staff. Students should not act first and then hope that a disruptive action will be overlooked because it is not specifically listed in the handbook.

Classroom Expectations:

It is the responsibility of the teacher to maintain the proper learning environment. To maintain this environment, it is necessary for the students to follow basic expectations, and therefore, to be responsible for their own behaviors and actions. Teachers will set up expectations for their classrooms that are consistent with the policies of the California Area School District.

Counseling Services:

Counseling services are part of the regular educational program for all California Area students. Students are supported either individually or in small groups. Students receiving counseling are assisted in making decisions, setting goals to improve class performance, and discussing personal or social issues. The counselors work closely with teachers, parents, and other school staff. They may also work with people from other local agencies. The goal of the counseling staff is to make school experiences rewarding and meaningful.

Homework:

We believe that homework should be meaningful and grade-appropriate and can significantly enhance learning when used as an extension to classroom activities. Homework is expected to be completed as assigned. Any student experiencing difficulty completing homework should request help from the teacher.

Anti-Bullying Policy:

The California Area School District believes that all students have the right to a safe and healthy school environment. We promote mutual respect, acceptance, and tolerance, and will not permit behavior that infringes upon these principles. No student shall harass, intimidate, or verbally abuse another student. Hitting, shoving, teasing, name-calling, manipulating, or shunning other students is prohibited. This policy is in effect when a student is at school, en route to or from school, or at any school-sponsored event.

Complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations outlined in [Unlawful Harassment Policy](#).

Staff and administration will contact and show support to families in the event that a student has been hurt either by physical or emotional aggression while in school. Counselors, administrators, teachers, and/or other staff members will follow-up as necessary with families/students to ensure a level of comfort and a safe environment for students who have been bullied or physically hurt.

Student Assistance Program (SAP):

Students may be referred to Student Assistance Program (SAP) if they experience barriers to their learning or the learning of others. When appropriate, referrals of a student to SAP may result in the SAP team assisting the classroom teacher in developing individualized positive behavior interventions.

Communication with Parents/Guardians:

Parents/guardians shall receive regular contact from teachers for every student relative to positive academic or behavioral occurrences. This correspondence can occur in person, by phone, email, or SMS, or letter.

For chronic classroom behavioral issues, prior to any discipline referral advancing to the administrative level, teachers must contact the parent/guardian in person, by phone, email, or letter. The teacher and parent/guardian will seek to resolve the challenges prior to involving school administration.

Administrators will contact parents/guardians prior to any discipline referral resulting in an out-of-school suspension. Contact will be in person, by phone, email, or by letter.

Recognition:

Recognition is used to encourage positive behaviors that are being exhibited by students. Every effort is made to recognize and reinforce positive behaviors. In addition to formal awards, this may be done through announcements, bulletin boards, parental notification, certificates, etc.

Progressive Discipline Procedure

The California Area School District recognizes the importance of establishing clear policies and consistent disciplinary consequences for violations of District expectations, as this allows the California Area community to build and maintain a positive, safe, and trusting environment in which our students can learn. We expect our students to act as mature, responsible, and considerate citizens, treating each other with dignity and respect.

When a student violates District expectations and regulations, the student will be subject to an appropriate form of discipline. The information that follows shows the normal sequence and/or combination of disciplinary actions that will be taken for violation of school expectations and regulations. Multiple or repeated infractions will result in a higher level of consequences, a different combination of consequences and/or a restorative action.

Once a referral to the principal has been written, the referral is handled according to the Progressive Discipline Procedure. It is understood that behaviors are developmental in nature, some infractions are more serious than others, and that repeated infractions may warrant stricter consequences. When appropriate, alternate consequences directly connected to the infraction may be used with the goal of teaching positive and proper school behavior. In some cases, the development of an individualized behavior plan may be appropriate. In all cases, consequences are subject to parameters of state and federal law.

If a student violates any policy set forth by the California Area Board of School Directors, the teacher, principal or

his/her designee is to follow the regulations outlined in the Student Handbook and Discipline Code. The administration of each individual school is given the authority to take appropriate action to ensure compliance with Board policy.

In all cases, the Administration retains the right to use its discretion in evaluating cases.

AEDY Program Overview

The California Area School District's AEDY program serves students in grades 6–12 who have exhibited disruptive behaviors that interfere with learning.

In addition to offering standards-aligned academic instruction, tiered behavioral and emotional support, counseling and mental health services, regular monitoring of student progress, and structured transition planning back to the general education setting, the program is uniquely designed to foster growth beyond the classroom. Students engage in outdoor learning experiences that emphasize the development of leadership, daily living skills, and social-emotional competencies. These hands-on, experiential opportunities help students build confidence, resilience, and personal responsibility.

Placement in AEDY is not intended to be permanent. Each student's placement is reviewed at least once every 45 school days to determine readiness for return to the regular setting.

California Area School District's AEDY program will remain in compliance with The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) guidelines and in accordance with applicable federal and state law and regulation, including the Public School Code of 1949, and PDE policies and procedures.

Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) Program

A program approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) that is designed to provide a temporary placement for disruptive students in grades 6 through 12. Students placed in an AEDY Program continue to make academic progress towards graduation and work to remedy disruptive behavior through counseling and other behavioral interventions. AEDY placements are used only as a last resort, after all other behavioral interventions have failed to remedy the student's disruptive behavior(s).

Disruptive Student

As defined by the Public School Code (24 P.S. § 19-1901-C(5)), a student in grades 6 through 12:

- *who poses a clear threat to the safety and welfare of other students or the school staff; or*
- *who creates an unsafe school environment; or*
- *whose behavior materially interferes with the learning of other students or disrupts the overall educational process.*

Additionally, the student must exhibit to a marked degree any or all of the following conditions:

1. *Disregard for school authority, including persistent violation of school policy and rules.*
2. *Display or use of controlled substances on school property or during school-affiliated activities.*
3. *Violent or threatening behavior on school property or during school-affiliated activities.*
4. *Possession of a weapon on school property, as defined by the Crimes Code at 18 Pa.C.S. § 912 (relating to possession of weapon on school property).*
5. *Commission of a criminal act on school property or during school-affiliated activities.*
6. *Misconduct that would merit suspension or expulsion under school policy.*

A student with a disability must not be placed in an AEDY Program under this placement category unless (a) the student has had multiple displays of such behavior, documented by the LEA; (b) the LEA has attempted and documented multiple unsuccessful evidence-based interventions, and that the behavior persists; and (c) the LEA has conducted and documented compliance with applicable IDEA procedure.

Students enrolled in AEDY have the right to:

- *A free and appropriate public education*
- *Non-discriminatory access to academic and support services*
- *Regular ISP reviews*
- *Translation and interpretation services*
- *File a complaint if they believe their rights are being violated*

Complaints regarding AEDY placement or services can be directed to:

*Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly
Director of Student Services
724-785-5800 x2398
hoeslys@calsd.org*

AEDY Referral, Intake, and Placement Procedures

Students may be referred to the AEDY program if they exhibit disruptive behavior as defined by Chapter 19, including repeated violations of school policy, substance use on school grounds, or threats of violence. The referral process includes:

- *Review of behavioral data*
- *Parent notification and consent*
- *Consideration of IEP status or suspected disability*
- *Intake meeting and completion of a student interview (with interpreter if needed)*

All students entering the program must complete an intake process that gathers academic, behavioral, and social-emotional data to inform the development of an Individualized Student Plan (ISP)

Individualized Service Plan (ISP)

Each AEDY student will receive an ISP within 10 school days of placement. The ISP is developed collaboratively with the student, family, and school team and includes:

- *Academic, behavioral, and emotional goals*
- *Supports and interventions*
- *Monitoring schedule and responsible staff*
- *Parent involvement plan*
- *Transition Plan*

Progress on ISP goals will be reviewed and documented regularly. The ISP will guide decisions regarding continued placement or transition back to the regular school setting.

Counseling/Mental Health Services

In the AEDY setting, students have increased access to mental health and emotional regulation supports. Counseling is provided at least 2.5 hours weekly or more frequently if needed. Interventions include:

- *Individual counseling sessions*
- *Group social-emotional skill building*

- *Trauma-informed supports*
- *Referral to community-based mental health services if warranted*

Transition Planning

Every student's placement in AEDY is temporary. A transition team meets every 45 school days to assess readiness to return to the regular education setting. The ISP Team sets a presumptive exit date at every planning meeting in preparation for an exit of the program. Transition planning includes:

- *Academic and behavioral progress review*
- *Transition readiness criteria*
- *Gradual re-entry planning (e.g., half-days or specific subjects)*
- *Continued support during reintegration*

The transition team includes the parent/guardian, student, AEDY teacher, regular education teacher, counselor, and Director of Student Services/AEDY Administrator, and the building principal or home district AEDY liaison (if student is not a California Area School District Student).

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

All students educated in the California Area School District have access to the following services which address students' needs throughout their district enrollment: school counseling, psychological services, health services, home and school visitor services, and social work services to support students in addressing academic, behavioral, health, personal, career, and social development issues.

Students with IEPs, GIEPs, or 504 Plans enrolled in the AEDY program continue to receive all rights and services mandated by law. English Learners receive language instruction educational programs (LIEPs) and access to interpreters throughout the process.

Screening and Evaluation

California Area School District employs the following procedures for locating, identifying, and evaluating the specific needs of school-age students requiring special programs and services. These procedures, as required by law, are as follows:

The district, as prescribed by Chapter 14 of the Pennsylvania School Code, routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing acuity (grades kindergarten-3, 7, and 11); visual acuity (grades kindergarten-12); and speech and language skills (grades kindergarten-12).

California Area School District, per board policy 113.3, has adopted a system of screening that includes early intervening services and is designed to accomplish identification and initial screening for students prior to district referral for a special education evaluation. Gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social and emotional skills are assessed by teachers and support staff on an ongoing basis. At-risk students can be referred to the pre-referral team for screening and additional interventions/accommodations. The pre-referral team will provide support to staff to improve their ability to work effectively with students in the general education curriculum, identify students who may require special education services and programs, and includes hearing and vision screening as well as screening at reasonable intervals to determine whether students are making educational progress and performing at grade appropriate levels in core academic subjects. Screening may also include but is not limited to a review of group-based data such as cumulative enrollment and health records, curriculum based assessments/report cards, ability and achievement test scores. Identified needs from these screening sources as well as information obtained from parents/guardians and outside agencies are assessed, noted within student records, and discussed with parents/guardians. These school records are always open and available to parents/guardians and only to school officials who have a legitimate "need to know" about the child.

Information from records is released to other persons or agencies only with appropriate authorization, which involves written permission by parents/guardians.

If a parent/guardian or the school team feels a more comprehensive assessment of a student is necessary, an evaluation may be recommended. Parental consent is required before a comprehensive evaluation may take place. Evaluations may include a review of the student's records, classroom observations, a gathering of parent/guardian and teacher input, individually administered assessments of achievement and cognitive ability, and other assessments as necessary.

After all of the assessments are completed, an Evaluation Report that includes specific recommendations for the types of interventions necessary to support the child's specific needs is prepared and shared with parents/guardians. In accordance with state regulations, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting, with parent/guardian

involvement, may be scheduled to develop an appropriate IEP for the student. Parents/Guardians are then notified of the proposed placement and services with a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP).

Parents/Guardians of students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education services may request multidisciplinary evaluations of their child through a written request to the building principal or Director of Student Services.

Services for School-Age Exceptional Children:

California Area School District provides a free, appropriate, public education to exceptional students according to state and federal mandates. To be eligible, the child must be of school age, need specially designed instruction, and meet the eligibility criteria for one or more of the following 13 identified disability categories under IDEA (2004) or be identified as mentally gifted:

Autism	Multiple Disabilities	Emotional Disturbance
Deaf-blindness	Orthopedic Impairment	Visual Impairment
Deafness	Other Health Impairment	Hearing Impairment
Intellectual Disability	Specific Learning Disability	Speech or Language Impairment
	Traumatic Brain Injury	

Services designed to meet the needs of eligible students include annual development of an IEP, multidisciplinary re-evaluation, supportive intervention in the regular class, supplemental intervention in the regular class or in a special education resource program, and placement in a part-time or full-time special education class outside of the regular school. The extent of special education services and the location of the delivery of such services are determined by the parents/guardians and staff at the IEP team meeting and are based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age, and level of intensity of the specified intervention.

The school district also provides related services such as transportation, physical therapy, and occupational therapy that are required to enable the student to derive educational benefits. Prior to the initiation of services parents/guardians are presented a "Notice of Recommended Educational Placement" (NOREP) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents/guardians disagree with the program being recommended, they have the right to request a pre-hearing conference, mediation, and/or due process hearing.

Independent Educational Evaluations:

Parents/guardians have the right to request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at public expense if there is disagreement with an evaluation obtained by a District (34 CFR 300.503). However, the district may initiate a due process hearing to show that its evaluation is appropriate. If the final decision is that the evaluation is appropriate, parents/guardians still have the right to an IEE, but not at public expense.

Admission of Service Animals to Schools:

A student or an employee with a disability may submit a request to bring a service animal to school for educational or employment purposes. However, there is no automatic right to be accompanied by a service animal in the school setting.

Parents/Guardians of students with disabilities who believe the student needs to bring a service animal to school in order to receive a free and appropriate public education shall notify the building principal or the Section 504 or IEP team. The appropriate team shall evaluate the request to use the service animal in school, gather necessary information, and determine whether the student requires the service animal during the school day or at school activities. Any service animal accompanying a student with a disability to school or school activities shall be handled and cared for in a manner detailed in the student's IEP or Section 504 Service Agreement.

Cyber Instruction/Special Education:

Upon parent request for enrollment into cyber, the IEP team should convene a meeting and discuss the student's potential for success in that environment. The IEP team will consider the ability for the student's supports and services to adequately transfer to a cyber platform and will evaluate the potential for cyber placement as an option for providing a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for each student. This should include an assessment of how well the cyber placement meets the individual educational needs of the student and ensures that the student can achieve their individualized educational goals. The IEP team will make decisions based on the student's unique needs and ensure that any chosen placement complies with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements.

Acceleration:

Acceleration will be granted for the purpose of completing a coherent, accelerated academic plan and approved by the building administration on a case by case basis.

Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools:

Public special education is accessible to resident students attending nonpublic schools by permitting the nonpublic school student to enroll on a part-time basis in a special education program operated in a public school. Special education programs are accessible to nonpublic school students through dual enrollment following multidisciplinary evaluations and the development of an IEP. Parents/ guardians of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request multidisciplinary evaluations and development of an IEP. Parents/Guardians of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is exceptional and in need of special education may request multidisciplinary evaluations of their child through a written request to the Director of Student Services - Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, 724-785-5800 x 2398, hoeslys@calsd.org.

Chapter 15 Services for Protected Handicapped Students/504 Plans:

California Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aides, services, or accommodations, which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school programs and extracurricular activities to the extent appropriate to the student's abilities. To qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. Services and protections for protected handicapped students are different from those applicable to all eligible students enrolled in special education programs.

504 Evaluations

Students may be identified as eligible for protections under Chapter 15 in a variety of ways:

- Through a multidisciplinary evaluation, the team will determine that a student is not eligible for Chapter 14 services but will recommend Chapter 15 services
- Through a re-evaluation, an IEP team may determine that special education services are not necessary, but that accommodations would provide the means to an education that is equitable to the student's nondisabled peers
- School professionals may recommend that a student be evaluated for services and accommodations
- A parent may request, in writing, that a student be evaluated for Section 504 services

With parental consent, evaluations are conducted by professionals familiar with handicapping conditions. The evaluation should include information from a variety of sources, including parents, medical personnel, school psychologists, teachers, related service providers, and/or anyone who interacts with the student on a regular basis.

It is the educational entity's responsibility to ensure that appropriate services are provided in a reasonable

amount of time in accordance with Chapter 15 regulations. California Area School District is committed to identifying qualifying students as part of the Child Find requirements and henceforth evaluations are expected to be completed within 60 days of receipt of parental consent.

504 Service Agreements

Chapter 15 requires that a service agreement be written for each “Protected Handicapped Student.” If a student is determined to be eligible for services and parental consent is given, a written service agreement must be developed to meet the needs of the student. California Area School District is committed to ensuring that identified students are receiving services/supports in a timely manner once identified; therefore, with parental consent, 504 Service Agreements should be developed within 30 days of the completed evaluation.

The service agreement outlines those accommodations that have been agreed to by the school and parents. The LEA requires parental consent prior to providing services. Each 504 plan will be reviewed at least one time annually.

Request to Amend 504/District Complaint Process

Parents/guardians may request that the school district reopen the 504 Service Agreement at any time by providing the written request to the Building Principal or the Student Services Office. If any person believes that the school or any of its staff have inadequately applied the regulations of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, he/she may initiate a complaint with the district by contacting the school district’s Section 504 coordinator (Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, 724-785-5800 x2398, hoeslys@calsd.org) or by completing California’s 504 Complaint Form found in the appendices of the handbook and returning it to the school district.

A complaint can also be made by filing a written request for assistance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education if you feel the school district is not providing the related aids, services, and accommodations specified in the service agreement and/or the school district has failed to comply with the regulations in Chapter 15 of the State Board. The Department of Education will investigate and respond to requests for assistance and, unless exceptional circumstances exist, will, within 60 calendar days of receipt of the request, send to the parents and school district written response to the request. Written requests should be addressed to Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126.

Parents/Guardians also have the right to file a complaint with the regional office of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights without going through the local complaint process. The contact information for the regional office is as follows:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100

Additional information about the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students is available by contacting the Director of Student Services- Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, 724-785-5800 x 2398, hoeslys@calsd.org.

The California Area School District will not discriminate in its education programs, activities or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, ancestry, disability, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Employees and participants who have an inquiry, complaint of harassment or discrimination, or who need information about accommodations for disabled persons, should contact:

Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly
 Director of Student Services
 40 Trojan Way, Coal Center, PA 15423
 (724) 785 - 5800 x 2398

English as a Second Language Instruction:

When registering their students at California Area, all parents/guardians will be required to fill out a Home Language Survey. Based upon the responses to this survey, those children who qualify will be referred for an “English Language Learner Assessment”. The results of this assessment will determine if a student requires English as a Second Language instruction. Parents/guardians may not opt their children out of English language learner assessment or ESL instruction in the regular education environment if found to be eligible.

Homelessness:

In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), California Area School District is attempting to identify all children within the district who may be experiencing homelessness.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes individuals:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or campground due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations or similar settings
- Living in substandard housing (no running water or working utilities, infestations, etc.)

Children who are experiencing homelessness may qualify for assistance with school supplies/materials, tutoring, and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin throughout the duration of their homeless episode.

If you believe your child(ren) may qualify for this service, please contact Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, homeless liaison for the California Area School District, at 724-785-5800 x 2398, hoeslys@calsd.org. If your living situation changes during the school year, and you and your children become homeless, please be sure to contact the school. We will work with you so that your child(ren)’s education is disrupted as little as possible.

Gifted Services

Determining Gifted Eligibility:

Mentally gifted is defined as “outstanding intellectual and creative ability, the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program.” A child may be eligible for gifted education if he/she:

- Is a year or more above grade achievement level for the normal age group in one or more subjects.
- Demonstrates an observed or measured rate of mastering new academic content or skills that reflect gifted ability.
- Demonstrates achievement, performance, or expertise in one or more academic areas.
- Shows early and measured use of high-level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, intense academic interest areas, communication skills, foreign language aptitude, or technology expertise.

- Has documented, observed, validates, or assessed evidence that intervening factors are masking gifted ability.

Screening and Evaluation:

The term mentally gifted includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher and other factors that indicate gifted ability. Gifted ability cannot be based on an IQ score alone. If the IQ score is lower than 130, a child may be admitted to gifted programs when other conditions strongly indicate gifted ability. The other factors considered may include achievement test scores that are a year or more above level; observed or measured acquisition/retention rates that reflect gifted ability, achievement, performance, of expertise in one or more academic areas that demonstrate a high level of accomplishment; higher-level thinking skills and; documented evidence that intervening factors are masking gifted ability.

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE):

A Gifted Multidisciplinary evaluation is a process to gather the information that will be used to find out if a child qualifies for gifted education and, if so, the types of programs and services needed. Part of this process includes an evaluation by a certified school psychologist.

A child may be referred for the first GMDE by teacher/administrator referral or family request (one per academic year) by contacting the building principal or director of student services by phone or in writing .

The Gifted Written Report (GWR):

A multidisciplinary team reviews all materials and prepares a GWR that recommends whether a child is gifted and needs specially designed instruction. As a member of the GMDT, a parent may present written information for consideration. The GWR must include the reasons for the recommendations and list the names and positions of everyone who was part of the team. The entire GMDT process must be completed within 60 calendar days, excluding summer vacation, from the date the school district receives the parent's written permission on the Permission to Evaluate form.

The Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP):

If the GIEP team decides the student is gifted and in need of gifted education, the team writes the GIEP at the meeting. The GIEP is based on the unique needs of the gifted student and enables the gifted student to participate in acceleration or enrichment programs, or both, as appropriate, and to receive services according to the student's intellectual and academic abilities and needs.

Notice of Recommended Assignment:

Upon completion of the GIEP, the parent will receive a NORA and a Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Children. The NORA will indicate the educational placement for the student and requires parent approval before the school district will begin implementation. The Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Children describes your rights and the procedures that safeguard your rights.

Parent Rights:

At all times, a parent has certain rights with all gifted education services received by their child:

- The right to be notified about a child's program and progress and any changes that take place;
- The right to approve or reject programs and testing;
- The right to privacy

Services for Preschool-Age Children:

Act 212, the Early Intervention System Act, entitles all preschool-age children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delays or physical or mental disabilities are eligible

for early intervention services. The Pennsylvania Department of Welfare is responsible for providing services to infants and toddlers, defined as children from birth through two years of age. For additional information, please contact the Intermediate Unit I at 1 Intermediate Unit Dr #1, Coal Center, PA 15423; 724-938-3241.

Parents' Rights: Directory Information & FERPA Notification

California Area School District is required each year to provide you with notice of your rights with respect to your child's educational records. The purpose is to advise you of the types of information that may be disclosed to the public throughout the course of the school year:

- Academic Honors
- Students of Honor
- Valedictorian/Salutatorian
- Other Academic Accolades

Furthermore, this letter advises you of your right to review your child's educational records pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Should you have any questions regarding the information contained herein, please feel free to call the office.

Directory Information:

During the course of the school year, information relating to California Area students may be disclosed to individuals and/or the media. For example, individual and/or group interviews, photographs or videos of the students may be taken for use by the District in various publications, or for use in local newspapers. This publicity provides the community with information about various school programs and achievements.

The District may also disclose additional directory information relating to students for various reasons throughout the school year without prior parental consent. "Directory information" means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degree, and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. Interviews, photographs, and videos, as described above, are also considered to be directory information. (34 CFR §99.3). Directory information does not include disciplinary information, medical records, evaluation records, grades, special education records, or other information that would be considered private in nature.

You have the right to refuse to let the District release directory information pertaining to your child. If you refuse to permit the District to release any or all directory information pertaining to your child, your objection must be in writing. Telephone calls or voice messages will not be sufficient. Should you desire to exercise this right, please write a letter indicating your objection to your school's office within 14 calendar days of the date of this notification. If you do not provide other written objections, directory information as identified above may be released.

Homebound Instruction:

Homebound instruction involves the delivery of educational services by school district personnel within a student's home. Homebound instruction is an educational service option for students who are physically incapable of attending school.

Homebound instruction is provided for students who:

- Have an injury that will require absence for more than twenty (20) school days.
- A chronic illness causing a total of twenty (20) instructional days missed over the period of the school year.

Homebound teachers instruct students who are unable to attend school. The homebound teacher can instruct in the home for ten (10) hours per week. Homebound instruction requires the parent/guardian to obtain a physician's statement and prescription regarding the necessity for the child to receive instruction in the home.

An application for homebound instruction can be obtained from the building level principal. Homebound instruction cannot exceed three months without a renewed physician's statement and/or updated prescription.

FERPA Notification-Confidentiality of Student Records:

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

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the California Area receives a request for access. The parents/guardians of eligible students should submit to the building principal, or appropriate California Area official, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the California Area to amend a record should write to the school principal, or appropriate school official, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be changed, and specify why it should be changed. If California Area decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the California Area School District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-8520

With concern or to register a complaint please contact:
California Area School District

Attn: Dr. Laura Jacob
40 Trojan Way
Coal Center, PA 15423
724.785.5800 x 3000

BUILDING LEVEL DISCIPLINE & CONSEQUENCES

Discipline

Discipline is a necessary part of any educational system. California Area School District is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all our pupils. No student is allowed to disrupt the learning process or limit the opportunity of others. Students may not fight, steal, use profanity, or in any way endanger the welfare of their classmates while in school, on our buses, or when coming to or going home from school. Any of the listed infractions will result in disciplinary action.

Our discipline system is based upon restorative practice, positive behavior supports, and progressive disciplinary approach – each succeeding offense/infraction will result in a more severe consequence. The purpose of this approach is rehabilitation and the development of self-control and self-motivation. All discipline decisions will be based on what is best for the child, as an individual, and the impact of the actions on the good of the school. Discipline penalties and consequences will be fair and consistent based upon the age level and behavior record of the pupil. Any questions or concerns as to our discipline system and its applications may be addressed to the building principal.

The California Area School District is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment where all students have the opportunity to succeed. Our discipline approach is grounded in School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Practices, both of which are designed to promote student responsibility, community-building, and long-term behavioral change.

Discipline is not about punishment—it is about teaching students self-regulation, empathy, accountability, and positive social skills. All behaviors are addressed through a combination of proactive supports, progressive interventions, and restorative responses.

Intervention Procedure

It is the responsibility of staff to maintain a positive learning environment. To maintain the environment, it is necessary for the students to follow basic school and classroom expectations. Each teacher will be responsible for the promotion of those positive behaviors and will always first implement corrective strategies within the learning environment. If at any time a student becomes disruptive to the educational process of others, that student may be removed from the situation. If disruptive behaviors continue, students can be referred to the principal, and the Progressive Discipline Procedure will be implemented at the administrative level. All interventions and discipline are assigned at the discretion of the building level administrator and are considered on a case by case scenario.

Restorative Practice:

Restorative practice seeks to repair relationships. Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim. Restorative Practices can be assigned by teacher, principal, or the Director of Student Services.

Guiding Framework

Our district's discipline system is based on:

- Restorative Practices: A relationship-centered approach focused on repairing harm and restoring trust when conflict occurs.
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS): A proactive, tiered system of supports that promotes expected behaviors school-wide.
- Progressive Discipline: A continuum of responses that increase in intensity based on the severity and/or frequency of behavior, always considering individual student needs, age, and history.

Disciplinary decisions will be made with the intent to support growth and learning while balancing the needs of the individual student with the safety and well-being of the school community. Families are encouraged to partner with school personnel in supporting student behavior. All interventions and discipline are assigned at the discretion of the building level administrator and are considered on a case by case scenario with guidance from the [K-12 Discipline Matrix](#).

Behavior Supports and Referrals

The district promotes a layered approach to behavior intervention:

- Tier 1 (Universal Supports): Clear expectations, recognition systems, social-emotional learning, and prevention strategies for all students
- Tier 2 (Targeted Supports): Check-in/check-out, small group instruction in social skills, or mentorship
- Tier 3 (Individualized Supports): Behavior intervention plans, counseling, mental health referrals, or team-based problem-solving through the Student Assistance Program (SAP)

Staff, families, and students collaborate regularly to ensure behavior is addressed with compassion, equity, and consistency.

Classroom Expectations

All students are expected to follow the principles of **Trojan PRIDE** to guide student behavior across all settings. Our School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) framework promotes a positive school climate by teaching and reinforcing expected behavior that support a safe and productive learning environment:

PRIDE stands for:

- Positive
- Respect
- Initiative
- Determination
- Excellence

Students are expected to demonstrate Trojan PRIDE in the following areas:

- Transition Areas/Hallways
- Cafeteria

- Buses
- Learning Spaces
- Bathrooms
- Intervention Rooms
- Arrival/Dismissal spaces

Each classroom implements consistent, clear expectations aligned with school-wide behavior matrices. Teachers are the first line of intervention and are responsible for creating a positive environment through modeling, redirection, and classroom-level strategies.

Minor behavioral infractions may result in classroom consequences and interventions such as:

- Teacher conferences
- Restorative conversations
- Phone calls or written communication with parents/guardians
- Behavior reflections or written apologies
- Loss of classroom privileges
- Documentation through a Student Misconduct Referral

When classroom interventions are not sufficient, or behaviors escalate, students may be referred to administration for further supports and consequences.

Administrative Interventions and Supports

Administrative actions may include one or more of the following depending on the nature and severity of the behavior:

Restorative Interventions assigned during lunch or after school, these include:

- Restorative conversations or conferences
- Problem-solving circles
- Behavior skill-building sessions
- Opportunities to repair harm caused to individuals or the school community/ community service

Students are expected to engage respectfully and reflectively during these sessions.

Lunch Detention

Held in a supervised setting during the lunch period. Students are expected to bring academic materials and reflect on behavior. Repeated failure to attend may result in additional consequences or restorative alternatives.

Loss of Privileges

May include exclusion from non-academic activities, assemblies, events, or extracurriculars. Used as an opportunity for students to reflect and re-engage with behavior expectations.

Progress Monitoring

Ongoing documentation of behavior, reflection tools, and follow-up with families and support staff. Students may be placed on a behavior plan or have behavior goals reflected in their Individualized Support Plan (ISP).

Restorative Interventions:

Restorative Interventions may be assigned by the teacher, principal, and director of student services for minor behavior infractions. Students are provided a full lunch period and required to eat their lunches in the assigned room. Students are not permitted their cell phones/electronic devices during detention. Students are to bring academic materials to work on when they are finished eating their lunch (if time permits). Teachers are trained to offer interventions during the Restorative Interventions time to identify the cause of the behavior infraction and work towards repairing the damage caused. Failure to attend may result in students being assigned suspension(s) or additional restorative action(s).

Community Service:

When a student engages in inappropriate, disruptive, or disrespectful behavior, school administration may assign community service hours as part of a restorative disciplinary approach. This measure is designed to help students take responsibility for their actions, make amends, and contribute positively to the school and surrounding community. Community service assignments are determined by school administrators based on the nature and severity of the behavior. Tasks may include but are not limited to: assisting with school beautification projects, helping staff with approved tasks, or participating in school-approved community initiatives.

Parents/guardians will be notified when community service is assigned. Completion of the service may be required before a student can return to certain school activities or privileges. This restorative approach aligns with our belief in accountability, growth, and the importance of giving back. Our goal is to guide students toward making better choices and becoming responsible citizens of our school community.

For questions regarding the community service policy, please contact the main office.

Major Incidents and Legal Violations

The above interventions may be accompanied by school-based consequences. Some violations of expectations may result in student misconduct referrals. Student Misconduct referrals may result in a written warning, phone call to parents, documentation in the student's file and progress monitoring, loss of privileges,, detention (lunch, in-school, after school, or recess), etc., suspension, expulsion, or referral to higher levels of support and will be reflected in the child's progress report in their ISP.

School Board Referral (Expulsion)

Students may be referred to the Board for expulsion hearings in cases of severe or repeated violations. Due process will be observed in all instances.

Violation of Law

When a student's behavior violates local, state, or federal law, the district will notify law enforcement. Legal action may be taken independently or alongside school discipline.

Citations Filed with the Magistrate's Office

In alignment with Pennsylvania law, citations may be filed for:

- Possession or use of tobacco, nicotine, vaping devices, drugs, or paraphernalia
- Chronic truancy or attendance issues
- Assault, disorderly conduct, harassment, or threats
- Trespassing or other infractions deemed serious by school officials

ATTENDANCE & EXTRA-CURRICULARS

The family of the student is responsible for the attendance and actions of their child while enrolled in the California Area School District. A student will not be released from school without communication with a parent or approved guardian.

Student attendance and participation in class is crucial to the learning process. Attendance and tardy patterns are very important parts of a student's permanent record. Families/Students are notified by letter or by deficiency notice if the student establishes a pattern of absences, cuts or tardies that could lead to a failing grade under the school policy.

Student attendance is required in the specific model in which the student is attending each school day. This required attendance can be virtual or in-person, depending on the student situation and building-provided options.

Attendance Policy

In Pennsylvania, school attendance is mandatory for students the period of a child's life from the time the child's parents elect to have the child enter school and which shall be no later than 6 years of age until the child reaches 18 years of age. When a student misses school, they must bring a written note from a parent/guardian or medical professional or complete the Student Attendance Form through ParentSquare within 3 days of their return to school.

If a written excuse is not turned in within 3 days of a student's return to school or the reason for the absence is not among the listed acceptable excuses, then the absence will be recorded as unexcused. By law, the school district must send a written notice home once a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences. If a student accumulates six (6) unexcused absences, then they are considered, by law, to be habitually truant. A "Student Attendance Improvement Plan" must then be put into place that clearly outlines consequences for further absences. Consequences may include loss of credit or a citation to the magistrate.

According to California Area School Board [Policy 204](#), once a student accumulates 10 absences (whether they are excused or unexcused), medical excuses are required for any further absences. If a student has a planned trip, an approved absence form should be completed and turned in to the main office BEFORE they leave. Students must have a doctor's excuse upon return if he/she is out for more than three (3) consecutive days. If a note is not received within three days, all days out will be considered unexcused.

Every effort should be made to schedule medical or dental appointments, as well as driver's examinations, during non-school hours. If appointments must be made during school hours, the student must present a signed parental note or email (with phone number of where parents can be reached) prior to being excused. ***Students must check out in the main office before leaving in order for an early dismissal to be excused (unless a student has prior administrative permission to leave on a regular basis to attend school or work). Failure to do so will result in consequences for cutting class or leaving school grounds without permission.*** Students are responsible for all class work missed due to an appointment.

Regular attendance is essential to the success of students participating in the Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) Program. Because each student's Individualized Service Plan (ISP) is developed around measurable behavioral, academic, and social-emotional goals to be achieved during the 45-school-day review period, excessive absences, tardiness, or early dismissals may significantly impede the student's ability to demonstrate progress and successfully meet established goals. Attendance concerns will be reviewed as part of each 45-day ISP review and may

impact recommendations regarding continued placement, transition planning, or successful return to the student's home school. Parents/guardians are expected to ensure regular attendance and promptly communicate with program staff regarding any absences.

Absences, tardies or early dismissal are legally **excused**, as determined by the PA School Code, for the following reasons:

- Personal: Student's own illness or quarantine; death in family
 - *Bereavement Leave*
 - *5 Days – Immediate family (e.g., parent, sibling, guardian living in household, etc..)*
 - *2 Days – Extended family (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, etc..)*
- Tutorial programs and/or counseling programs, which are not available in the school and which do not conflict with the regular school program
- Observance of religious holidays
- Educational tours and trips conducted under the supervision of an adult acceptable to the superintendent/designee and to the parent or guardian.
- Suspension
- Medical/dental appointments
- Preplanned education tours or trips (including college visits). One (1) week advance notice is required. Educational Trip/Tour forms are available in each building office or on the district website

Absences, tardies or early dismissals are legally **unexcused**, for the following reasons:

- Missed Bus
- Oversleeping/missed alarm
- Childcare for another sibling and/or family member
- Frequent/excessive transportation issues (transportation not provided by School District)

In case of absence, parents should notify the student services office each morning for each day of the absence at (724) 785- 5800 ext. 2420 or by email / [ParentSquare](#).

Appeals Process:

Students who have experienced extenuating circumstances can submit a written appeal to the Principal. The final decision will be made by the administration.

Attendance Policy & Procedures

The California Area School District believes that regular school attendance is critical to student success. This policy outlines procedures for excused and unexcused absences, excessive absences, tardiness, and required interventions in compliance with Safe Schools reporting requirements. After 3 unexcused/unlawful/illegal absences, a citation may be filed at discretion of the school district.

Unexcused (Illegal) Absences Definition: An absence is marked as illegal if a written excuse is not received within 3 school days of the absence.

Progressive Interventions:

- **3 Illegal Absences**
 - *Marked as truant*
 - *Phone call home*

- **4 Illegal Absences**
 - First letter sent
 - TIPPS referral
 - SAP referral or guidance check-in
- **6 Illegal Absences**
 - Marked as habitually truant
 - Second letter sent
 - Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) meeting scheduled and held
 - Incident report filed in PowerSchool
 - Habitually truant report as part of student record
- **7 Illegal Absences**
 - Third letter sent

Excused Absences Definition: Absences documented with a valid excuse, such as illness, medical appointments, religious holidays, or court appearances.

Progressive Interventions:

- **11th Excused Absence**
 - Counted as the first illegal absence
- **13th Excused Absence**
 - Phone call home by an administrator or counselor
- **14th Excused Absence**
 - Letter sent
 - TIPPS referral
 - SAP referral or guidance check-in
- **16th Excused Absence**
 - Second letter sent
 - SAIP meeting scheduled and held
 - Incident report filed in PowerSchool
 - Habitually truant report as part of student record
- **17th Excused Absence**
 - Third letter sent

Tardiness Definition: Arrival more than 30 minutes late without a valid excuse will be marked as unexcused tardy.

Excessive Tardiness: More than 10 unexcused tardies in a quarter will follow the illegal absence intervention process.

Progressive Interventions:

- **13th Tardy in a Semester (3rd Tardy Illegal)**
 - Phone call home
 - Teacher/student check-in or informal counseling

- *Review of academic/behavioral records*
- **14th Tardy in a Semester (4th Tardy Illegal)**
 - *Letter sent*
 - *SAP referral or guidance check-in*
 - *TIPPS/Blueprints referral or Family Support Team meeting*
 - *Attendance Success Plan created*
- **16th Tardy in a Semester (6th Tardy Illegal)**
 - *Second letter sent*
 - *Call home by administrator*
 - *Additional review of student needs*
- **17th Tardy in a Semester (7th Tardy Illegal)**
 - *Third letter sent*
- **18th Tardy in a Semester (8th Tardy Illegal)**
 - *Citation issued if interventions have been exhausted and educational impact has occurred*

This policy is designed to provide early intervention and support to improve student attendance and ensure educational success. All actions and interventions will be documented in accordance with district guidelines and state reporting requirements.

Truancy (Act 29):

Truancy is defined as the act of staying out of school without permission or excuse. Pennsylvania legislation Act 29 increased to \$300 the fine for truancy placed on parents and requires them to pay court costs or be sentenced to complete a parenting education program. Both the truant child and parents must appear at a hearing by the district justice. If the parents show that they took reasonable steps to ensure the attendance of the child, they will not be convicted of a summary offense. If the parents are not convicted and the child continues to be truant, the child can be fined up to \$300 or be assigned to an adjudication alternative program. The law also grants school attendance officers and home and school visitors arrest powers.

Act 29 also removes from truant juveniles, driving privileges for 90 days for a first offense and six months for a second, while juveniles who are unlicensed are prohibited from applying for a learner's permit for 90 days (first offense).

Enrollment:

Documentation establishing proof of residency is required for enrollment. New students enrolling in California Area School District must contact the Enrollment Coordinator and complete an enrollment packet or complete an application online. If the student is not living with his/her parents, an affidavit of residency will be required.

Under Pennsylvania's Act 26, prior to admission to the school district, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a student shall, upon registration for admission, provide a sworn statement of affirmation stating whether the pupil was previously suspended or expelled from any public or private school of the Commonwealth or any other state for an act or offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs or for the willful infliction of injury to another person or for any act of violence committed on school property. Such registration shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record. Parents and guardians shall be advised that any willful false statement made under this section shall be a misdemeanor of the third degree. When a student transfers to this school district, a certified copy of the student's disciplinary record shall be requested and obtained from the school entity from which the student is transferring. This record shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record and shall be available for inspection as required by law. No child will be enrolled without a certificate of immunization.

Arrival/Dismissal Times (AEDY)

Students in the AEDY program will receive at least 22.5 hours of instruction per the AEDY calendar which includes 20 hours of instruction and 2.5 hours of counseling per week. Additionally, students are provided with a 30 minute lunch. AEDY hours will be as follows:

Monday-Thursday (in person synchronous learning)

Arrival: 9:30am

Dismissal 4:00pm

Friday (virtual asynchronous learning)

Start Time- 9:30am

End Time - 4:00pm

Academics

Progress during enrollment in the AEDY program will primarily be monitored as defined in each student's ISP. Additionally, students may receive grades and/or competency-based feedback for general coursework per the school district's grading/progress monitoring policies.

Grading:

The following grading scale will be used at all grade level and in all classes in which grades are assigned:

A – 90% - 100%

B – 80% - 89%

C – 70% - 79%

D – 60% - 69%

F – 0% - 59%

I – Incomplete

No course credit will be given for “F” or “I” grades. All methods of evaluation must be converted to a percentage for each nine-week grade. From that, the equivalent letter grade, in respect to the grading scales, will be recorded.

Assessment of Student Progress

Honor Roll:

At the close of each nine-week period, qualified students will be named to an honor roll. A 3.0 QPA is the minimum honor roll average. All classes will count for honor roll purposes. Students who earn less than a “D” grade in any subject or do not maintain a minimum of four (4) credits do not qualify for the honor roll.

Honors	3.000 - 3.249
High Honors	3.250 - 3.499
Distinguished Honors	3.500 - 4.000

Make-Up Work & Homework:

Students or parents are encouraged to request make-up work and homework when a student will be absent for an extended period of time. Requests should be made by emailing the teacher(s) or contacting the main office. A reasonable time to complete work will be given to the student. A failing grade on each assignment will result in work not completed to the teacher’s specifications within a reasonable time period. Number of days permitted to make up work will be the same as the number of days absent unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Students who are legally absent; who have been excused from class or are serving a suspension shall be given the opportunity to make up all tests.

Students who cut class or are illegally absent are responsible for information missed during the class and may not receive credit for work completed during that time.

Extra-Curricular/Athletics Participation

Participation in athletics, extracurricular activities, clubs, and other school-sponsored events is recognized as an important component of student engagement and successful transition back to the school community. Whenever appropriate and consistent with the student's educational and behavioral goals, the AEDY program will collaborate with the resident school district to support opportunities for participation. However, eligibility is determined by the student's resident school district and must comply with all applicable district policies, Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) regulations, and the terms of any disciplinary action. Students who are participating in the AEDY program as the result of an expulsion may be ineligible to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities if such participation is restricted by the terms of the school board's expulsion decision, the student's agreement with the district, or directives issued by the Superintendent. As part of each student's transition planning process, the AEDY program supervisor and the resident school district administration will review eligibility on an individual basis and work collaboratively to identify appropriate opportunities for school connectedness while maintaining compliance with applicable policies and disciplinary requirements.

Graduation Requirements:

All seniors must meet credit requirements listed in the Course Description Handbook published each spring in order to be considered for participation in senior activities including, but not limited to, commencement.

Failure to meet the credit requirements established by the California Area Board of School Directors will result in a loss of these privileges and potential for retention.

California Area School District will provide opportunities for credits and credit recovery for students enrolled in the AEDY program.

Village Transcript

As part of California Area School District's commitment to preparing students for success beyond high school, all graduating students will develop and maintain a Village Transcript throughout their high school experience.

The Village Transcript is intended to provide students, families, colleges, employers, apprenticeship programs, military recruiters, and other postsecondary organizations with a comprehensive picture of each student's academic achievements, skills, experiences, and personal growth.

Prior to graduation, each student will be responsible for contributing to and meeting the requirements that the school district has set forth that includes, at minimum:

- Official California Area School District Transcript- documenting courses completed, grades earned
- Mastery Transcript- highlighting demonstrated competencies, mastery of essential skills, leadership, service, career readiness, and other learning experiences that extend beyond traditional coursework.
- Professional Resume- summarizing education, work experience, extracurricular involvement, leadership activities, community service, certifications, honors, and other accomplishments.
- Letters of Recommendation- from teachers, counselors, employers, coaches, mentors, or other individuals who can speak to the student's character, work ethic, leadership, and readiness for postsecondary opportunities.

Students will receive guidance and support throughout their high school years in developing and maintaining these materials. Prior to graduation, students will review and finalize their Village Transcript to ensure it accurately reflects their accomplishments and is prepared for use in applications for college, career, military service, apprenticeships, scholarships, and other postsecondary opportunities.

Administration will provide clarity and clarification to students regarding expectations and proficiency requirements.

POLICIES & DEFINITIONS

Access to Students:

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), an LEA must provide notice to parents of the types of student information that it releases publicly. This type of student information, commonly referred to as “directory information,” includes such items as names, addresses, and telephone numbers and is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The notice must include an explanation of a parent’s right to request that the information not be disclosed without prior written consent.

Additionally, § 9528 requires that parents be notified that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters upon request, subject to a parent’s request not to disclose such information without written consent. A single notice provided through a mailing, student handbook, or other method that is reasonably calculated to inform parents of the above information is sufficient to satisfy the parental notification requirements of both FERPA and § 9528. The notification must advise the parent of how to opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so.

A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described in the preceding paragraph be excluded from the list and not be released without prior written parental consent. The local educational agency shall notify the students and parents of the option to make such a written request at least 21 days prior to compilation of the list, and shall comply with any request.

Same Access to Students:

Each local educational agency receiving assistance under the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015, shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post-secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.

Student directory information will be used specifically for armed services recruiting purposes and for informing young people of scholarship opportunities.

Alcohol and Drug Policy:

The California Area Board of School Directors recognizes the abuse of alcohol and/or chemical substances as a serious problem with legal, physical, emotional and social implications for the whole school community and adopts the position that a student must be free of illegal and harmful substances.

These substances include, but are not limited to beer, wine, liquor, any other alcoholic beverages, anabolic steroids, marijuana, hashish, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, opioids, chemical solvents, look alike substances, paraphernalia, and any capsules or pills not registered with the nurse and/or given in accordance with school district policy.

The District’s policy is to prevent and prohibit the possession, use and/or mimic of use, sale and/or mimic of sale, distribution of any illegal or controlled mind-altering chemical medication or chemical substance not approved by the health office, on school property, at school-sponsored events or functions including athletic events (even at another school), on school buses, en route to and from school by any mode of travel. This policy applies anywhere that students are under the jurisdiction of the school district. If a violation occurs at a school event, the student involved may be prohibited from attending any extracurricular or co-curricular school activities to include, but not limited to

clubs, sports, tutoring and theater production and rehearsals, for a specified amount of time, determined by a building principal.

In the event of any violation of this policy, the District Resource Officer will be notified, as well as police from the Municipality in which the school event takes place. Charges may be filed on any student involved in the violation. During an investigation, students will be asked to complete a written student statement. This statement will be requested by District Administration and/or the Resource Officer/police. The student/parent/guardian will receive written notice (by regular mail, electronic mail and/or hand delivery) of the suspension and the scheduling of an informal hearing.

Possession/Use/Under the Influence First Offense:

A student possessing, using, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance(s) shall be initially suspended by the building Principal or Administrator on site for a period of not less than three (3) school days and not more than ten (10) days. If a suspension, either by way of initial imposition or extension, exceeds three days, an informal hearing will be held with the building Principal, the student, and the student's parents within five (5) days of the suspension. At the informal hearing, consideration will be given to the nature of the offense and any mitigating or compounding circumstances, including other contemporaneous violations by the student of District policy and the Pennsylvania School Code, a student's prior disciplinary record, and a student's defiance and lack of cooperation through an investigation. Following the informal hearing, a suspension may be extended by the building Principal but not to exceed a total of ten (10) school days. Also, in addition to the mandated minimum requirements applicable for a 1st offense violation, the student may be recommended to the Administration and School Board for other further discipline, including expulsion.

Mandated minimum requirements of student for 1st Offense violation:

- Expulsion for minimum of balance of the school year
- Undergoes a drug and alcohol evaluation by a licensed practitioner who specializes in drug and alcohol evaluations and treatment; at cost of student and/or family
 - Follows any recommendation of the drug and alcohol evaluation
 - The student and a parent authorize release of compliance with the drug and alcohol evaluation to the California Area School District Administration for purposes of verifying successful completion of same
- Educational Teen Outreach Program (or other consistent program approved by District Administration); at cost of student and/or family.
- Referral to the Student Assistance Program Team
- Referral to the Magistrate's Office for Citation

A transition team meeting will occur prior to the student's return from suspension and participation in any extracurricular or co-curricular school activities to include, but not limited to clubs, sports, tutoring and theater production and rehearsal.

Academic work will be completed for credit while suspended, but students must coordinate that work with teachers. Students may not be on school grounds during the suspension. Exclusion from all school activities is a condition of suspension.

The above mandated minimum requirements for a 1st offense violation of the drug and alcohol policy does not limit or preclude the imposition of further discipline. As stated above, other contemporaneous violations by the student of District policy and the Pennsylvania School Code, a student's prior disciplinary record, and a student's defiance and lack of cooperation through an investigation may lead to further disciplinary actions, including expulsion.

Subsequent Drug & Alcohol Offenses:

If a student violates the drug and alcohol policy more than once, the student will be suspended for 10 days and an informal hearing will be held with the building Principal, the student, and the student's parents within five (5) days of the suspension. The student will be recommended for expulsion to the School Board.

Distribution:

In the case of drugs and alcohol distributed through sale, exchange or other consideration, a recommendation will be made to the School Board for possible expulsion. If a student is apprehended distributing drugs or alcohol at school or at a school-sponsored event, without a sale, exchange or other consideration, the process and discipline relating to a student possessing, using, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance(s) will apply, as set above, with such distribution being an additional factor as to the scope of disciplinary action.

Assemblies:

Assemblies are called periodically as part of the academic program offered at California Area. All students are expected to adhere to the same District expectations as defined in this handbook. Additionally, students will be expected to:

1. Stand when requested by the faculty or administration to show respect for the speakers.
2. Be quiet, courteous and respectful.
3. Sit appropriately, keeping feet off the chairs and away from the aisles.
4. Refrain from eating or drinking anything during this time.

Disruptive students will be removed by the administration/ faculty and are subject to further disciplinary action.

Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors/Emergency Medical Situations:

Students may possess and self-administer asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors in compliance with state law and board policy # 210.1. Written requests for such medications from the parent/guardian and the licensed medical personnel are required to be submitted annually to the nurse's office.

The school nurse is trained and authorized to administer emergency medical care when a student experiences a health crisis during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of emergency epinephrine (EpiPen) for severe allergic reactions, administration of emergency seizure medications or overdose reversal agents such as naloxone (Narcan), and the provision of basic first aid and CPR as needed. These procedures are performed in accordance with state laws, standing orders, and district health protocols to ensure student safety.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify the school nurse of any known medical conditions or emergency medications prescribed for their child.

Bus Policy:

All school expectations apply to school district transportation. The bus driver is in charge and his/her directives must be followed. Students are expected to be courteous, cooperative, and punctual. Infractions may result in disciplinary action by the school administration, including suspension from riding the bus.

1. All students must ride their assigned bus. Permission to ride a different bus must be obtained through the administration beginning with a written parent note, which must be approved by the main office.
2. Parents/guardians are liable for damages done by students to school property or bus property.
3. If a bus arrives late to school due to inclement weather or emergency, all students on that bus should report to the main office upon arrival.

4. Students are not to extend heads/arms from the bus windows or doors or to throw objects from the bus.
5. Charges will be filed with the District Magistrate for any damages done by a student.
6. Elementary (K-3) students must have a parent/guardian waiting at the bus stop to escort the child home. If no parent/guardian is at the stop to meet the child, he/she will not be permitted to exit the bus. The bus will return the student to the Elementary School.

**The School Board of Directors authorizes the use of video and audio recording on school buses and school vehicles.*

Child Custody:

Unless otherwise directed by a court of law, both biological parents have full access to students and their records. If for some reason these rights are restricted, legal documentation must be on file at the school. Your child's emotional and physical well-being are of the utmost concern to our school staff. Please ensure that copies of any Custody or Access orders affecting your child are on file at the school office. It is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court certified copy of any pertinent court orders.

Discrimination, Intimidation, Bullying, or Harassment:

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation/identity, ancestry, national origin or handicap/disability.

Bullying is an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of creating a threatening environment within the school.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

An imbalance of power between the target(s) and the individual demonstrating the negative behavior exists.

Ex: treating another person in an overbearing or intimidating manner, forcing one's way aggressively or by intimidation, teasing, coercive behavior, mean-spirited conduct, etc.

Complaints of bullying will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will take place when allegations are verified. Students who have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, mandatory counseling, parental conference, loss of school privileges, detentions, exclusion from school or school-sponsored activities (including bus transportation), or referral to law enforcement.

According to School Board Policy #248, unlawful harassment consists of verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation/identity or religion when such conduct: 1. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment. 2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance. 3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities. For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other inappropriate verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: 1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic status. 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or work decisions affecting the individual. 3. Such conduct deprives a student of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment. 4. Such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or

pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations. Staff and administration will contact and show support to parents/guardians in the event that a student has been hurt either by physical or emotional aggression while in school.

Counselors, administrators, teachers and/or other staff members will follow-up as necessary with parents/guardians/students to ensure a level of comfort and a safe environment for students who have been bullied or physically hurt.

Tobacco and Smoking Policy (PA Act 145 of 1996):

Smoking and use of tobacco or nicotine products (including chewing tobacco, pipes, cigars, lighters, vaping mods/pens, e-cigarettes, Juuls, vaping oils/liquids/juice, vaping pods, and chargers) will not be permitted in any indoor or outdoor school area, stadium and field areas, any areas within sight of school property during the time to and from school, and other school district property including busses and bus stops.

Per Pennsylvania Act 145 of 1996, smoking and all other uses of tobacco by students will not be permitted during any school-sponsored game or practice taking place on or off school property. This policy shall apply to all users of school district facilities.

Once Administration has determined that a student has used or is in possession of an item in violation of this policy, the prohibited items will be confiscated and given to the School Resource officer. As some of these items can be a means to use illegal substances, the School Resource officer may test the confiscated item(s) for the presence of such a substance. If such a substance is detected, then the Drug & Alcohol Policy ([Board Policy 227](#)) will apply.

If no illegal substance is indicated, then the following consequences will apply:

First Offense: Mandatory attendance STEP Program (Juul School), sponsored by the Washington Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. (or similar restorative practice if Juul School is not available). A citation will be filed with the District Magistrate (to include fine and court costs). In the event students fail to complete the mandatory Juul School coursework, students will be required to attend lunch detention and/or mandatory after school academic support.

Second Offense: Mandatory attendance STEP Program (Juul School), sponsored by the Washington Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. (or similar restorative practice if Juul School is not available). A citation will be filed with the District Magistrate (to include fine and court costs). One day of ISS or eight (8) hours of community service.

Third Offense: Mandatory attendance STEP Program (Juul School), sponsored by the Washington Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. (or similar restorative practice if Juul School is not available). A citation will be filed with the District Magistrate (to include fine and court costs). Two days of ISS or 16 hours of community service.

Fourth and Subsequent Offenses: Mandatory attendance STEP Program (Juul School), sponsored by the Washington Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. (or similar restorative practice if Juul School is not available). A citation will be filed with the District Magistrate (to include fine and court costs). Three days of ISS or 24 hours of community service.

Vandalism (PA Act 26 of 1995):

Students who willfully or carelessly damage school property (books, equipment, lockers, school buses) will first attempt to restore the damage done, if possible. If there is a financial cost associated with the vandalism, there will be assessed the cost of the repair. Debts resulting from damage or destruction that are unpaid may result in elevated disciplinary action, loss of privileges, and/or referral to law enforcement.

Weapons Policy (PA Act 26 of 1995):

No person shall possess, handle or transmit any knife, cutting instrument or tool, brass or metal knuckles, cane, machete, firearm, shotgun, rifle, B.B. or pellet gun, look-alike gun, chemical agent, explosive device, and/or other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury in any school building, on any school premises, or on any school bus, on or off the school grounds at any school activity, event or function.

Any person discovered to have any weapon or other item in violation of this policy in his/her possession (including locker or car) or threatens to use a weapon on another person shall not be permitted to remain in any school building, or on any school bus, or at any school activity, event or function. Where any person violates this policy, the police department of the appropriate jurisdiction shall be notified.

The school district shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year any student who violates this weapons policy. This is mandated under Pennsylvania Act 26 of 1995. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. Act 26 also requires schools to maintain records on acts of violence and weapon possession and must forward student discipline records should a student transfer to another school. Any violation of Act 26 results in an initial consequence of exclusion from school.

Wellness Policy #246:

California Area School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn in accordance with federal and state laws.

Student Acceptable Use Policy: Access & Use of District Technology Systems Policy:

Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with district policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and state law. Specifically, the following uses are prohibited:

Facilitating illegal activity.

1. Commercial or for-profit purposes
2. Non-work or non-school related work
3. Product advertisement or political lobbying
4. Bullying/Cyberbullying
5. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive or inflammatory communication.
6. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction, or use of copyrighted materials.
7. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal materials, images or photographs.[18]
8. Access by students and minors to material that is harmful to minors or is determined inappropriate for minors in accordance with Board policy.
9. Inappropriate language or profanity.
10. Transmission of material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients.
11. Intentional obtaining or modifying of files, passwords, and data belonging to other users.
12. Impersonation of another user, anonymity, and pseudonyms.
13. Fraudulent copying, communications, or modification of materials in violation of copyright laws.[19]
14. Loading or using unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media.
15. Disruption of the work of other users.
16. Destruction, modification, abuse or unauthorized access to network hardware, software and files.
17. Accessing the Internet, district computers or other network resources without authorization.
18. Disabling or bypassing the Internet blocking/filtering software without authorization.

19. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading confidential information without authorization.

Students are expected to follow all components of [Board Policy 815](#).

EXPECTATIONS

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and cheating on examinations and individual/group submitted work. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another's words or ideas. Whether such borrowing is intentional or unintentional, it constitutes plagiarism.

There are three common forms of plagiarism:

- The duplication of an author's words without quotation marks or proper footnotes.
- The duplication of an author's words or phrases with footnotes but without quotation marks.
- The use of an author's ideas in paraphrase without proper footnotes.

A student who helps another student cheat, or provides answers, is considered equally guilty and will be subject to appropriate discipline. Any student caught cheating on a test or assignment will receive a grade of "zero" for that test or assignment.

Details of the incident will be submitted by the teacher to the administration. Parents will be notified. Restorative Practice/Disciplinary action will be taken.

Cafeteria Expectations:

The cafeterias in the California Area School District strives to offer a quality breakfast and lunch program for our students. No students are permitted to leave school grounds for lunch.

The following expectations must be followed when students are in the cafeteria:

1. Food and drinks are not to be taken from the cafeteria
2. Students are asked to refrain from loud talking or yelling while in the cafeteria
3. Students are not permitted to cut serving lines
4. Trash is to be deposited in the proper receptacles
5. Trays/dishes are to be returned to the proper collection area
6. Each student is responsible for the cleanliness of the area where they eat
7. Chairs should be placed back in the proper position before exiting
8. Throwing objects or engaging in food fights is unacceptable behavior
9. After eating, students must remain in the cafeteria area until the end of the lunch period.
10. Students not following cafeteria expectations may be assigned restorative practice, lunch detention, etc. at the discretion of the building principal

Classrooms & Hallways:

The classroom teacher is in control in their classroom and has a right, expectation, and a duty to establish clear expectations and expectations for proper student conduct. Failure to follow specific directions from a classroom teacher on student conduct will result in restorative practice, lunch detention, and/or administrative disciplinary action.

In the event the initial interventions do not create appropriate outcomes and repeated incidents occur, Administrative Intervention will follow. Disrespectful language or behavior will not be tolerated. Any action that interferes with the education or safety of fellow students will not be tolerated.

Class Cuts:

See Attendance Policy.

Cell Phone/Smartwatch/Headphones (Earbuds):

Personal electronic devices are not required by the District. Students are encouraged to leave valuable possessions (such as cell phones, smart watches, headphones, earbuds, etc. at home). Teachers may ask students to power off or remove smart watches at their discretion. Photography, videography, and audio recording using these devices for any reason is strictly prohibited. The usage of social media on personal and school issued devices during school hours is prohibited. The District assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.

Mindful Campus Plan

To foster a focused and engaged learning environment, California Area School District has implemented a Mindful Campus plan. This approach prioritizes student learning and well-being by minimizing distractions.

Student Expectations:

- Cell phone usage: Cell phones must be powered off and stored in backpacks, bags, or lockers during the entire instructional school day. This includes time in classrooms, the cafeteria, hallways, and common areas.
- Exceptions: Students with documented medical necessity requiring a powered-on cell phone or specific apps may be granted an exception. These devices must remain silent and accessible to the student only.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Incentives:

To encourage adherence to the Mindful Campus plan, a school-wide positive behavior support program may be implemented:

- School-wide Rewards: As our school community demonstrates increased compliance with the Mindful Campus policy, as evidenced by a decrease in referrals, students will enjoy collective rewards such as game tables in the cafeteria, DJ-led music events, and other engaging activities.
- Classroom Rewards: Individual classrooms that achieve 100% compliance with the Mindful Campus policy on a designated day will earn a class reward. Students in each class will collaboratively decide on their preferred reward, which should align with the duration of their compliance.

Consequences for Infractions:

Infractions of the Mindful Campus policy will result in the following consequences:

- 1st Violation: The student's phone will be held in the school office until the end of the day. A copy of the Mindful Campus policy will be sent home for parent/guardian signature.
- 2nd Violation: The student's phone will be held in the school office, and parents/guardians will be contacted to pick it up. A copy of the Mindful Campus policy will be sent home for parent/guardian signature.
- 3rd Violation: The student will be required to check in their phone at the beginning of the school day and pick it up at the end of the day for a specified period determined by school administration. Parents/guardians and teachers will be notified of this consequence.

Additional Information:

- The District assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.
- Photography, videography, and audio recording using any electronic device are strictly prohibited without prior written authorization.
- The use of social media on personal or school-issued devices during school hours is prohibited.

We believe that a Mindful Campus environment will enhance student learning, well-being, and overall school climate. We

appreciate your cooperation in supporting this initiative.

California Area Cyber Academy:

Students who wish to enroll in the California Area Cyber Academy must obtain approval from the principal. Enrollment in the Cyber Academy requires a firm commitment from both the student and their family to participate for the entirety of a full semester. Once enrolled, students will not be permitted to transition between the Cyber Academy and in-person instruction.

Additionally, students may be required to return to face-to-face instruction if they are not meeting mastery through cyber instruction. This policy is in place to ensure continuity in the student's educational experience and to maintain the integrity of both the Cyber Academy and traditional classroom settings.

In cases where a student is placed in the district's approved Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) program, **cyber instruction may be assigned as part of a blended learning model** to support the student's academic, behavioral, and emotional needs. This instructional approach is **not considered enrollment in the California Area Cyber Academy**, but rather a component of the individualized educational programming outlined in the student's **Individualized Service Plan (ISP)**. Cyber instruction in this context is determined by the placement team and reviewed regularly as part of the student's ongoing progress monitoring and exit criteria

Computer Use:

All students and parents must sign off on a separate *Acceptable Use of Computer Agreement* form each year, outlining in further detail the expectations of computer use at California Area School District. Failure to return this form will result in loss of computer privileges. Computer misuse will result in disciplinary action. Information and programs stored on California Area computers, storage systems, or peripherals are the private property of the individual creator of California Area School District, and shall not be duplicated.

Distribution and/or Posting of Materials:

Students wishing to distribute and/or post non-school materials must receive approval by the building principal one (1) school day in advance of distributing or posting the material. Materials will be dated upon approval, and the district may remove them within 10 days.

Dress Code:

The Dress_Code Policy is intended to support the creation of an educational environment promoting self-respect and appropriate exposure while not inhibiting self-expression. Faculty and administration have the right to question a student's dress if perceived as inappropriate and/or offensive. Dress should be appropriate for a school environment as preparation for appropriate dress in the workplace.

Parents will be notified and be required to bring a change of clothing if the student cannot make adequate adjustments. Classes missed by the student as a result of the dress code violation will count against the school's attendance/discipline policy. Multiple violations of the dress code will result in discipline assigned by the administrator.

Students are not permitted to wear sunglasses in the building during the school day. No clothing, including coats, which interferes with the function of the class is to be worn.

Clothing that is obscene and vulgar or promotes the use of illegal substances (alcohol, drugs, tobacco, guns and/or gangs/violence) sexual innuendo or discrimination may not be worn.

Tops exposing the chest or a bare midriff are not permitted and must be able to meet the top of the student's pants, shorts or skirt while standing up. Shorts and skirts must be of a length that does not expose the buttocks.

It is strongly suggested that students not wear flip-flops. Slippers are not permitted to be worn. Flip-flops and slippers are unsafe footwear for the halls, stairs, buses, and playground.

Students are not permitted to wear hats, hoods, or other head coverings.

Field Trips:

If a student requires medicine during the school day, prior to the field trip, it must be arranged that a school nurse attend the field trip or the student must take the required medicine prior to leaving school for the field trip.

Freedom of Speech and Expression:

The District considers freedom of expression a fundamental right. California Area School District follows the Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U. S. 502 (1969) standard in that student expression may be regulated only where it substantially disrupts school operations or interferes with the rights of others or if it creates a realistic threat of such disruption. Profane speech and lewd conduct are prohibited, due to their disruptive impact and the school's interest in teaching appropriate behavior (see [Board policy #220](#) for a complete list). The district reserves the right to discipline students for unprotected expression.

Freedom of Speech does not protect a student's right in the event another student is made to feel uncomfortable. Students who make terroristic threats are subject to discipline. A terroristic act is an offense against property or involving danger to another person. When an administrator has evidenced that a student made a terroristic threat or committed an act of terrorism, the administrator may suspend the student pending further investigation and possible recommendation for expulsion. The principal will report the student to law enforcement officials.

Gambling:

Any form of gambling is prohibited. Money or materials will be confiscated. Appropriate discipline will be assigned, including, but not limited to: the assignment of a lunch detention,

Hazing:

Hazing of any student, on or off school property, as it relates to school sponsored activities is prohibited and will be addressed immediately. Those involved in such acts will be suspended out-of-school for a minimum of three (3) days. They may also face a Board hearing for possible expulsion proceedings as well as face charges filed with the local police department.

Library:

The staff work hard to make the library materials accessible and to assist all students, faculty members and school staff with research, reading enrichment and personal development. The library is appropriate for quiet study; students who are noisy or disturb others may be asked to leave.

Each student is expected to observe the expectations for signing out and returning books and magazines, and for the use of other library materials. It is expected that books, magazines or material taken from the library be to be signed out at the circulation desk even if they are to be used for part of a school period. If the materials are taken without being signed out, they are considered stolen and students caught stealing library materials will be disciplined. A fee will be charged for each book not returned by the end of the school year. Additionally, any theft or damage done to

materials or furniture in the library will be met with charges for restitution and disciplinary action.

Student's records will be withheld until their fines are paid unless special arrangements have been made with the librarian and/or building principal.

Lockers:

Students shall not expect privacy regarding items placed in school lockers. The California Area School District will not be held responsible for articles missing or destroyed in/from a student's locker.

The administration reserves the right to open and search lockers in case of an emergency or reasonable suspicion. School officials may conduct random, periodic sweeping searches, including canine drug searches of all lockers.

The main office will assign lockers to students in their first period class/homeroom. Only books and clothing should be left in the lockers. No trash is to be stored in lockers. Accumulation of trash will result in a loss of locker privileges. For health reasons, gym clothes should be taken home at the end of the day.

The administration will not tolerate entering, destroying or stealing from lockers. Any student entering a locker, other than their own, destroying locker contents and/or stealing will be prosecuted to the fullest limit of the law. Action will be taken by the administration through the local police department.

In the event a lock has to be "cut", the student is to obtain permission from the administration at the main office.

Media:

Throughout the school year, the news media may have an occasion to visit the building. They may ask students questions or take pictures or a video of the school for their use. If a parent or guardian does not want their son or daughter involved with the media, a letter must be sent to the building principal requesting that this not occur. If a letter is not received, it will be assumed that this will not be a problem and permission therefore will be granted.

Off-Campus Activities:

School district policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would violate the Code of Student Conduct if:

There is a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.

The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off- campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.

The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, such as an agreement to complete a transaction outside of school that would violate the Code of Student Conduct.

The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.

On Campus Parking of Motor Vehicles:

The California Area School District regards the student use of motor vehicles for travel to and from school as a

privilege for which full responsibility must be assumed by both the families and the student. The use of such must follow the guidelines set by each building principal and in accordance with the expectations of the district.

All expectations of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code will be enforced while vehicles are on school property. The parking privilege of any students may be withdrawn by the administration for violation of the expectations or regulations established at the respective buildings. Additional disciplinary measures may be imposed upon the student who refuses to comply with building policies concerning driving to school. This may include the assistance of the local police department or school resource officer.

No student is to park in the spaces designated for the handicapped, for visitors or for the staff. School officials may search a student vehicle on school property if they have a reason related to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students or staff, and to enforce school board policies and procedures. A student has the option to be present if his or her vehicle is searched.

Student drivers are responsible for all items in the vehicles they drive to and park on school property. Vehicles are subject to search by administration and police canine units under the authority/supervision of school administration.

Student Driving:

At the High School level, if students drive themselves anywhere while on school time, the following must be secured by the principal and available on file in the principal's office:

- Administrative permission.
- Parental permission form.
- Forms indicating that the vehicles being driven are covered by automobile liability insurance currently in effect.

Student Injuries:

If a student is injured during the school day, the school nurse will be notified to provide treatment and make decisions about the medical care of a student. If the school nurse is out of the building, another building nurse will be notified and/or an Emergency Medical Services will be called for assistance.

Student Privileges:

At California Area High School, participation in student privileges is an important and rewarding part of the educational experience. These privileges include, but are not limited to:

- School dances (e.g., Homecoming, Prom)
- Clubs and extracurricular activities
- Social excursions and reward trips
- Field trips (academic or recreational)
- Spirit days, assemblies, and special events

To maintain a healthy balance between academics and extracurricular involvement, student privileges are reserved for those who are in good academic standing.

To be considered in good academic standing, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Be passing all enrolled courses with a minimum grade of 60% or a mark of "P" (Pass) in pass/fail courses.
- Academic standing will be reviewed regularly throughout the school year.

Students who are failing one or more courses at the time of review will be considered ineligible for the above privileges until they meet the passing requirement.

Once a student improves their academic performance to meet the minimum standard, privileges may be restored. Students are encouraged to seek academic support, attend tutoring, or meet with teachers to help improve their grades.

Maintaining academic success is our top priority, and we believe that student privileges should be earned through hard work and responsibility. This policy supports our commitment to academic achievement while also encouraging accountability and personal growth.

For questions regarding academic standing or eligibility, please contact the guidance office or school administration.

Student Rights and Responsibilities:

The Board has the authority and responsibility to establish reasonable expectations and regulations for the conduct and deportment of district students. At the same time, no student shall be deprived of equal treatment and equal access to the educational program, due process, a presumption of innocence, and free expression and association, in accordance with Board policy and school expectations.

Sexual Harassment:

California Area School District is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from sexual

harassment. Please refer to guidelines in [Board Policy 103](#).

Tardy to School or Class:

A student is considered tardy to class if he or she arrives to class after the start of class. Refer to attendance policy.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Financial Obligations:

The District believes that students must respect property and develop feelings of pride in community institutions. The school issues books needed for particular courses of study, a locker for books, and extra articles of clothing (sports). It is the student's duty to take care of all these loaned items. Any destruction, accidental or intentional, must be paid for at the respective school main offices.

Additionally, all fines for violations of the Tobacco Policy must be paid in a timely manner.

The secretary will give the student a receipt for all paid debts and fines. Charges could be filed with the local magistrate for unpaid debts or fines.

Legal Notification (PA Act 30):

Act 30, passed by the Pennsylvania legislature, requires the court judicial system, through the juvenile probation department, to provide school administrators information concerning the adjudication of an enrolled child. Such reports include a description of delinquent acts committed by the student, disposition of the case, probation or treatment reports, prior delinquent history, the established supervision plan and any other information deemed necessary. The building principal is required to share the information with the child's teacher or teachers or the principal of another school to which the child may transfer.

Medication:

The California Area School District recognizes the need for medications to be provided to students when prescribed by a practicing physician. To avoid any possible misinterpretation of this need, the following provisions shall be followed:

- All medications should be given by the parent whenever possible.
- It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of any medication that must be brought to or taken in school.
- School personnel in school may give prescription medication only when instructions for administration and possible side effects are on file with the school nurse. The parent shall be responsible for supplying the labeled medication in its original container. When the nurse is not available, the responsibility for such will be delegated by the building principal.

Personal Search:

The California Area School District recognizes that all people want and expect the security and privacy of their persons, that there should be clear and good reasons to violate this expectation, and that the violation should be as unobtrusive as possible to protect the safety and order of the schools.

Procedures to be followed are outlined in Pennsylvania Code Title 2, Chapter 12.14: Searches will be conducted when it can be determined through reliable information that a student had illegal material on school property or his/her person.

Snow Days, Emergencies, Cancellations, or Delays:

The California Area School District utilizes a notification system, which allows us to reach parents, students, and staff members instantly via an automated telephone system. The District also urges parents to listen to or watch the following stations, rather than to call the school office: KDKA, WTAE, and WPXI for announcements of school closings or delays due to snow or inclement weather. Additionally, information will be posted on the school website, calsd.org, and social media.

Any parent who feels that local road conditions are not safe for travel should feel free to keep a child at home. Students may be excused from missing school in this circumstance, if approved by the building principal.

School Security:

California Area School District maintains a safe environment for students, staff, and community. Security cameras are installed in public areas to alert administration of any potential misconduct. A School Resource Officer is on site daily to address law enforcement and security and an unarmed security guard is assigned to each building.

Outside doors, other than the main entrances, should remain closed/locked during the school day. Visitors should enter only through the main entrance and must provide identification for screening via Raptor.

To support a safe and secure learning environment, the school district utilizes weapons detection systems on a daily basis in designated school buildings and for designated extracurricular and athletic events. All students, staff, and visitors may be subject to screening upon entry, which may include walk-through weapons detectors and/or handheld scanning devices. These procedures are designed to prevent the introduction of weapons or dangerous items onto school property. Cooperation with this process is expected of all individuals entering the building, and refusal to comply may result in denial of entry and further disciplinary action as outlined in the district code of conduct.

While enrolled in the AEDY program, cell phones, backpacks, purses, and other personal bags or prohibited items are not permitted in the program unless specifically authorized by program staff. Security will conduct searches of any approved bags entering the facility at arrival. Refusal to comply with security procedures or possession of prohibited items may result in disciplinary action, removal from the program, or other consequences consistent with district procedures and the student's placement requirements.

No individual student or group shall be selected for a search based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics, unless reasonable suspicion exists.

Students will be asked to remove potentially triggering items (e.g., binders, Chromebooks, eye glass cases, etc.) and place them on the designated table. School personnel may not reach into students' pockets or bags during initial screening.

If the system is triggered, the student will be asked to remove any remaining items and undergo a second scan.

If the system is triggered a third time, the student will be escorted to a private area where a more extensive search will be conducted by an authorized person (preferably of the same sex). A witness shall be present during the search. In cases where a private search is conducted or a prohibited item is found, the student's parent or guardian shall be notified promptly.

Illegal items such as firearms, knives, and contraband will be turned over to local law enforcement. Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and student handbook.

After each search event, a written report must be completed and must include:

- Name of the campus and date of search
- Name(s) of administrator(s) conducting the search

- Names of any witnesses present
- Description of the randomization method used
- Search results (e.g., cleared, secondary scan, item recovered)
- Copies of the report will be retained in the campus office and the original submitted to the district's Office of Campus Operations for record-keeping.

Section 8528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

Pursuant to section 8528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), each LEA receiving federal funding must:

- Comply with a request by a military recruiter or an IHE for access to the name, address, and telephone number of each secondary school student served by the LEA, unless the parent of such student (or the student if they have attained 18 years of age) has submitted a written request to the LEA to opt out of the disclosure of such information;
- Notify parents of the students served by the LEA, or the student (if they have attained 18 years of age), of the opportunity to submit a written request to opt out of the disclosure of the student's name, address, and telephone number, unless prior written consent has been provided;
- Compile the list of student names with directory information by the first day of the academic year in which senior students will graduate; and
- Provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to IHEs or to prospective employers of those students.

Student Assistance Program:

Student Assistance Program (SAP) assists district employees in identifying issues and providing help to students experiencing difficulties in learning and academic achievement.

Transcripts (High School)

Throughout the school year requests for transcripts can be arranged through the guidance office. During the summer months, please contact the high school office. Transcripts will be mailed to the requested institution.

Valuables:

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or other personal valuables, including cell phones to school. Students, not the school, are held responsible for the loss of their personal property. Do not leave any valuables in your locker.

Visitors/Volunteers:

Students are not permitted to bring visitors without special permission from the building principal.

All volunteers must update their clearances every five (5) years beginning July 1, 2015. The following clearances are required under law:

- Criminal Record Clearance
- Child Abuse Clearance
- Federal Criminal History Record Information

However, the FBI clearance may be waived for a prospective volunteer if they have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entire last ten-year period. That being the case, the volunteer must "swear and affirm in writing" that they have not been convicted of any crime (reportable offense) by signing the PA Disclosure Statement Affidavit. This will need to be signed in the building office with a witness present.

A volunteer may locate applications for clearances on the following websites:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse (Act 151) – <https://www.compass.state.pa.us>
- Criminal Record (Act 34) – <https://epatchstate.pa.us>
- Federal Criminal History (Act 114) – <https://identigo.com> School Code: IKG6Y3

Clearances will be kept on file in the school offices. Copies should be provided to the school office. A computer-generated badge will be distributed to visitors upon checking into the office. All visitors must provide a driver's license or some form of identification to enter the building. Any volunteer who does not have their pin/badge will not be permitted to gain access to the school.

APPENDICES & FORMS

VIDEO CONFERENCING GUIDELINES

The use of video conferencing can help connect teachers to their students while learning from home. California Area teachers will be using this resource to meet with classes, small groups, and individual students. The District is using two video conferencing platforms: Google Hangouts/Meet. The District has taken several precautions to ensure the privacy of these video conferences, but we rely on our partnership with parents to ensure these tools are used appropriately by students while they learn from home. Students and parents are expected to follow these video conferencing guidelines:

- Students' ability to use video conferencing with or without parents' direct supervision is a decision parents need to make based on the age and independence of the child. For example, while K-2 students may require an adult's direct assistance while using video conferencing tools, older students may be able to use these learning resources independently.
- Parents/guardians should be mindful of the family activities and images that are or heard/seen during a student's use of video conferencing. Please have your children use these tools in a space that you can monitor, yet private enough for them to minimize distractions.
- Students need to ensure that video conferencing devices are fully charged in advance of the video conference session, and they should know how to turn off the camera or microphone as needed.
- Please remind students to dress and behave appropriately when video conferencing. The same expectations of conduct and behavior that apply to the classroom apply to video conferencing. Please refer to the District's Code of Conduct to review behavior expectations.
- Students/parents/guardians are not permitted to take photos, screenshots, or recordings of any video or audio from these video conference sessions. Participants do not have permission to do so and should be aware that this is a violation of the Student Acceptable Use of Technology policy.
- Teachers may choose to record instructional video conferencing sessions and share them with students who cannot attend the live session. Recordings of sessions will not be publicly available, and will only be shared within a secure resource such as Google Classroom or Seesaw, or as a link in an email to the class or individual students. Students and parents are not permitted to share links provided by teachers with anyone. Faculty will announce their intention to record the session giving students/parents/guardians the opportunity to turn off their camera and/or microphone if privacy is of concern.

STUDENT DEVICE USER AGREEMENT

The purpose of this document is to delineate the terms and responsibilities for families taking possession of a California Area School District issued device. Although families will take temporary possession of the device, the device remains the property of the California Area School District. All equipment must be returned or made available to California Area School District upon the student's separation from California Area School District, either by graduation, withdrawal, or at the request of California Area School District Administration. The option to purchase insurance for the device will be made available annually, at the beginning of the school year, through the District.

Students in the California Area School District are being provided access to technology for educational purposes. Students must follow the California Area School District *Code of Conduct* and *Acceptable Use Policy* for responsible use of technology in order to maintain the privilege of accessing such technology. The student and parent/guardian(s) will be responsible for taking the necessary precautions to safeguard the device. If the California Area School District determines that loss and/or damage is the result of negligence, the parent/guardian(s) may be held financially responsible for the repair or replacement of the device. California Area School District reserves the right to review, monitor, and restrict information stored on or transmitted via the California Area School District owned device and to investigate inappropriate use of resources. The District will provide filtered Internet access to its students in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act. Students will be educated in the proper use of the device and options for data storage.

This information is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with efficient, ethical, and lawful use of the District's technological resources. If a student violates the California Area School District *Code of Conduct* or Responsible Use Policy, privileges may be denied and appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion for students. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

The Student and Parent/Guardian signature signifies that the student will:

- Use the device in a responsible and ethical manner that upholds the standards of California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT.
- Understand that the device is at all times the property of the California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT.
- Not uninstall, disable and/or modify any hardware or software installed on the device or install new or additional programs on the device.
- Not permit individuals, other than California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT administrators or authorized California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT IT Department personnel, to access, repair or service the device.
- Adhere to the California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT Acceptable Use Policy found in the *Code of Conduct*. Devices used off school property are subject to all applicable California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT Board Policies, expectations, and regulations.
- Understand the device will not be used for personal and/or private purposes and is to be used for the student's educational use and school responsibilities.
- Report loss and/or damage of the device to the California Area SCHOOL DISTRICT IT Department. If the loss and/or damage is a result of negligence, the student/parent(s) or guardian(s) may be held financially responsible.
- Adhere to this Student Device User Agreement in the event the student is issued a "loaner" device during service.
- Notify the administration immediately if a student should receive an electronic communication containing materials that may be unlawful, inappropriate, affected by a virus, and/or a potential violation of the Code of Conduct.
- Not share login credentials and log off and secure their device to protect their work and information.
- Have a fully charged device prior to the start of the school day.

CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Request for Excused Absence from School
for a Pre-planned Educational Tour or Trip

Student's Full Name: _____ Grade: _____

Date(s) of Proposed Absence: _____

Name of Person(s) Directing and/or Supervising Student during Above Absence:

Relationship to Student: _____

Itinerary of the trip:

Include activities which could be educational in nature and will, therefore, provide the child with some valuable experiences outside the classroom.

Classroom assignments are the responsibility of the student to obtain, preferably prior to departure.

All assignments must be completed. Upon their return, students shall be given the number of days to complete their assignments equal to the number of days absent.

I certify that all of the above information to be true and agree to comply with the above conditions.

 Signature of Parent or Guardian Date Best Contact Phone #

*Please return this form to the Main Office 1 week prior to the pre-planned educational tour or trip.



California Area School District

California Area School District seeks to promote student activities and celebrate student achievement on the district website, social media channels, and newsletters. The School District will not release any information without prior written consent from you as the parent or legal guardian. Please return this form to your child's homeroom teacher to indicate if your child's image, voice, video, work and/or full name may be used on the School District's website and publications. This permission will remain in effect throughout your child's educational experience at California Area School District. As a parent or legal guardian, you may withdraw your consent at any time by sending a written letter to the principal of your child's school. We look forward to highlighting your child's accomplishments in the future. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please check one of the following options:

- ☐ I/We GRANT permission for any photo/image, voice, video, work, and/or full name of our son/daughter to be published on the School District's website and approved digital and print publications.
- ☐ I/We DO NOT GRANT permission for any photo/image, voice, video, work, and/or full name of our son/daughter to be published on the School District's website and approved digital and print publications.

Child's Name: (Please Print)		
Parent/ Guardian Name: (Please Print)		
Parent/ Guardian Signature:		Date:



CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT CHAPTER 15- 504 COMPLAINT

Parent/Guardian Name:	
Phone Number:	
Email Address:	
Student Name:	
Grade:	
District:	California Area School District

Summary of Complaint			
Previous Attempts to Resolve	Date	Contact	Result
Proposed Solutions/Corrective Action			

NOTE: A Section 504 Accommodation Plan is **not** a plan designed to enhance a student's performance. It is a plan to provide fairness and equal access to education. A student is entitled to a Section 504 Accommodation Plan if he or she has been identified through an eligibility determination process and the evaluation shows that the individual has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Please attach any additional information or documentation you wish the district to consider. You also have the right to file a complaint with the regional office of the U. S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) without going through the district's grievance procedures. Contact information may be found on the previous page.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE COMPLETED: _____

RECEIVED BY:

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE RECEIVED: _____

Copies to: Parent/Guardian, School District 504 Coordinator, Building 504 Coordinator, Superintendent



CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Laura B. Jacob, Ed.D. 40 Trojan Way Superintendent Coal Center, PA 15423

(724) 785-5800 – Phone

(724) 785-4866 – Fax

Dear (Complainant):

Thank you for contacting California Area School District and providing us with the opportunity to assist you in this matter. The following is a process designed to address complaints and concerns regarding any aspect of Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) programs, including placement and exiting decisions, the quality of academic instruction, the provision or omission of language assistance services, and services to students with disabilities to include reasonable modifications. This process is referred to as the “AEDY Complaint Process” throughout this document.

Individuals having complaints and concerns regarding AEDY are required to seek resolution via the ¹ relevant School District rather than elevating concerns to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) in the first instance. The filing of a complaint via the AEDY Complaint Process does not limit any other rights or remedies under federal and state law. This means, for example, that a parent may still file a separate due process complaint concerning his or her child’s Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) as provided pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”).

School districts will ensure that parents and students who are limited in (or have no) English proficiency (known as Limited English Proficiency or “LEP”) are provided translation and interpretation services to participate in the AEDY Complaint Process. If you need translation and interpretation services to access this document or the AEDY Complaint Process, please contact [Stephanie Hoesly, 724-785-5800].

Filing an AEDY Complaint with the School District

Any individual or organization may submit a written complaint using the attached AEDY Complaint Form. The form must be completed and sent to the relevant School District.

The complaint must include:

- (1) the facts on which the statement is based;
- (2) all relevant documents and supporting information;
- (3) a proposed resolution to the problem to the extent known and available to the complainant at the time the complaint is filed; and
- (4) the contact information for the complainant.

All relevant documents must be forwarded to the _____ (California Area School District), at _____ (40 Trojan Way, Coal Center, PA 15423), or faxed to _____ (724-785-5800), or emailed to _____ (hoeslys@calsd.org).

¹ While the term “school district” is used throughout, this document pertains to charter schools as well as school districts placing students in AEDY Programs.

Failure to provide all of the information in the AEDY Complaint Form will not result in the complaint being dismissed. LEAs will work with complainants to ensure that the requested information is as complete as possible.

The Staff Member in charge of this process shall be impartial and the School District will ensure that the Staff Member handling the investigation is not the subject of the complaint. The Staff Member in charge of this process may interview any individual who is said to have knowledge of the allegations. As part of the investigation, the Staff Member may require the AEDY Program and/or School District to respond to the allegations and may contact the complainant. The Staff Member may consider any relevant evidence as part of the investigation and outcome.

If the Staff Member concludes an investigation and makes a finding of compliance, the Staff Member will notify the complainant and the School District and take no further action. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, the Staff Member may provide the State AEDY Complaint Process information to the complainant. If the Staff Member concludes an investigation and makes a finding of non-compliance, the Staff Member will notify the complainant, the School District as applicable and direct corrective action to address the noncompliance.

The Staff Member will make a good faith effort to perform the actions outlined above in accordance with the following timeline: (1) investigate within 30 days of a determination that an investigation is appropriate, and (2) determine compliance or noncompliance within 30 days of the conclusion of an investigation. Depending upon the nature of the allegations and the investigation, the Staff Member may take additional time for these steps and will notify the complainant if additional time is needed. Regardless of the aforementioned timelines, the Staff Member will expedite its investigation and corrective action for allegations involving the health, safety and welfare of students or for other good cause shown.

The Staff Member will review the actions taken to address any noncompliance. If the Staff Member determines that the School District addressed the noncompliance, the matter will be closed. If the Staff Member determines that the School District failed to address the noncompliance, the Staff Member will report to a School District Administrator for appropriate enforcement action.

The Staff Member will acknowledge receipt of complaints. To determine the status of a complaint, please feel free to contact _____ (Stephanie Hoesly) at _____ (724-785-5800 x2398). If the complainant disagrees with the School District's conclusions, he or she may file a complaint with PDE.

Local AEDY Complaint Form

California Area School District

You may make copies of this form, use additional paper, or call/email the California Area School District at 40 Trojan Way, Coal Center, PA 15423 for additional copies. You may also attach copies of relevant documents to this form.

My preferred method of contact is:

☐ By phone (please provide number):

Best time during normal business hours to call:

☐ By email (please provide email address):

☐ In person at a public facility during normal business hours. The location would probably be a school or Intermediate Unit building to permit duplication of documents.

Are you filing this complaint on behalf of a specific child? ☐ Yes ☐ No Name of Child:

Child's Date of Birth:

Address of Child:

Complainant Information

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Home:

Work:

Cell:

E-mail:

Relationship to child or children:

☐ Parent ☐ Attorney ☐ Advocate ☐ Other **School/Program Information**

Child's school and school district:

Child's AEDY Program (please include even if the child has not yet attended the program and has only been referred to attend):

Is the child currently in school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, where is the child's current program:

School Building:

School District:

Charter School:

Private Provider:

Complete *only* if this Complaint is filed on behalf of a homeless child or youth.

Contact Person:

Telephone:

Complaint Information

On or about what date did the violation occur?

Date:

To clarify my allegations, I would like the School District to interview the following person(s).
(Optional)

Name	Occupation/Title	Phone Number/Email Address

Provide a statement about the violation or issue, which you believe has occurred. Please include a description of the problem. List the facts that support your statement.

What, if any, is your proposed solution to this problem?

Please return the form to:

Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly

hoeslys@calsd.org

cc: Dr. Laura Jacob, Superintendent

CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE HANDBOOK

The Student Handbook is available on the California Area School website, or by hard copy upon request to the main office of your school building.

Student Name (please print): _____ Grade: _____

My child and I have reviewed the contents of the **2023-2024** California Area Student Handbook. We acknowledge the expectations, procedures, and consequences explained throughout.

(Student Name/ Signature) (Grade)

(Parent/Guardian Signature) (Date)

California Area Board of School Directors

Mr. Barry Niccolai, President, niccolaib@calsd.org
Mr. John Bitonti, First Vice-President, bitontij@calsd.org
Mr. Benjamin Neil, Second Vice-President, neilb@calsd.org
Mrs. Susan Baumgard, Board Director, baumgards@calsd.org
Mr. Joe Grodz, Board Director, grodzj@calsd.org
Mrs. Gina Martin, Board Director, marting@calsd.org
Mr. Chad Ross, Board Director, rossc@calsd.org
Ms. Diane Zielensky, Board Director, zielenskyd@calsd.org
Mrs. Maria Hurley-Ziolecki, Board Director, zioleckim@calsd.org

California Area School District Administration

Dr. Laura Jacob, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Mary Bastin, Secretary to the Superintendent/Board of Directors
Mrs. Stephanie Hoesly, Director of Student Services/AEDY Supervisor
Ms. Stefanie Landman, Student Services Secretary
Mrs. Julie Iams, Enrollment Coordinator
Dr. Rachel Nagy, Elementary Principal
Mrs. Shannon Matty, Elementary Secretary
Dr. Joshua Pollock, Secondary Principal
Mrs. Sharon Neason, Secondary Secretary
Mrs. Dara Mudry, Secondary Secretary
Mr. Jeffrey Hoffman, Director of Technology
Mr. Jeremy Hodge, Director of Buildings/Grounds
Mr. Chris Wilson, Director of Food Service
Mrs. Lynn Hudak, Business Manager
Mrs. Danielle Ott, Payroll/Accounts Payable

CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals



CALIFORNIA AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

40 TROJAN WAY, COAL CENTER, PA 15423

TELEPHONE 724-785-5800

FAX: 724-785-5458

WEBSITE: www.calsd.org

Rachel Nagy
Elementary K-6 Principal

August, 2025

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, the California Area School District would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher –
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teachers' and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact Rachel Nagy, Elementary K-6 Principal at (724) 785-5800.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Hoesly

Director of Student Services/AEDY Program Supervisor



CALIFORNIA AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

40 TROJAN WAY, COAL CENTER, PA 15423

TELEPHONE 724-785-5800

FAX: 724-785-5458

WEBSITE: www.calsd.org

Stephanie Hoesly
Director of Student Services/AEDY Program Supervisor

Agosto, 2024

Derecho a saber las calificaciones profesionales de maestros y paraprofesionales

Estimado Padre / Tutor,

En cumplimiento de los requisitos de la Ley de éxito de todos los estudiantes, el Distrito Escolar del Área de California desea informarle que puede solicitar información sobre las calificaciones profesionales de los maestros y / o paraprofesionales de su estudiante. La siguiente información puede ser solicitada:

- Si el maestro del alumno -
 - ha cumplido con los requisitos estatales y los criterios de licencia para los niveles de grado y áreas de materias en las que el maestro proporciona instrucción;
 - está enseñando bajo una emergencia u otro estado provisional a través del cual los criterios de calificación o licencia del estado han sido eximidos; y
 - está enseñando en el campo de la disciplina de la certificación del profesor. • Si el niño recibe servicios de paraprofesionales y, de ser así, sus calificaciones.
- Si el niño recibe servicios de paraprofesionales y, de ser así, sus calificaciones.

Si desea solicitar información sobre las calificaciones del maestro y / o paraprofesional de su hijo, comuníquese con Rachel Nagy, Directora de Primaria al (724) 785-5800.

Sinceramente,

Stephanie Hoesly

Director de Servicios Estudiantiles/Supervisor del Programa AEDY