



Student & Family Handbook

EQUITAS ACADEMY

Board Approved
2022-2023 School Year

School Mission

Equitas Academy Charter School provides a structured, achievement-based community that prepares students to graduate from four-year colleges and universities. Equitas Academy Charter School provides a high-quality education and challenging school experience. Our school model is based on:

- **High Expectations** - Structured and disciplined classrooms, school-wide behavioral code of conduct, and school uniforms
- **College Readiness** - Extended school day and year, enrichment activities, and preparation to enter top-performing middle, high schools and ultimately college
- **A Family Partnership** - Ongoing communication with parents about academic and behavioral progress, at-home visits by staff, and family workshops
- **A Safe and Supportive School Community** - We help our children make positive choices through our school values of integrity, perseverance, dignity, pride, respect, and compassion

Attendance

Attendance is the first step in ensuring academic achievement. In order for students to be academically successful at Equitas Academy, they must be in attendance and make their strongest effort each and every day. At Equitas Academy, regular attendance is required. Our curriculum is an ambitious one; every day is essential for students to keep pace with their learning.

Parents/guardians/families are expected to ensure that their children are in school. Please do not allow your child to miss a day of school except in the case of illness. Excessive absences will be considered a violation of the statewide attendance policy. Students who miss an excessive number of days may not be promoted to the next grade.

Never Miss School for Appointments

Parents/guardians are responsible for scheduling medical appointments outside of school hours. The best times are Friday afternoons (after dismissal) or days when school is not in session. In the rare case when a student has a medical appointment during school hours, he or she should not be absent for the entire school day unless he or she is ill.

Suspensions Are Considered Absences

If students are absent from school due to suspension, these days will be treated the same as absences.

Early Pickups

Students are expected to stay in school until the very end of the day (3:00 PM for elementary and 3:15 PM for middle school for regular dismissal; 1:00 PM on Fridays for elementary school and 1:15 on Fridays for middle school for early dismissal). Early pickups are disruptive to the learning environment. Since we are intently focused on climbing the mountain to college, we will not release students prior to the end of the school day without prior notification. All

students must be signed out at the office by an approved parent/guardian prior to being released.

Tracking and Following Up on Student Absences

The school will keep records of all student absences. If a student misses school, Equitas Academy staff will make reasonable efforts to contact the student's parent/guardian by telephone, in writing, or in person. Staff will explain the school's attendance policy and request the parent/guardian's strong support in enforcing this policy.

"Excused" and "Unexcused" Absences

Absences at Equitas Academy are tracked as either excused or unexcused absences. Absences that qualify as "excused" need to be documented (doctor's note or parent/guardian note) and submitted to the office within 24 hours of the student's absence. Phone calls are not sufficient to track an absence as "excused".

Independent Study

At Equitas Academy we are committed to getting our scholars to college and one of the ways we do that is by holding our scholars to high learning expectations. We do not have control of the student learning when scholars are not present at school. However, if it is absolutely impossible for a student to be present at school for a certain period of time, Independent Study can be an option.

The minimum period of time for any Independent Study option shall be two consecutive days. If Independent Study becomes an option, families should notify the office. The School Director shall ensure that a written Independent Study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student.

The written agreement shall specify the length of time in which each Independent Study assignment must be completed. Because excessive leniency in the duration of Independent Study assignments may result in a student falling behind his/her peers, the due date for the Independent Study assignments shall be no more than one week. However, when necessary, based on the specific circumstances of the student's approved program, the School Director may allow for a longer period of time between the date an assignment is made and when it is due, up to the termination date of the agreement.

Attendance – Recognitions and Consequences

No Absences in a Year

The child and family are congratulated and recognized for exceptional attendance and commitment to their education.

Three Absences in a Year

If a student has three unexcused absences in a year, it is considered unsatisfactory attendance and a serious issue. At this point, the parent/guardian will be called to attend a mandatory group attendance meeting and will receive the first attendance truancy letter. At the meeting, unsatisfactory attendance and consequences will be discussed.

Six Absences in a Year

If considerable improvement has not been achieved and the student has six unexcused absences in a year, it is considered a chronic absent record. At this point the parent/guardian will be called to the school to meet with the Dean or another school leader to develop an attendance plan and will receive the second attendance truancy letter. This plan will consist of the agreed upon terms during the meeting, but also will require a monthly home visit and weekly teacher phone calls for the following four weeks. The School Director reserves the right to retain any student who misses more than six days of school.

Nine or More Absences in a Year

If a student has nine or more unexcused absences in a year, the student will be considered to have a chronic absence record and is considered habitually truant. At this point, a meeting will be held with the Student Success Team (SST) and the school administration may file a written complaint with a relevant court or child services agency alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family has service needs.

Attendance – Tardiness

Getting to school on time is key to your child's success – at school and in life. Late students miss vital academic time, and we would like to instill timeliness as a value in order to prepare our students for college and beyond. At Equitas Academy, the learning begins from the moment students walk in the door. Students read and complete challenging critical thinking problems during breakfast. Students who are late miss essential reading instruction, disrupt the learning of other children, and risk falling behind on our ambitious curriculum.

Definition of Tardiness

Our doors open at 7:20 AM each morning for elementary school and 7:35 AM for middle school. School begins at 7:45 AM for elementary school and 8:00 AM for middle school. Students must arrive by those times. A student is tardy when they arrive past those start times. Students at the school must arrive before 11:30 AM to be considered present for the day.

Consequences for Tardiness

Three Tardies Equals One Absence

Every three tardies is equivalent to one day of lost instruction and will be monitored as such in the student's file. Tardies that turn into absences do not get recorded for reporting purposes, but do affect student learning. Tardy students are not receiving academic instruction; therefore they are not allowing themselves the opportunity to be fully successful.

Three Tardies

If a student arrives after the start time three times in a year, that student is late, and it is considered a serious issue. After the third tardy in a year the parent/guardian will be contacted by the classroom teacher to hold a meeting. At the meeting, the unsatisfactory attendance will be discussed and an "On Time" attendance plan will be developed.

Six Tardies

If a student is late six times in a year, it is considered a serious issue. At this point the parent/guardian will be called to the school to meet with the Dean or another school leader to develop a second “On Time” attendance plan and will receive the second attendance truancy letter. This plan will consist of the terms agreed upon during the meeting, and also will require a monthly home visit and weekly teacher phone calls for the following four weeks. The School Director reserves the right to retain any student who is tardy for more than six times during the school year.

Nine or More Tardies

If a student is tardy nine or more times in a year, the student will be considered habitually truant. At this point, a meeting will be held with the Student Success Team to discuss further action on the situation.

Arrival

The school officially opens to students between 7:30 AM - 8:15 AM for elementary school and 8:00 AM for middle school each day. Office hours are 8:00 AM- 2:45 PM for elementary school and 8:00 AM -3:00 PM for middle school.

Dismissal

The school day officially ends between 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM at the elementary school and 3:15 PM at the middle school. Dismissal is at 1:00 PM on a shortened day schedule (on Fridays) for elementary school and 1:15 PM for middle school. No student will be allowed to leave the school with an adult who is not his/her legal guardian unless the guardian has submitted a signed and written note to an Office Coordinator in advance that specifies the name, address, and working phone number for the adult as well as specific dates and times for pick-up.

Families MUST submit a release form, provided during parent orientation, listing the names and information for any individuals, besides parent/guardian, who are regularly authorized to pick up their children.

Homework

At Equitas Academy, we believe students should be held accountable for completing homework assignments. Homework is an essential part of the Equitas Academy educational program. It is designed to reinforce skills taught in the classroom, to help students develop a deeper understanding of concepts, and to promote good study habits. Students who do not complete homework are missing an important opportunity to reinforce skills and student habits that are essential in preparation to attend and graduate from college. Homework will be assigned EVERY night at Equitas Academy, Monday through Friday as well as on holidays and breaks.

Homework must be completed in full and in accordance with Equitas Academy’s high standards for hard work and professional presentation, which includes clear and neat handwriting, full heading and parent signature.

Equitas Academy provides every student with a homework folder that is sent home nightly. Homework Folders are designed to teach students essential organizational skills and must be

kept professional. There should be no stickers, pictures or images in or on the folder. Homework folders are turned into teachers each morning as soon as students arrive in their classroom.

Homework – Recognitions and Consequences

No Missing Homework in a Trimester

The child and family are congratulated and recognized for exceptional homework completion and commitment to their education. Scholars will be recognized during various Equitas Academy celebrations, such as Community Meeting, Fun Fridays, and “bonus” on “paychecks.”

Elementary school scholars who complete homework (must include parent signature to be complete) will result in the scholar being invited to participate in Fun Friday. Middle school scholars who have incomplete or missing homework (must include parent signature to be complete) are invited to homework club to address reasons for incompleteness. This allows scholars time for the important learning and practice that was not done the night before. Learning time is valuable and necessary. Teachers will send a note home about incomplete, missing, and/or unprofessional homework. The main office will also send daily auto dial recordings to parent/guardian/family of the students with incomplete, missing, and/or unprofessional homework for that day.

Independent Reading

Research shows that the number one way to improve a student’s reading skills is to have them READ, READ, READ. The students who read every day outside of school are the students who are the best readers and score highest on reading tests. Supporting your child’s independent reading at home is the number one way to help him/her improve reading speed, accuracy, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Although Equitas Academy students have high-quality reading time during school, they also must READ, READ, READ at home every night, weekend and during any vacations from school. Parents/guardians should make sure to supervise their child in reading at least 30 minutes every night and on weekends.

Discipline

Our approach to discipline is rooted in a belief that the learning environment is sacred. At Equitas Academy, we will do whatever it takes to make sure that every child is safe (physically, emotionally, mentally, and intellectually) and that every child has the chance to learn without disruptions. We have very high expectations for student behavior, and we “sweat the small stuff” to create and preserve a focused learning environment.

Our teachers use a large variety of strategies to promote positive behavior and to correct problem behaviors. Our faculty uses positive reinforcement whenever possible and recognizes and celebrates student successes at every opportunity.

We also use consequences and a problem-solving approach to help students correct behavior problems when needed. Students may lose privileges (social time, field trips, school-wide events such as enrichment performances, family nights and school-wide celebrations) when they violate the rules.

Suspension/Expulsions & Appeal Process

A properly conducted investigation shall take place when an incident is reported. This includes gathering witness statements, pictures, evidence, video camera footage, etc. The investigating administrator shall also write a summary of the incident, including all relevant facts.

If the student violation rises to the level of a suspension, the administrator shall list all of violations and follow the outline listed here, documentation of which shall be provided to the parent at the time of the parent meeting. There are 5 offenses that result in an automatic expulsion recommendation by a school director:

1. Possession, selling, or furnishing a firearm, explosive, or other destructive device.
2. Brandishing a knife at another person
3. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance
4. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery

A student may be suspended for up to 5 days unless pending an expulsion hearing. Equitas must provide communication to the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for longer suspensions (typically for scholars awaiting an expulsion hearing only).

Administration has 48 hours to send adequate notice to the family once an expulsion determination is made. This includes sending a letter by "Return Receipt Request" as well as having the parent pick up and sign for receipt of the documents in person. The documents to be mailed and provided to the family includes a notice of the expulsion hearing, all evidence that will be presented during the hearing (including a cover page titled "Exhibit A" and with all scholar/other names redacted from witness statements, etc. to protect privacy). The packet shall also include the Element 10 procedures and the letters should all have both Spanish and English versions. Element 10 of the charter includes the suspension and expulsion procedures including the appeal process.

Equitas shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal. Equitas shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law. Equitas shall establish and implement policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), or a student who has a 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and Charter School, an IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District's Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and as listed in Element 10 of the charter.

The length of the out of school and in school suspensions will be determined by the School Director based on the severity of the offense(s), as evidenced by witness statements, physical evidence, and other relevant factors. The length of suspension for students may not exceed a period of 5 consecutive days unless a recommendation has been made by the School Director and agreed to by the student's parent/guardian. The total number of days for which a pupil may be suspended from Charter School shall not exceed 20 school days in any school year, unless a pupil enrolls in or is transferred to another regular school, an opportunity school or class, or a continuation education school or class, in which case the total number of schooldays for which the pupil may be suspended shall not exceed 30 days in any school year. Equitas will offer an interim placement at another Equitas school or other reasonable placement where the student will have meaningful access to education during the term of the suspension pending the outcome of the expulsion process.

Parents will be notified by the School Director through a telephone call and in writing in advance of enactment of the suspension or expulsion and can appeal a student's suspension or expulsion. The suspension of a student will be at the discretion of the School Director. A suspension appeal may be made to the CEO within ten working days of the suspension. A family will have the opportunity to file a written appeal that would include any additional information. Following due consideration of the appeal, the suspension facts and safety of students, a decision by the CEO regarding student suspension will be considered final. Each site has specific behavior policies and expectations that should be followed. This includes alternatives to suspension whenever possible.

Involuntary Removal Process

No student shall be involuntarily removed by Equitas Academy for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action. The hearing shall be consistent with Equitas Academy's expulsion procedures. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to Equitas Academy's suspension and expulsion policy.

Upon parent/guardian request for a hearing, Equitas Academy will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. The notice of hearing shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall include a copy of Equitas Academy's expulsion hearing process.

If the parent/guardian is nonresponsive to the Involuntary Removal Notice, the student will be disenrolled as of the effective date set forth in the Involuntary Removal Notice. If the parent/guardian requests a hearing and does not attend on the date scheduled for the hearing the student will be disenrolled effective the date of the hearing.

If, as a result of the hearing, the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known school district of residence within thirty (30) days.

A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent Equitas Academy from making a similar recommendation in the future.

School Uniforms

All students must come to school in the Equitas Academy uniform every day. The uniform consists of a light blue shirt with the Equitas Academy logo and navy blue pants, shorts or skirt for elementary school and a royal blue shirt with the Equitas logo and dark grey pants, shorts or skirt for middle school. Students can also pick up, at no charge, an Equitas Academy patch to be affixed to a blue polo shirt (light blue for elementary and royal blue for middle) at the front office. If a student arrives at school out of uniform, parents/guardians will be called and asked to bring in a uniform and/or a temporary one will be supplied to the scholar while their own arrives at the school. We have a required school uniform for several very important reasons.

Uniforms Unite us as a Community

When you look at a group of students in the Equitas Academy uniform, it is a powerful visual statement of our community. Students make a commitment when they put on the Equitas Academy uniform; they are agreeing to live up to the school's high expectations.

Uniforms Reduce Distractions and Clothing Competition

Often students spend more time discussing and evaluating what others are wearing or not wearing than they spend focusing on learning. Wearing uniforms eliminates this distraction.

Uniforms Make us all Equal

Whether families have high incomes or low incomes, the students come to school looking the same. This allows our students to avoid concerns about the clothes they are wearing to school each day.

Uniforms Look Professional

Students look neat when they arrive to school with shirts tucked into their pants. The students come mentally prepared for school and "dressed for work."

Please make sure your scholar is in uniform EVERY day and ready to learn. This means students must have their uniform shirts tucked into their bottoms, wearing the appropriate shoes, and shirt. We highly recommend writing your child's name in permanent marker on all sweater tags and uniform items. Detailed uniform guidelines will be presented to families and students during parent orientation.

Students may not change out of the Equitas Academy uniform at any point during the school day, including the Afterschool Program.

Students may wear their uniform pants and/or shorts or skirts with their college t-shirts every Friday and on all school field trips, unless otherwise stated by school staff. Students will receive their college shirts during the first week of school.

Dress Code

- **Jewelry:** Stud earrings (no hoops or dangling) should be no larger than a quarter. All other jewelry should be of an appropriate nature/content. For safety reasons, necklaces must be tucked inside shirts. Staff will confiscate all jewelry that is not in compliance with the uniform policy and scholar/parent handbook.
- **Hats:** Scholars are not allowed to wear baseball hats, scarves, or bandanas in the classroom/building. Small hair clips or hair bands are permitted.
- **Make-Up:** Make-up (lipstick, mascara, eye-make up, etc.) is strictly not allowed.

Freedom of Speech

Students have a right to freedom of expression and may participate in free speech activities, including political or religious speech, while on school campus. Students may distribute literature reflective of their views and opinions. Students may assemble on campus during non-instructional time to discuss their views and opinions and may participate in peaceful protests and demonstrations on campus. Students may exercise these rights as long as their speech, expression, or conduct is not obscene, lewd, libelous, slanderous, incites students to destroy property or inflicts injury upon any person, or causes a substantial disruption to the operations of the school. California law permits school site administrators to establish reasonable parameters for those students who wish to exercise their free speech rights on campus or during the school day. School site administrators may establish reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of the speech or activity in order to maintain a safe and peaceful campus for all students and charter school employees.

Valet Procedures

Valet procedures are in place at all school sites across each of the Equitas campuses to ensure the safety and ease of traffic flow for all of our families. Please be respectful and follow all safety procedures and traffic laws during arrival and dismissal in order to ensure the safety of your scholar. Please also ensure that your scholar is on time to school and that your scholar is picked up from school promptly after dismissal time. Valet starts at 7:20 AM for elementary and at 7:35 AM for middle schools.

Valet procedures are available through the school office, during orientation, and communicated to families by each school site. Parents that pick up their scholar using a vehicle, must have the name placard visible on the windshield at time of pickup to facilitate the valet process. Parents that are walking up to the site to pick up their scholar, must have a pass to show the staff member. Middle school students will not be allowed to walk home without written permission from their parent/guardian and must have their pass to show to a staff member.

To ensure compliance of all of the procedures and traffic safety laws, each site tracks infractions as noted below. Drivers with 3 or more infractions are subject to loss of valet privileges and will need to park and walk to pick up their scholars.

First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation
Green Letter	Yellow Letter	Red Letter
• Drivers receive a letter indicating the violation that was committed.	• Drivers receive a letter indicating the violation that was committed. • Phone call from the office.	• Drivers receive a letter indicating the violation that was committed. • Phone call to set up an in-person meeting. • A meeting is held with The School Operations Manager.

Student Accident/Incident Reporting

Incident reports are vital information for school staff members to analyze the incidences that occur on campus to monitor possible changes to current practices. Incident reports are internal school documents and are not shared with the public. The data from incident reports can be helpful to school sites in order for school staff to make educated decisions on how best to manage people and resources to ensure a safe and efficient school environment. *A school incident report should be prepared for any event which results or is likely to result in injury to a person, or damage to or loss of property, that occurs on school premises or during school activities.* Incident reports should be completed for incidents including, but not limited to: illness/medical emergency, injury, property damage, elopement, theft, and abuse.

Notification to parents or guardians should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurs. Notification to parents or guardian by telephone should include:

- Confirmation that the student was involved in an incident together with a description of the nature of the incident
- A description of any injury sustained by the student
- A description of any action taken following the incident (e.g. first aid)

All parents should also be aware that witness statements may be obtained from students for the purpose of receiving an accurate reporting of the issue. All incident reports are confidential and for school use only

Orientation, Lottery, & Registration

Equitas Academy Schools are open to all students in California. Completing the interest form does not guarantee admission to Equitas Academy. Admission preference will first be given to siblings of students admitted to or attending Equitas Academy and children of teachers and staff (up to a cap of 10% of enrollment); further admission preference will be given to students who live within the boundaries of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Admission will be granted to students whose names are drawn in the lottery to be held in March 2023 at each Equitas Academy school site. All other applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order their names are drawn. The waiting list will not carry over from year to year. Students who do not attend the school must fill out a new application in future years. Please check the website at www.equitasacademy.org for further information. If you have questions or need assistance completing an application, please call (213) 201-0440.

Equitas Academy Schools do not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student's actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status,, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Equitas Academy Schools do not request or require submission of a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or any other student records or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

In order to enroll a child at an Equitas Academy school, parents must submit an interest form to the school in which they would like to enroll during the interest period. A single interest form cannot be used for multiple children. A separate interest form must be submitted for every child in a family. Interest forms may be submitted online via Equitas Academy's website (www.equitasacademy.org) or in person at the front office of any school. The deadline for lottery consideration is typically in March. If the school receives more interest forms than it has spaces for students, a lottery will be held to determine admission, as is required by law.

Each year, Equitas Academy's schools have a fixed number of seats available for all incoming grade levels. If we receive more interest forms than there are available spaces, admission will be determined by a lottery, as required by law. The number of spaces vary by school and grade. The lottery is a method for ensuring each student has an equal opportunity to be accepted. Students will have until a designated time period in which to accept their lottery offer by completing their registration at the school.

Like all public schools in California, students must turn five years old by a specific date in order to enroll in kindergarten at Equitas Academy's elementary schools in a given year. For the 2022-23 school year and each school year thereafter, the date is September 1. For example, if you would like to enroll your child in kindergarten at an Equitas Academy elementary school for the 2022-23 school year, *your child must turn five years old on or before September 1, 2022*. If your child's fifth birthday is between September 2 and February 2, your child qualifies for *Transitional Kindergarten (TK)*.

Each year, Equitas Academy holds a new-student orientation, which includes receiving documentation regarding school policies and procedures, as well as turning in any required documentation. This documentation typically includes proof of age, proof of residence and immunization records. Equitas Academy has moved to a digital platform for registering your student and the school's office can support with this registration process.

Parent & Family Engagement

Schools receiving supplemental federal funds are required to provide services that raise the academic achievement level of K through 12th grade participants. Additional support may be provided through professional development and health and guidance services. Parents of scholars being served have the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation of the programs through activities such as serving on the school site council; developing parental involvement policies and compacts; attending parent-teacher conferences, parent training and literacy workshops; participating as classroom volunteers, tutors, and aides.

At Equitas, the school site council is responsible for the development, annual review, and update of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). The content of the LCAP shall be aligned

with goals for improving student achievement and address how funds will be used to improve academic performance for specific student populations such as special education students or students with a 504 plan. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the instructional program will be based on an analysis of verifiable student data and annual updates will reflect the appropriate modifications to the program.

Parent Participation

Equitas Academy requires parents/guardians to be partners in the education of their children. The important task of educating a child calls for the school, the student and the family to all work together to ensure success. Because we believe parent/guardian participation is extremely important to the Equitas mission, we encourage but do not require our families to volunteer for 20 participation hours a year. Parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, Equitas Academy.

Equitas families can earn participation hours by attending school meetings, family workshops, daily duties and tasks at school, fundraising efforts, donations, take home projects, etc. We want to make achieving our goal of 20 hours per family accessible, but we also want to ensure that our scholars are safe and receive minimal interruptions during the day to focus on their learning. We achieve this by maintaining strict guidelines and procedures for every aspect of our participation opportunities.

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

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

Volunteer Policy

All prospective volunteers must complete the required Equitas Academy volunteer application form and satisfy the requirements of the applicant review process annually. Misrepresentation on any of the application forms or during the review process may result in immediate disqualification of a volunteer applicant.

Any individual who has been convicted of any violent or serious crime shall be ineligible to be a volunteer. An individual who has been convicted of an offense that requires him/her to appear on a sex offender registry in any jurisdiction shall be ineligible to serve as a volunteer.

All volunteers serve at the pleasure of Equitas Academy. Accordingly, Equitas Academy retains the exclusive discretion to refuse a volunteer's services at any time for any reason.

Volunteers who provide service in their child's school or classroom for 10 or more hours per week or volunteer outside the supervision of a credentialed employee will be required to complete a criminal background check (Live Scan fingerprinting service) and Tuberculosis risk

assessment which will be reimbursed by the school. Please see Equitas Academy's Board Approved Volunteer Policy for more information.

While our schools' policy prohibits discrimination and harassment based upon the actual or perceived characteristics of of mental or physical disability, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions, and parental status), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, immigration status, nationality (including national origin, country of origin, and citizenship), race or ethnicity (including ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, ethnic background, and traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twist), religion (including agnosticism and atheism), religious affiliation, medical condition, genetic information, marital status , age or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or based on any other characteristic protected under applicable state or federal law or local ordinance. We reserve the right to deny volunteers on factors including, but not limited to:

- Positive approach and enthusiasm for working with children;
- Ability to work cooperatively with school personnel and participate regularly; and;
- Strong communication skills, character, dependability, health and personal hygiene

All Equitas volunteers that will be providing help at the school site must abide by the following procedures:

- All volunteers must **FIRST** sign-in at the school office prior to entering the main building. Parents/guardians/family members and visitors that do not check-in at the main office first, will not receive credit for the hours involved that day and will be escorted off the premises.
- Volunteers and visitors must wear an Equitas badge at all times during their stay at Equitas so that staff can identify the adults that have authorization to be in the school.

The following is a list of opportunities for volunteers looking to participate at the school site.

Help Supervising Students/Areas

Parents and volunteers that will be providing help with the scholars must first attend an Equitas workshop on participation expectations.

Participation Opportunities that involve direct interaction with students.

- Breakfast help
- Snack help
- Lunch help
- Recess/PE help
- Pick-up and drop-off help
- Field trip chaperone
- Classroom helper

School/Office Volunteer

Parents and volunteers that will be providing help with day-to-day opportunities

- Office helper
- Cleaning student snack/lunch tables
- Maintaining playground/area
- Sweeping the school grounds
- Take home projects
- Aiding in school fundraisers
- Participating in leadership roles at school (ex: secretary for SSC)

The following list gives examples of other ways in which our families may gather their volunteer/participation hours.

Equitas Meetings

Our families receive participation hours for attending any Equitas event or meeting. The goal is to have a strong sense of communication among school and family, and this is nurtured through the participation in these meetings or events. When attending the following meetings or events, parents/guardians need to sign-in to receive the participation hours. TB risk assessment is not required.

- Cafecitos
- School Site Council meetings
- Family events
- Saturday Academy
- Parent conferences
- School performances
- Attending community events (ex: Neighborhood Council meetings)

Participation hours need to be registered by Equitas staff in the main office. For any questions about parent/family participation hours you may contact the School Office or the Dean.

Donations

We are always taking donations for any events, meetings, daily school and office supplies, and any fundraising efforts that Equitas may have.

Fundraising

Equitas holds fundraisers throughout the school year. Please refer to the rules and regulations that are stipulated by the school site during the fundraiser for the particular event. Fundraiser participation is entirely voluntary and the proceeds are to wholly or in part provide a benefit to the school.

Letter Updates

Every week, your child will bring home updates from the school. This will contain important information about the schedule/calendar, events, announcements, field trips, and other important reminders. It is very important that you take the time to read these updates completely. Please remove all letter updates from the student's homework folder once read and

provide a parent/guardian signature on the homework cover page as an indicator to school staff that the information has been received.

Parent Conferences

At the end of the first and second trimester, a parent/guardian will be expected to attend a parent conference with their child's teacher.

Behavior Logs

Behavior will be recorded on the front cover of the homework every day. Your signature is required every night on the homework. Homework is not considered complete unless the behavior log is signed. In addition, your child will bring home a Kickboard report in their homework folder every week that informs you of their behavior.

Phone Calls

Throughout the year, you may receive a phone call or note from a teacher or school leader. If the message requires a response, please contact the school either by phone or in writing within 24 hours. You should expect to hear from your child's teacher at least once a month during the year.

Meetings

Parents have an opportunity to schedule a meeting with staff members in the office. School leaders will also be on-call to answer any questions.

Parent/Family Concerns

As you know, Equitas Academy is a very demanding school, with high expectations for academics and behavior. All of us – parent/guardians, teachers, and school leaders – are working hard to help your child climb the mountain to college. We are all part of your child's team: if you and your child work with us, we can all succeed. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we ask that you take some time to reflect on it and then follow the meeting procedures at the school. These procedures are included later in this Handbook. We welcome any conversation. We understand that as parents/guardians, you have very strong feelings about issues concerning your children and want to address those concerns as quickly and efficiently as possible. Please review our policies for Title IX Complaints, Universal Complaint Procedures and General Complaint Policy and Procedures for more information on issuing formal complaints.

Cell Phones/Electronics

Students are not allowed to use cell phones or electronic devices at school or on school field trips. If a cell phone or electronic device is used during school, rings during school, or is seen by a staff member, it will be confiscated from the student and will be returned to a parent/guardian once they have come to the school to pick it up. The student will also receive detention.

School Meals and Nutrition

The Charter School shall provide two (2) nutritionally adequate meals to each student who requests a meal without consideration of the student's eligibility for a federally funded free or

reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one (1) free meal per meal service (breakfast and lunch) each school day. This shall apply to all pupils.

Families may send lunch to school; however, students will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave. If you are sending lunch to school with your child, we ask that you send only nutritious foods. Please do not let your child bring unhealthy drinks (sodas, juices that are not 100% juice, sports drinks, and/or energy drinks) or unhealthy snacks to school. Candy, gum, and soda are not allowed at school in accordance with Equitas Academy's School Wellness Policy (available on the school's website). If you choose to send lunch, the entire lunch must be in one bag or container that has the student's name on it.

Assessments

Equitas Academy employs multiple assessments to monitor student progress, inform instruction, and ensure that all students succeed. Staff works to ensure that assessments are not stressful times for students; rather they are presented as opportunities to demonstrate all that students have learned. The assessments, which include nationally normed standardized tests and internally developed assessments, are administered throughout the year. Teachers analyze the results to inform their instruction, identify students in need of extra help, and to assess the overall effectiveness of the school's curriculum. Results are shared with families through the report cards that are distributed three times each year.

Equitas Academy shall annually administer required state testing to the applicable grades (e.g., the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress [CAASPP].) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a parent's or guardian's written request to Charter School officials to excuse their child from any or all parts of the CAASPP shall be granted. Upon request, parents have a right to information on the level of achievement of their student on every State academic assessment administered to the student.

Nursing Services & Medication

Being healthy physically helps children learn more effectively. For this reason, it is important to have your doctor or health center look into any problem that your child may have. If your child requires medication during school hours, we will assist by administering medication. Families must complete a medication authorization form and can get a copy of this form by calling or stopping by the school office. The requirement to have a form on file applies to all medicine, including aspirin, Tylenol, and other over-the-counter medicines. All student medicines will be kept in a locked cabinet. The school will keep a detailed log of all medicines that are administered. The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49414 regarding epinephrine auto-injectors and training for staff members.

Mental Health Services

Equitas Academy Charter School recognizes that unidentified and unaddressed, mental health challenges can lead to poor academic performance, increased likelihood of suspension and expulsion, chronic absenteeism, and student attrition. Access to mental health services at Equitas Academy Charter School and in our community is not only critical to improving the physical and emotional safety of students, but it also helps address barriers to learning and provides support so

that all students can learn problem-solving skills and succeed in school and, ultimately, in life. The following resources are available to your child:

Available on Campus:

- School-based counseling services – To seek support please contact the main office of your child’s school. School counselors support students by providing individual sessions, group or parent consultations whenever a student is having a difficult time due to academic stress, transition to changes in their environment, or social concerns, including isolation. Counseling services, whether provided by Equitas Academy or by an outside provider listed herein, are voluntary.
Special education services – if you believe your child may have a disability, you are encouraged to directly contact the main office of your child’s school.

Available in the Community:

- LA Red Shield Community Center – This organization provides social and wrap services. Available at 213-381-3747.
- Dignity Health – This organization provides individual and family therapy services. Available at 213-765-4115.

Available Nationally:

- National Suicide Prevention Hotline - This organization provides confidential support for adults and youth in distress, including prevention and crisis resources. Available 24 hours at 1-800-273-8255.
- The Trevor Project - This organization provides suicide prevention and crisis intervention for LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13 and 24. Available at 1-866-488-7386 or visit <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>.
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America – This organization is a community- based mentorship program. Community-specific program information can be found online at <https://www.bbbs.org> or by calling (813) 720-8778.

Section 504

Equitas Academy recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program of the charter school. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity, including, but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodations by Equitas Academy. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for accommodations under Section 504 may make a referral for an evaluation to the School Director. A copy of Equitas Academy’s Section 504 policies and procedures is available upon request at the main office.

Special Education /Students with Disabilities

We are dedicated to the belief that all students can learn and must be guaranteed equal opportunity to become contributing members of the academic environment and society. Equitas Academy provides special education instruction and related services in accordance with the

Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and procedures of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). These services are available for special education students enrolled at Equitas Academy. We offer high quality educational programs and services for all our students in accordance with the assessed needs of each student. Equitas Academy collaborates with parents, the student, teachers, and other agencies, as may be indicated, in order to appropriately serve the educational needs of each student.

Pursuant to the IDEA and relevant state law, Equitas Academy is responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating children enrolled at the charter school with known or suspected disabilities to determine whether a need for special education and related services exists. This includes children with disabilities who are homeless or foster youth. Equitas Academy shall not deny nor discourage any student from enrollment solely due to a disability. If you believe your child may be eligible for special education services, please contact the main office at your student's school.

English Learners

Equitas Academy is committed to the success of its English Learners and support will be offered both within academic classes and in supplemental settings for students who need additional support for English language development. Equitas Academy will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, English Learners and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. Equitas Academy will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding English Learners and the rights of students and parents.

School Visitor Policy

Visitors, especially parents/guardians, are a vital part of the Equitas Academy community. We welcome them as volunteers, observers, and partners in the education of our students. Parents/guardians who would like to visit should simply call in advance and schedule a class-visit appointment, as unannounced visits can be disruptive to our educational program. Upon arriving, all visitors must sign in at the main office. They should enter classes during a regular-scheduled transition period between classes, but they may leave at any time. Visitors may not talk to a child or a teacher during class, although they may call the teacher after school to discuss what they observed.

If a visitor is coming to school to drop something off for a student or to leave a message, we still require that the visitor come first to the main office. For the sake of student safety, we cannot have anyone in the building who has not signed in.

Student Records

The operational staff is in charge of student records. If a parent/guardian would like to examine a child's record, the parent/guardian should submit a request in writing and submit it to an Office Coordinator. Within five business days of receipt of a written request, the school, depending on the requested information, responds by:

- Making the information available at the school itself during normal business hours to the person requesting it;
- Denying the request in writing; or
- Providing a written acknowledgment of receipt of the request that supplies an approximate date for when the request will be granted or denied.

Other Information and Policies

Student Belongings

Students who disrupt class for any reason are violating school rules. This rule applies to students' personal possessions as well. Items including, but not limited to, game cards, trading cards, portable electronic games or devices, toys, and cell phones are not allowed in school. Students who violate this rule will have their item(s) confiscated until the item(s) is/are picked up by a parent/guardian and will be subject to consequences.

Lost and Found

The school will keep a lost and found box. Parents/guardians may come in any day between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM to search the Lost and Found. At the end of every trimester, items left in the box will be donated to a local charity.

School Supplies

Equitas Academy will purchase all of the school supplies needed for the classroom.

Acceptable Use of Technology

One of the adopted goals of Equitas Academy is to assist in advancing the use of technology to enhance student learning. Access to Equitas Academy's technology is a privilege, not a right, and students enrolled in school or after-school programs or activities must follow school guidelines and procedures regarding acceptable use of technology.

All Equitas Academy students and their parents/guardians shall sign the Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement prior to using Equitas Academy technological resources. Equitas Academy shall make a diligent effort to filter the inappropriate or harmful matter accessible through the Internet, and students shall also take responsibility not to initiate access to inappropriate or harmful matter while using school technology. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action and the loss of the privilege to use the technology and/or civil or criminal liability.

Internet Safety

Equitas Academy encourages parents to talk with their child about the potential danger of social media and the Internet. Parents should ask their child if they have an account with Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Kik, Vine, Periscope, WhatsApp, YouNow, Burn Note, Whisper, Twitter or similar Web sites and applications. If your child is using such a site with your permission, you may want to review his or her profile to ensure that no personal and identifiable information has been posted.

Equitas Academy also encourages parents to establish rules and guidelines to ensure the safety of your child while on the Internet. Some Web sites offer parental or family guidance for Internet safety; for example, SafeKids.com, located online at <http://www.safekids.com>, and Web Wise Kids, located online at <http://www.webwisekids.org>, by telephone at 866-WEB-WISE, or by e-mail at webwisekids2@aol.com.

The Charter School shall ensure that all Charter School computers with Internet access have a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access to websites that have no educational purpose and/or contain visual depictions that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or that are harmful to minors. While the Charter School is able exercise reasonable control over content created and purchased by the Charter School, it has limited control over content accessed via the internet and no filtering system is 100% effective. Neither the Charter School nor its staff shall be responsible for the failure of any technology protection measures, violations of copyright restrictions, or user mistakes, misuse or negligence.

Equitas Academy will continue to provide Internet security within our schools. It is important that parents also monitor Internet use at home. If parents have questions or would like more information, please contact your School Director.

School Field Trips and Schoolbus Safety

Prior to departure on a school activity trip, all pupils riding on a school bus or school activity bus shall receive safety instruction that includes, but is not limited to, location of emergency exits, and location and use of emergency equipment. Instruction also may include responsibilities of passengers seated next to an emergency exit. A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

Health & Safety, School Safety Plan, & Disaster Drills

State law requires that schools be prepared to respond to emergencies such as earthquakes, fires, lockdowns, and other situational emergencies. Equitas has a plan in place should the need arise, and the Emergency Preparedness Plans that are available at each site are continuously reviewed. All staff members know their roles and responsibilities under the guidelines of each plan. With proper communication, response plans, as well as frequent practice and training, the school sites are better prepared to respond to emergencies in a safe and efficient manner to protect all stakeholders.

The following are some guidelines for communicating with parents/guardians during a real emergency:

1. The school will provide accurate information about a situation as quickly as possible.
2. The school will use the phone texting system, so the school should have up to date contact information on hand.
3. The school will also contact parents/guardians when the situation changes or is resolved.

Parents should not call the school or come to the school during an emergency. They should wait to receive notifications and updates from the school site.

The following are guidelines that the school follows:

1. A written record of all exit drills shall be kept. Such record shall state the time and date of each drill held.
2. Exit drills shall include complete evacuation of all persons from the building to a designated evacuation area. After reaching the evacuation area, student attendance shall be taken by the teacher from the class rollback.

Emergency Programs & Contact Information

Name	Phone Number
Emergency	911
Olympic Police Station	213-382-9102
Rampart Police Station	213-484-3400
Fire Department #13	213-485-6213
Los Angeles Emergency Management Agency (24 hours)	213-978-2222
American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles	800-627-7000
LAUSD Emergency Services	213-241-3889
LAUSD Office of Environmental Health & Safety	213-241-3199
LAUSD School Police	(213) 625-6631
LADWP	800-342-5397
Gas Company	800-427-2000/822-238-0092

St. Vincent Medical Center (2131 W. 3 rd St., Los Angeles, CA)	213-484-7111
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California Hospital Medical Center (1410 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, CA)	213-748-2411
Good Samaritan Hospital (1225 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA)	213-977-2121
Poison Control Center	800-222-1222
Los Angeles Animal Shelter and Animal Issue (24 Hrs)	888-452-7381
Department of Mental Health	800-854-7771
Department of Child Services	213-351-5507
Child Abuse Hotline	800-540-4000

School Safety Plan

The Charter School has established a Comprehensive School Safety Plan. The Plan is available upon request at the main office.

Tobacco Policy – Tobacco Free Campus

Equitas recognizes that the use of tobacco products is a health, safety, and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors, and school facilities. Therefore, all Equitas Academy school sites are tobacco-free campuses, including all electronic or other vaping materials.

Scholars who violate this policy are subject to discipline. Staff who violate this policy are subject to verbal warning, reprimand, or termination. Visitors who violate this policy are subject to removal from campus and law enforcement may be contacted as necessary.

No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time, including non-school hours (24/7):

1. in any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by school;
2. on any school grounds and property – including athletic fields and parking lots – owned, leased, rented or chartered by the school; or at any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.

Annual Notifications

Non-Discrimination Statement

Equitas Academy is committed to providing a safe school environment where all individuals in education are afforded equal access and opportunities. **Equitas Academy's** academic and other educational support programs, services and activities shall be free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any individual based on the actual perceived actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, immigration status, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code.. Specifically, state and federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in enrollment, counseling, and the availability of physical education, athletic activities, and sports. Transgender students shall be permitted to participate in gender-segregated school programs and activities (e.g., athletic teams, sports competitions, and field trips) and to use facilities consistent with their gender identity. Equitas Academy assures that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in any programs. Complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying are investigated through the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP). Such complaints must be filed no later than six months after knowledge of the alleged discrimination was first obtained.

The Charter School adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

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

The Charter School does not request nor require student records prior to a student's enrollment.

The Charter School shall provide a copy of the California Department of Education Complaint Notice and Form to any parent, guardian, or student over the age of 18 at the following times: (1) when a parent, guardian, or student over the age of 18 inquires about enrollment; (2) before conducting an enrollment lottery; and (3) before disenrollment of a student.

The Charter School is committed to providing an educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, or national origin); The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the IDEIA; and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA (mental or physical disability). The Charter School also prohibits sexual harassment, including cyber sexual bullying, and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religion, religious affiliation, creed, color, immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. The Charter School does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including discrimination, intimidation, or bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the Charter School does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender. The Charter School will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted. Inquiries, complaints, or grievances regarding harassment as described in this section, above, should be directed to the Charter School Uniform Complaint Procedures Compliance Officer:

Maggie Ford
Chief Operating Office
(213) 201-0440

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

Annual Notification of Education Code 48205 – Excused Absences:

Pupils, with the written consent of their parents or guardians, may be excused from school in order to participate in religious exercises or to receive moral or religious instruction.

No pupil shall have his or her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence or absences, if missed assignments and tests that can reasonably be provided are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time.

- (a) *Notwithstanding Section 48200, a pupil shall be excused from school when the absence is:*
 - (1) *Due to his or her illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health.*
 - (2) *Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.*

(3) *For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometrically, or chiropractic services rendered.*

(4) *For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of his or her immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than one day if the service is conducted in California and not more than three days if the service is conducted outside California.*

(5) *For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided for by law.*

(6) *Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent, including absences to care for a sick child for which the school shall not require a note from a doctor.*

(7) *For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service, observance of a holiday or ceremony of his or her religion, attendance at religious retreats, attendance at an employment conference, or attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization when the pupil's absence is requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designated representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the governing board.*

(8) *For the purpose of serving as a member of a precinct board for an election pursuant to Section 12302 of the Elections Code.*

(9) *For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil's immediate family, who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code Section 49701, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Absences granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be granted for a period of time to be determined at the discretion of the superintendent of the Charter School.*

(10) *For the purpose of attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.*

(11) *Authorized at the discretion of a school administrator, as described in Education Code Section 48260(c).*

(b) *A pupil absent from school under this section shall be allowed to complete all assignments and tests missed during the absence that can be reasonably provided and, upon satisfactory completion within a reasonable period of time, shall be given full credit therefore. The teacher of the class from which a pupil is absent shall determine which tests and assignments shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the tests and assignments that the pupil missed during the absence.*

(c) *For purposes of this section, attendance at religious retreats shall not exceed four hours per semester.*

(d) *Absences pursuant to this section are deemed to be absences in computing average daily attendance and shall not generate state apportionment payments.*

(e) *"Immediate family," means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.*

(f) *“Cultural” means relating to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people.*

Entrance Health and Oral Health Screenings

State law requires that the parent or legal guardian of each pupil provide the school within 90 days after entrance to first grade documentary proof that the pupil has received a health screening examination by a doctor within the prior 18 months. Pupils may be excluded up to 5 days from school for failing to comply or not providing a waiver. Free health screening is available for eligible students through the Child Health Disabilities Prevention Program. Please contact the front office for more information.

A record of a dental assessment done by a dental professional is required for all kindergarteners and first graders attending public school for the first time. Dental assessments must be completed in the 12 months prior to entry or by May 31st of the pupil's first school year.

Physical Examinations and Health Exclusions

Schools are required to conduct physical examinations including sight, hearing and scoliosis testing. A parent or guardian may file annually with the school principal a written statement, signed by the parent or legal guardian, withholding consent to a physical examination of the pupil. However, whenever there is good reason to believe that the pupil is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, the pupil shall be sent home and shall not be permitted to return until school authorities are satisfied that the contagious or infectious disease no longer exists.

Emergency Treatment for Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that can occur after encountering an allergic trigger, such as food, medicine, an insect bite, latex or exercise. Symptoms include narrowing of the airways, rashes or hives, nausea or vomiting, a weak pulse and dizziness. It is estimated that approximately 25% of the anaphylactic reactions occur during school hours to students who had not previously been diagnosed with a food or other allergy. Without immediate administration of epinephrine followed by calling emergency medical services, death can occur. Being able to recognize and treat it quickly can save lives. The Charter School shall provide epinephrine auto-injectors to school nurses and trained personnel who have volunteered and authorizes them to use epinephrine auto-injectors for any student who may be experiencing anaphylaxis, regardless of known history.

Immunizations

Students must be immunized against certain communicable diseases. Students are prohibited from attending school unless immunization requirements are met for age and grade. Equitas Academy shall cooperate with local health officials in measures necessary for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in school age children. The school may use any funds, property, or personnel and may permit any person licensed as a physician or registered nurse to administer an immunizing agent to any student whose parents have consented in writing.

Parents of students in any school are no longer be allowed to submit a personal beliefs exemption to a currently required vaccine. A personal beliefs exemption on file at school prior to January 1, 2016 will continue to be valid until the student enters the next grade span at kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade.

Students are not required to have immunizations if they attend a home-based private school or an independent study program and do not receive classroom-based instruction. However, parents must continue to provide immunizations records for these students to their schools. The immunization requirements do not prohibit students from accessing special education and related services required by their individualized education programs.

A student not fully immunized may be temporarily excluded from a school or other institution when that child has been exposed to a specified disease and whose documentary proof of immunization status does not show proof of immunization against one of the communicable diseases described above.

Diabetes

Equitas Academy will provide an information sheet regarding type 1 diabetes to the parent or guardian of a student when the student is first enrolled in elementary school, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.6. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

1. A description of type 1 diabetes.
2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes.
3. A recommendation that parents or guardians of students displaying warning signs associated with type 1 diabetes should immediately consult with the student's primary care provider to determine if immediate screening for type 1 diabetes is appropriate.
4. A description of the screening process for type 1 diabetes and the implications of test results.
5. A recommendation that, following a type 1 diagnosis, parents or guardians should consult with the pupil's primary care provider to develop an appropriate treatment plan, which may include consultation with and examination by a specialty care provider, including, but not limited to, a properly qualified endocrinologist.

A copy of the information sheet regarding type 1 diabetes is available on our website. Please contact the office if you need a copy of this information sheet or if you have any questions about this information sheet.

Equitas Academy will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

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

5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

A copy of the information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes is available at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/type2diabetes.asp>.

Please contact the office if you need a copy of this information sheet or if you have any questions about this information sheet.

Student Surveys

Anonymous, voluntary and confidential research and evaluation tools to measure student's health behaviors and risks, including tests, questionnaires, and surveys containing age-appropriate questions about the student's attitudes and practices relating to sex, family life, morality, and religion may be administered to students in grades 7-8. Parents shall be notified in writing that 1) this test, questionnaire, or survey is to be administered, 2) the student's parent is given the opportunity to review the test, questionnaire, or survey, and 3) in order to excuse their child they must state their request in writing to the Charter School. .

A student may not attend any class in comprehensive sexual health education or HIV prevention education, or participate in any anonymous, voluntary, and confidential test, questionnaire, or survey on student health behaviors and risks, if the Charter School has received a written request from the student's parent or guardian excusing the student from participation. An alternative educational activity shall be made available to students whose parents or guardians have requested that they not receive the instruction or participate in the test, questionnaire, or survey.

California Healthy Kids Survey

The Charter School will administer the California Healthy Kids Survey ("CHKS") to students at grades five, seven, nine, and eleven whose parent or guardian provides written permission. The CHKS is an anonymous, confidential survey of school climate and safety, student wellness, and youth resiliency that enables the Charter School to collect and analyze data regarding local youth health risks and behaviors, school connectedness, school climate, protective factors, and school violence.

Sexual Health Education

Equitas Academy offers comprehensive sexual health education to its students in grades 7 and 8. A parent or guardian of a student has the right to excuse their child from all or part of comprehensive sexual health education, HIV prevention education, and assessments related to that education through a passive consent ("opt-out") process. Equitas Academy does not require active parental consent ("opt-in") for comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education. Parents and guardians may:

- Inspect written and audiovisual educational materials used in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education.
- Excuse their child from participation in comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education in writing to the Charter School.

- Be informed whether the comprehensive sexual health or HIV/AIDS prevention education will be taught by Charter School personnel or outside consultants. When the Charter School chooses to use outside consultants or to hold an assembly with guest speakers to teach comprehensive sexual health or HIV/AIDS prevention education, be informed of:
 - The date of the instruction
 - The name of the organization or affiliation of each guest speaker
- Request a copy of Education Code sections 51930 through 51939.

Safe Place to Learn and Bullying Prevention

Equitas Academy is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, violence, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics, of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, pregnancy or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code, including immigration status.

All school personnel who witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying must take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Any student who engages in acts of discrimination, harassment, violence, intimidation, or bullying related to school activity or school attendance occurring within the charter school may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. The Charter School's antidiscrimination, anti-harassment, anti-intimidation, and anti-bullying policies, please contact the School Director.

Human Trafficking Prevention

California has the highest number of incidents of human trafficking in the U.S., and all students may be vulnerable. Equitas Academy believes it is a priority to inform our students about (1) the prevalence, nature of and strategies to reduce the risk of human trafficking, techniques to set healthy boundaries, and how to safely seek assistance, and (2) how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking.

In accordance with the California Healthy Youth Act, Equitas Academy will provide age-appropriate instruction on the prevention of human trafficking, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment. You have the right to excuse your child from all or part of the instruction on the prevention of human trafficking. An opt-out form is available at the main office for your convenience. Your consent for this instruction is NOT required. If we do not receive a written request to excuse your child, your child will be included in the instruction.

Information and materials for parents/guardians about the curriculum and resources on prevention of human trafficking and abuse, including sexual abuse, assault, and harassment are available on Equitas Academy's website for your review.

Youth Suicide Prevention Policy

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to the charter school. The board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

1. Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, using support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. This will occur in all health classes.
2. The charter school will designate a suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.
3. When a student is identified as being at risk, they will be assessed by a school employed mental health professional who will work with the student and help connect them to appropriate local resources.
4. Students will have access to national resources which they can contact for additional support, such as:
 - The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – [1.800.273.8255](tel:18002738255) (TALK), www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 - The Trevor Lifeline – [1.866.488.7386](tel:18664887386), www.thetrevorproject.org
5. All students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help.
6. Students should also know that because of the life or death nature of these matters, confidentiality or privacy concerns are secondary to seeking help for students in crisis.
7. For a more detailed review of policy changes, please see the charter school's full suicide prevention policy available on its website.

Sexual Harassment

Equitas Academy is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. Any student who engages in sexual harassment of anyone in or from the school(s) may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any employee who permits, engages in, or fails to report sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For a copy of the charter school's sexual harassment policy or to report incidences of sexual harassment, please contact the School Director.

Annual Pesticide Use Notification

Equitas Academy has adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy. This policy includes notifying parents/guardians of pesticide use. During the school year, it may be necessary to

apply pesticides at the charter school to avoid serious health problems posed by pests and/or maintain the integrity of a structure. However, should you feel that your child's or your (for school staff) health and/or behavior could be influenced by exposure to pesticide products, you are notified as follows:

- An application of products approved by the Healthy Schools Act may be applied during the school year by Western Exterminators/Terminix.
- In the event the use of a product is required that is not on the Approved List, you will be notified 72 hours in advance. (Exception: Emergency circumstances that warrant an immediate response).
- Additional information regarding pesticide products, including those on Equitas Academy's Approved List, is available online at <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov>.

Notice Regarding Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for Homeless Children and Youth entitles all homeless school-aged children to the same free and appropriate public education that is provided to non-homeless students. A homeless student is defined as a person between the ages of birth (Early Head Start and Head Start Programs) and twenty-two (special education students) who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and may temporarily:

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

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the parent/guardian has the right to dispute the school's decision by contacting the charter school's homeless liaison **Maggie Ford** at (213) 201-0440 or 1700 West Pico Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90015 and following the charter school's dispute resolution policy.

The law requires the immediate enrollment of homeless students, which is defined as "attending class and participating fully in school activities". Schools cannot delay or prevent the enrollment of a student due to the lack of school or immunization records or other documentation usually required for enrollment. It is the responsibility of the homeless liaison to refer parents to all programs and services for which the student is eligible. Referrals may include, but are not limited to: free nutrition, special education services, tutoring, English Learner programs, Gifted and Talented Education program, preschool, before and after school services or any other program offered by the charter school. The charter school shall ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent/guardian/unaccompanied homeless youth, to and from the school of origin, if feasible.

Unaccompanied youth; such as teen parents not living with their parent or guardian or students that have runaway or have been pushed out of their homes, have access to these same rights. A homeless student that transfers schools after the second year of high school, and is greatly deficient in credits may be able to graduate within four years with reduced state requirements. Charter schools are required to issue and accept partial credit for courses that have been satisfactorily completed.

Teacher Qualification Information

As Equitas Academy receives Title I federal funds through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), all parents/guardians of students attending school may request information regarding the professional qualifications of classroom teachers and/or paraprofessionals, including at a minimum:

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

Upon request, Equitas Academy will provide the information to the parents/guardians in a timely manner. Parents/guardians may contact the Chief Operating Officer at (213) 201-0440 to obtain this information.

Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interaction Policy

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

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student.

For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property.

For clarification purposes, the following examples are offered for direction and guidance of school personnel:

- A. Examples of PERMITTED actions (NOT corporal punishment)
 - 1. Stopping a student from fighting with another student;
 - 2. Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism;
 - 3. Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student;
 - 4. Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object;
 - 5. Requiring an athletic team to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition team members or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills;
 - 6. Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities.
- B. Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment)
 - 1. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control;
 - 2. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment;
 - 3. Paddling, swatting, slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Staff/Student Behavior

This policy is intended to guide all faculty and staff in conducting themselves in a way that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of school employees and to specify the boundaries between students and staff.

Although this policy gives specific, clear direction, it is each staff member's obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents, students, colleagues, or school leaders. One viable standard that can be quickly applied, when you are unsure if certain conduct is acceptable, is to ask yourself, "Would I be engaged in this conduct if my family or colleagues were standing next to me?"

For the purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing the boundaries of a student/teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member's perspective but can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from a student or parent point of view. The objective of the following lists of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived as, sexual misconduct.

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

Duty to Report Suspected Misconduct

When any employee reasonably suspects or believes that another staff member may have crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, he or she must immediately report the matter to a school administrator. All reports shall be as confidential as possible under the circumstances. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

Examples of Specific Behaviors

The following examples are not an exhaustive list:

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors (Violations of this Policy)

- (a) Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal and intimate nature.
- (b) Kissing of any kind.
- (c) Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation.
- (d) Intentionally being alone with a student away from the school.
- (e) Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments.
- (f) Sexual jokes.
- (g) Seeking emotional involvement with a student for your benefit.
- (h) Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented.
- (i) Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student in an attempt to gain their support and understanding.
- (j) Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior.

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors without Parent and Supervisor Permission

(These behaviors should only be exercised when a staff member has parent and supervisor permission.)

- (a) Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities.
- (b) Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed.
- (c) Allowing students in your home.

Cautionary Staff/Student Behaviors

(These behaviors should only be exercised when a reasonable and prudent person, acting as an educator, is prevented from using a better practice or behavior. Staff members should inform their supervisor of the circumstance and occurrence prior to or immediately after the occurrence)

- (a) Remarks about the physical attributes or development of anyone.
- (b) Excessive attention toward a particular student.
- (c) Sending emails, text messages or letters to students if the content is not about school activities.

Acceptable and Recommended Staff/Student Behaviors

- (a) Getting parents' written consent for any after-school activity.
- (b) Obtaining formal approval to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions.
- (c) Emails, text, phone and instant messages to students must be very professional and pertaining to school activities or classes (Communication should be limited to school technology).
- (d) Keeping the door open when alone with a student.
- (e) Keeping reasonable space between you and your students.
- (f) Stopping and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries.
- (g) Keeping parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student.
- (h) Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief.
- (i) Asking for advice from fellow staff or administrators if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries.
- (j) Involving your supervisor if conflict arises with the student.
- (k) Informing the Principal about situations that have the potential to become more severe.
- (l) Making detailed notes about an incident that could evolve into a more serious situation later.
- (m) Recognizing the responsibility to stop unacceptable behavior of students or coworkers.
- (n) Asking another staff member to be present if you will be alone with any type of special needs student.
- (o) Asking another staff member to be present when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours.
- (p) Giving students praise and recognition without touching them.
- (q) Pats on the back, high fives and handshakes are acceptable.
- (r) Keeping your professional conduct a high priority.
- (s) Asking yourself if your actions are worth your job and career.

FERPA Notice

A cumulative record, whether recorded by handwriting, print, tapes, film, microfilm or other means, must be maintained on the history of a pupil's development and educational progress. Equitas Academy will protect the privacy of such records. Parents/guardians have the right to 1) inspect and review the student's educational record maintained by the school, 2) request that the school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading, and 3) have some control over the disclosure of information from educational records. School officials with legitimate educational interests may access student records without parental consent as long as the official needs to review the records in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request from officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, Equitas Academy shall disclose educational records without parental consent. Equitas Academy shall not release information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order. "Directory Information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The Charter School may disclose the personally identifiable information that it has designated as directory information without a parent's or eligible student's prior written consent.

Parents' request to access their student's educational records must be submitted in a written form to and the school will have five (5) business days from the day of receipt of the request to provide access to the records. Any challenge to school records must be submitted in writing to the School Director. A parent challenging school records must show that the records are 1) inaccurate, 2) an unsubstantiated personal conclusion or inference, 3) a conclusion or inference outside the observer's area of competence, 4) not based on the personal observation of a named person with the time and place of the observation noted, 5) misleading, or 6) in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student. Parents have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning an alleged failure by the District to comply with the provisions of the United States Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) by writing to: Family Policy Compliance:

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

A copy of the complete Policy is available upon request at the main office.

Uniform Complaint Policy for Parents and Students

A complaint under the Uniform Complaint Procedures is a written and signed statement by an individual, public agency, or organization alleging a violation of enumerated federal or state laws governing educational programs, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and failure to comply with laws relating to pupil fees and the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

The Uniform Complaint Procedures apply to the filing, investigation and resolution of complaints regarding alleged:

- 1) failure to comply with federal or state law or regulations governing adult education, Every Student Succeeds Act, consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, vocational education, child care and developmental programs, child nutrition programs, education of students in foster care, students who are homeless, former juvenile court students now enrolled in a public school, migratory children and children of military families, school safety plans, and special education programs;
- 2) unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group on the basis of the actual or perceived characteristics of age, ancestry, color, mental disability, physical disability, ethnic group identification, immigration status, citizenship, gender expression, gender identity, gender, genetic information, nationality, national origin, race or ethnicity, religion, medical condition, marital status, sex, or sexual orientation, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any Charter School program or activity.;

- 3) unlawful imposition of pupil fees for participation in educational activities in public schools; and
- 4) failure to comply with the requirements established through the Local Control Funding Formula related to the Local Control and Accountability Plan as described in Education Code Sections 52060 through 52076 or Sections 47606.5 and 47607.3, as applicable.
- 5) Failure to carry out responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) including any investigation of any complaint filed with Equitas Academy alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws.

A complaint must be filed no later than six months from the date the complainant first obtains knowledge of the concern. These uniform procedures require the complainant to submit a written complaint to Maggie Ford, Chief Operating Officer, who will coordinate an investigation and response within 60 calendar days of receipt of the written complaint, unless the complainant agrees in writing to extend the time line. If Equitas Academy finds merit in a complaint, Equitas Academy shall provide a remedy to all affected pupils, parents/guardians. A complainant may appeal Equitas Academy's decision to the California Department of Education (CDE) by filing a written appeal within 30 days after receiving Equitas Academy's decision. The CDE may directly intervene in the complaint without waiting for action by the charter school when one of the conditions listed in Section 4650 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations exists, including cases in which Equitas Academy has not taken action within 60 days of the date the complaint was filed with the charter school. If Equitas Academy is found to have violated a state or federal law and/or regulation, and does not take corrective action to comply, then various civil remedies may be available. Contact the School Director for additional information or assistance or for a copy of the full Uniform Complaint Procedures Policy.

General Complaint Policy and Procedures for Parents and Students

Equitas Academy takes seriously all concerns or complaints by students, parents, employees or other persons. Not all complaints fall under the scope of the Uniform Complaint Procedures as described above. Concerns related to classroom assignments, Common Core, State Standards, grades, graduation requirements, hiring and evaluation of staff, homework policies and practices, provision of core curricula subjects, public meeting laws (such as the Brown Act), student advancement and retention, student discipline, students' records, and other general education requirements should be expressed as general complaints directly to the school in accordance to the following procedures.

While written complaints are encouraged, a complaint may be made orally. Any employee receiving a complaint will advise the School Director or immediate supervisor of the receipt of the complaint. The supervisor will make an initial determination of the appropriate action to address the complaint and whether the matter should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer or Chief Academic Officer.

The following guidelines will be followed whenever a complaint or concern is voiced. The goal should be to resolve the conflict at the lowest intervention level possible, but do not hesitate to follow the entire process if necessary. Parents and staff are strongly encouraged to maintain open lines of communication. The procedures below have been established for the purpose of maintaining lines of communication between the school, parents/guardians and students for the resolution of concerns related to the education program.

Respectful communication is expected between all parties. If at any time the meetings become confrontational, they will be rescheduled.

STEP 1: STAFF/STUDENT

The student and teacher will meet to discuss the issue. The goal of this meeting is to bring closure to the concern. This meeting should occur within five days of the incident.

STEP 2: STAFF/STUDENT/PARENT

The parent and student should schedule a meeting with the teacher within five school days of the incident or within five days of the initial meeting between the teacher and student. Meeting time must be convenient to both parties. The meeting agenda should be limited to the initial issue. Staff may request administrative presence at the meeting, but the staff member will run the session and provide a detailed summary for the administrator.

STEP 3: STAFF/STUDENT PARENT/ADMINISTRATOR

If no closure is obtained at the meeting, the teacher shall create a written summary of the meeting within five school days for review by the administrator. If the parent requests a meeting with the administrator, a written summary of the parent/teacher meeting should be provided. The administrator will establish a meeting with the student, parent and teacher. After the meeting, the administrator will make a ruling on the issue and shall share the findings and solution strategy with the family and teacher.

STEP 4: PARENT/DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

If the established ruling/strategy is still unacceptable, the family may then meet with the appropriate Equitas administrator as determined above.

COVID-19

Please note that due to COVID-19, our policies may change at any time. This may include, but is not limited to, not allowing visitors on campus, limiting the number of persons that are allowed on campus at one time, instituting safety measures such as temperature checks, and any changes in scheduling or procedures listed in this document or as outlined at each school site. Please know that we are committed to continued operational excellence and the high standards of cleanliness that our schools are accustomed to in an effort to keep all of our staff and scholars safe at all times.

School Contact

If you have any further questions on any of the policies listed, please feel free to contact your scholar's school. Please feel free to also visit our website at equitasacademy.org under the "transparency" tab for more information on our policies and links to the LCAP for each school site. The phone numbers are listed below for each school site should you have any specific questions or immediate needs:

EQ – 213-201-0440
EQ2 – 213-201-5940
EQ3 – 213-204-0344
EQ4 – 213-201-5934
EQ5 – 213-201-5936
EQ6 – 213-201-5936

Student Grade:

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EQUITAS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL
STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK AND AGREEMENT**

Parents/Guardians must sign this notification form and return it to their children’s schools acknowledging that they have been informed of their rights. Please read the Student & Family Handbook and return the signed form below to the school. Your signature does not constitute consent to take part in any particular program.

I acknowledge I have received a copy, reviewed and understand the Equitas Academy Charter School Student & Family Handbook. I understand the Handbook has provided me for information on policies, procedures and practices.

I acknowledge I will follow the policies, procedures and practices to the best of my abilities in order to be a partner in my child’s education at Equitas Academy Charter School.

Parent Signature

Date

Print or Type Name

Print or Type Student Name

INFORMATION RELEASE FORM

Under Federal and State law, school districts may share student directory information with authorized individuals, organizations and/or officials. Equitas Academy has identified the categories of information listed below as directory information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone Number
- Date of Birth
- Dates of Attendance
- Previous Schools

This Directory Information may be released to:

- Department of Health
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Department of Mental Health
- Probation Department
- Elected Officials
- California Charter Schools Association

Parents of students 17 years or younger and adult students 18 years or older may request the School Director limit the release of directory information or not release directory information at all. The request to withhold the student directory information is applicable only to the current school year.

PLEASE READ AND COMPLETE THE INFORMATION RELEASE BELOW AND RETURN IT TO YOUR SCHOOL'S FRONT OFFICE. UNLESS THIS FORM IS RETURNED, YOUR STUDENT'S INFORMATION MAY BE RELEASED AS INDICATED.

STUDENT DIRECTORY RELEASE OF INFORMATION

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I do not wish to have any directory information released to the organizations listed.

SCHOOL NAME: _____ DATE: _____
STUDENT NAME: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____
GRADE: _____