



**Parent & Student Handbook  
2023-2024 Academic Year**



## Table Contents

---

<b>Letter from the Principal</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>THE SUCCESS OF THE PUENTE</b>	<b>6</b>
The PUENTE Mission	6
PUENTE Charter School	6
Administration Personnel Contact List	7
<b>2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b>	<b>9</b>
Admissions	9
Attendance	11
Uniform - Dress Code	15
Education Equity: Citizenship, Immigration Status, or Religious Beliefs	15
Education of Foster Children/Youth	16
Education of Homelessness Children/Youth	16
Education of Students with Disabilities Under Section 504	17
Education of Students with Disabilities and Special Education	17
Educational Equity: Government Instruction Conferences EC 244	18
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	18
Food Services	20
Student Lunches from Home	21
Media Release and Consent Agreement	21
Non-Discrimination Statement	21
Personal Property	22
Student Cumulative File	23
Title IX	23
Tobacco-free Campus	23
Williams Complaint Policy & Procedure EC 35186	23
Visitor Policy	24
<b>ACADEMIC PROGRAM</b>	<b>24</b>
Curricula Overview	24
English Learners	25
Progress Reports	25
Special Education Services	26
Student Assessments	27
Student Retention	27
Student Success Team ( SST)	28
Think Together After School Program (Expanded Learning Opportunities Program)	29
Acceptable Use of Technology	29
<b>STUDENT CONDUCT</b>	<b>30</b>
Discipline	30
Harassment and Bullying	31

Inappropriate Behavior	31
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS/Restorative Justice)	32
School Bus Safety	32
Suspension and Expulsion	32
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>36</b>
Camera Surveillance on School Property	36
Child Abuse Reporting	36
Emergency Card	37
Emergency Preparedness	37
Emergency Response	37
Entrance Health Screening	38
Epinephrine Auto-Injectors	38
Gun-Free Safe Schools	38
Health Care Coverage EC 49452.9	38
Illness or Injury at School or School Activity	39
Lice Policy	39
Medication at School Annual Notice	39
Medication at School (Administration Policy)	40
Mental Health EC 49428	41
Physical Examination	41
Social-Emotional Services (SEL)	41
Student ID	42
Suicide Prevention and Intervention	42
Vision and Hearing Screenings	45
<b>PARENT AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>45</b>
Communication	45
Parent Involvement & Committees	46
Parent Participation in School Meetings and Conferences LC 230.8	47
Parent Volunteer Policy	48
Rights of Parents and Guardians to Information	48
Parent Complaint Resolution Procedure	49
Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP)	50
<b>PUENTE CHARTER SCHOOL FORMS Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP)</b>	<b>53</b>

## Letter from the Principal

Welcome students and families of PUENTE Charter School!

The staff and I are eager to welcome our students for what promises to be a very productive school year for all. Our hope is that the partnership you develop with your child(ren)'s teachers and the school will reflect a positive feeling about education and will be a pleasurable experience for everyone.

One of the things that brought me to PUENTE Charter School is the mission, **People United to Enrich the Neighborhood Through Education**. PUENTE not only educates elementary aged students, but also their teenage siblings through the College and Career Program. There are also courses for adults such as ESL, Technology and Citizenship. While young students are in classes, their parents are taking classes as well, all under the same roof. At PUENTE, we are educating the future leaders of America and their families.

This 2023-2024 school year we will grow our student population to include 5th grade. We have worked hard over the summer upgrading and preparing our facility for this cohort. PUENTE Charter School welcomes several new staff and have some staff changes in roles and/or positions. We are excited to see what successes this year holds for our new staff!

PUENTE Charter School recognizes that the parent is the primary educator of the student. You are the most essential part of your children's education and it is important that we build a strong relationship in order to best serve your children's educational needs. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to be an active participant in your child's education by attending Parent-Teacher conferences and various activities and meetings scheduled throughout the school year.

We hope this handbook helps to answer any questions you may have. We want to ensure that you and your family understand the procedures and policies in place at PUENTE Charter School that help us to provide consistency and safety, as well as a well-balanced education for your child(ren). If you have other questions, please call the school and we will be happy to assist you in any way that we can. Please sign and return the last page of this handbook to acknowledge that you have read and discussed this handbook with your child(ren).

Your support will go a long way in helping make this a successful school year!

Ms. Meza  
Principal

## THE SUCCESS OF THE PUENTE

### The PUENTE Mission

PUENTE Charter School is part of our larger nonprofit organization, PUENTE Learning Center (PLC). An established nonprofit presence in the East Los Angeles community for over 33 years, PUENTE is recognized for its commitment to its mission: **People United to Enrich the Neighborhood Through Education**. Beginning in Boyle Heights as a tutoring program for elementary school students who needed remedial support to succeed at grade level, PUENTE's rapid expansion occurred when parents requested English as a Second Language classes to better empower themselves as their child's first teacher. This dialogue with the community continued and has resulted in the offering of comprehensive educational support services for children, youth, and adults, all offered in our wholly-owned and intentionally designed 40,000 square foot facility. The state-of-the-art design incorporates the research-based evidence of the components of effective, dignified learning spaces for a highly engaged student experience and desired academic outcomes, and is intended to respectfully welcome and inspire our vibrant, culturally rich community in a manner in which educational pursuit deserves.

PUENTE holds the distinction of establishing the first charter school in Boyle Heights. A Charter School is a public school that is given operational autonomy in exchange for being held highly accountable to the eight state priorities of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and documented in the school's charter petition, which is approved by the local school district - the Los Angeles Unified School District. PUENTE was first authorized in 2002 and has successfully renewed its charter three times, the latest including a revision to expand to fifth grade.

In 2018, the Los Angeles Unified School District approved PUENTE Charter School for expansion to serve grades TK-5. The school is utilizing a phased slow-growth rollout, expanding by one new grade level each year. During the academic year 2018-19, PUENTE Charter School welcomed its inaugural first-grade class in newly-constructed classrooms on the ground floor.

---

### PUENTE Charter School

PUENTE Charter is proud to offer the community of learners an intentionally designed dedicated Children's Wing that incorporates literacy workstations and technology enhancements for an experiential and participatory learning program. As educators we understand that students learn in different ways, so we offer rich and differentiated learning opportunities. Using all five senses provides an appropriate scaffolding approach as students build high-level academic content knowledge, skills and language. PUENTE's use implementation of differentiated groupings and use of classroom strategies supports the multiple opportunities for students to express that understanding - - through the visual arts (hands-on project-based learning, mural and collage-making, realia) and the performing arts (music, creative dance and drama). Students also participate in the designing, engineering and presentation of projects that connect to our theme-based learning. Through these peer-based projects, students are able to apply their content and skill knowledge in purposeful and meaningful ways. Parent feedback concerning the respectful and dignified school design and curriculum resources confirms this value-add component of PUENTE. Parent satisfaction with the facility environment yields a consistent 98% "extremely satisfied" response rate during the term of the charter.

To promote meeting the needs of all students, the use of effective, research-based class management procedures to embed appropriate depth and complexity to the Common Core State Standards provide the ability for the instructional staff to meet students at their mastery level, including advanced, and allocate the resource support accordingly. For example, implementing work centers provides the ability to cluster, and have flexible student groupings, and teaching to the zone of proximal development. The option to strengthen student momentum and reinforce anchor activities with additional take homework is utilized regularly by the instructional team.

PUENTE Charter School students and families receive a high-quality education that integrates the arts, math, and science (including engineering) into all disciplines. Carl Sagan stated, "All children are born natural scientists." The primary role of our PUENTE instructional and administrative team members is to leverage this curiosity into a continued love for learning. When planning curriculum, our teachers use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and California State Common Core Standards (CCSS) as the learning goals, yet are responsive to students' questions, ideas, and interests. We believe that planning and instruction should be integrated and interdisciplinary, as these approaches lend themselves to more meaningful, in-depth, and

engaged learning. Our classroom environments are designed to foster 21st-century skills - -critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration, and to help students feel safe so that they can be inquisitive learners.

Our culturally relevant learning environment respects and celebrates our diverse representation of students and is a key component of the strength's perspective of our school culture. Our service to our Latino families offers us the opportunity to ensure family communications are accessible in English and Spanish. Our students' and families' bilingual capacities are affirmed as assets to the school community. Our inclusive embracing of our families' rich identities is a guiding principle of our school operations and is expressed through our available parent education supports.

Our intentional emphasis on quality parent/caregiver engagement in support of a strong home-to-school connection serves to honor parents' role as "first teacher" and to responsibly initiate parents into the school system. With the extension of tools, resources, and an "open" school environment, the promotion of parent advocacy for the rights of their child and themselves is encouraged and supported.

With the standards-based, Common Core-aligned curriculum focusing on the core skills and content area knowledge, and the building of critical-thinking skills that students need to excel, PUENTE Charter School personalizes the learning for each student and family in recognition of their existing strengths and is the full expression of our belief that every child can succeed regardless of perceived obstacles.

Classes are offered at the PUENTE campus at 501 S. Boyle Avenue in Boyle Heights, the state-of-the-art facility, built to stringent seismic code and safety specifications, features modern classrooms; fully networked computer labs/stations; children's lavatories; and access to a multi-purpose room and indoor food court. The facilities also feature a recently installed outdoor playground.

**School Directory Information**

PUENTE Charter School Address	501 S. Boyle Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90033
PUENTE Charter School Phone Number	323.780.2961
LAUSD Board District location	2
LAUSD Local District location	East
PUENTE Charter School grade configuration	TK – 5th Grade
2023-2024 grade levels	TK, Kinder, 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grades
2023-2024 instructional calendar	Traditional – 180 Instructional days

**Administration Personnel Contact List**

There are key staff members to provide support with your family questions and concerns throughout the school year.

Name	Title	Email
Marylee Puga	Administrative Assistant	<a href="mailto:Marylee@puente.org">Marylee@puente.org</a>
Gabriela Hernández	Operations Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Gabriela@puente.org">Gabriela@puente.org</a>
Diana Juarez	Vice Principal	<a href="mailto:Diana@puente.org">Diana@puente.org</a>
Brenda Meza	Principal	<a href="mailto:Brenda@puente.org">Brenda@puente.org</a>

## 2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

The school calendar contains the first and last days of school, holidays, pupil-free days, and early dismissals throughout the year. We will maintain the same academic calendar as it relates to the first and last days of schools, holidays, and pupil-free days to the best of our ability. If minimum or pupil-free staff development days are scheduled after the start of the school year, the school will notify parents and guardians of affected pupils as early as possible. PUENTE Charter School's 2023-2024 academic school year will begin Monday, August 14, 2023 and will end on Thursday, June 6, 2024.

### School Calendar

July   Julio						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August   Agosto						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September   Septiembre						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October   Octubre						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November   Noviembre						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December   Diciembre						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January   Enero						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February   Febrero						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March   Marzo						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April   Abril						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May   Mayo						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June   Junio						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

### Instructional/Event Day Color Key\* Clave de color del Día de Instrucción/ Eventos\*

<span style="background-color: #f4a460; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Summer School (ELOP) Escuela de Verano (ELOP)	<span style="background-color: #0070c0; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> PUENTE Charter School Parent Event Evento de Padres de PUENTE Charter School
<span style="background-color: #92d050; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> No classes: Holiday or Pupil Free Day No Clases: Días festivos o Día para Estudiantes	<span style="background-color: #cccccc; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> PUENTE Learning Center Event Evento de PUENTE Learning Center
<span style="background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Instructional Day Día de Instrucción	<span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span> Parent Conferences Conferencias de Padres

\*Events are subject to change for updated information please consult ParentSquare. \*Los eventos están sujetos a cambios para obtener información actualizada, consulte ParentSquare.



## Daily Schedule

The daily schedule for PUENTE Charter School is as follows:

Monday–Thursday 7:45 a.m.–2:45 p.m.

Friday (early dismissal) 7:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

## Minimum & Pupil-free Staff Development Days – EC 48980(c)

The school calendars are included with this annual notification. If minimum or pupil-free staff development days are scheduled after the start of the school year, the school will notify parents and guardians of affected pupils as early as possible, with at least one-month advance notice.

---

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Admissions

PUENTE Charter School is, and has always been, and will continue to be an open enrollment, tuition-free public school with no specific requirements for admission (e.g., test scores, discipline records, aptitude assessment, etc.). Enrollment to our school is open to any resident of the State of California. At all times, PUENTE is diligently committed to serving all students who wish to attend, regardless of race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, academic achievement, special education needs, or homeless.

Our outreach efforts include social media, bilingual Spanish and English flyers and postings in our community, active involvement of current families – our “each one, reach one” campaign, outreach to collaborative and partner organizations, community-based non-profits and businesses, and our annual Family Festival.

### Application Form

Applications for admission to PUENTE are accepted during a specified enrollment period in the month of February or March. Families who apply after the lottery deadline are added to the end of the lottery waitlist in the order they are received. Vacancies that occur during the school year will be filled according to the waitlist order determined during the lottery drawing.

### Lottery Preferences

Students currently enrolled are exempt from the lottery. In the event of a public random drawing, admission preferences shall be given in the following order pursuant to Ed. Code §47605(d)(2)(B). Students will be enrolled by grade level applying the following priorities that ensure families are kept together at the same school.

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students (e.g., sibling preference)
2. Offspring of current instructional staff) to recruit and retain high quality staff (e.g., teacher and staff preference), not to exceed 10%.
3. As required by state law, preference will be given to pupils that reside within the LAUSD attendance area.

Preferences are only granted to applicants that apply within the open enrollment window. If an application is received after the application deadline, no preferences will be considered.

### Lottery Procedures

If the number of applications received during the open enrollment period exceeds PUENTE's capacity at any grade level we serve, attendance will be determined by a public, random drawing. Lottery procedures will be fairly executed and will be overseen by PUENTE's principal to ensure that they are accurately followed.

The lottery will take place at PUENTE Charter School on a date publicized to applicants, at a time convenient for families to attend – evening hours. We use contact information to call, email, and mail information to applicants. Families need not attend the lottery to claim their child's enrollment space. Once the open enrollment period ends, the lottery will take place 14 days later. Parents/caregivers

will be notified by a PUENTE Charter School staff member by telephone of their child's admission or waitlist status immediately following the lottery.

All parents/caregivers of students admitted through the lottery will be asked to complete the Enrollment Forms within two weeks of their immediate notification by PUENTE Charter School staff by phone to ensure their child's enrollment. PUENTE staff is always available to assist families in completing this paperwork, if needed.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be placed on a waiting list according to their draw in the lottery. Parents/caregivers of the students who are on our waitlist, if one were required, will be notified of their child's status in a mailed written communication by the Principal. Waitlist families will be notified, in order, by phone of an available seat and will be requested to complete an Enrollment Form within 48 hours (2 days) of the phone notification.

In the event that a waitlist is not needed, where the student space is available, the student space will be made available immediately on a first-come, first-served basis to our next interested family at the appropriate grade level.

## **Enrollment**

After a student is admitted, PUENTE welcomes any parent/caregiver to complete and submit an Application for Admissions a part of the enrollment process consisting of:

- Completed Enrollment Packet
- Proof of minimum age requirements (Birth certificate)
- Immunization Record
- Parent/Guardian Identification Card
- Proof of residency
- If applicable:
  - Release of student records
  - Transcripts or recent grade reports
  - Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan
  - Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) 1399 Form or minute order
  - Court orders regarding legal/physical custody or restricted contact with school or child.

PUENTE Charter School will provide affidavits as an alternative documentation for any missing but required documents.

## **Oral Health Assessment EC 49452.8 (K-8)**

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 31<sup>st</sup> of the pupil's first school year.

## **Immunizations**

Students must be immunized against certain communicable diseases. Students are prohibited from attending school unless immunization requirements are met for age and grade. PUENTE Charter school shall cooperate with local health officials in measures necessary for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in school age children.

Beginning January 1, 2016, parents of students in any school will 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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.

State law requires the following immunizations before a child may attend school:

- All new students, in transitional kindergarten through grade 12, to the Los Angeles Unified School District must provide proof of polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and mumps, rubella, and varicella immunizations.
- All transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students must also provide proof of vaccination against hepatitis B.

Free- or low-cost immunizations for children please call 1-800-427-8700 or 211 for information.

Information about a medical exemption or personal beliefs exemption from immunizations for your student is available at CAIR ME. For more information on medical exemptions, please visit the following website: <https://cair.cdph.ca.gov/exemptions/home>.

---

## **Attendance**

We view every day as an essential learning opportunity as all school activities are important for every child's educational and social development. Regular attendance is a critical component for success in school and a federal requirement. We need your support in bringing your child to school every day.

Missing school regularly is not only detrimental to a child's learning but can impede the development of positive learning habits. Often, students miss school days due to doctor's appointments, vacations, or during times when they are not really sick. Please only schedule appointments and vacations around the academic school calendar. Notify our school registrar if your child suffers from a chronic health condition and how this may impact your child's attendance.

Daily classroom activities are customarily the most vital and significant aspect of the instructional program. Therefore, excessive absences and tardies may result in gaps in learning and result in the lowering of the grade assigned. While attendance in class may be used as a factor in determining a student's overall performance and attendance, attendance may not be used as part of a rigid or automatic formula for issuing a failing grade (e.g., schools may not designate a set number of tardies or absences that result in the automatic lowering of a grade or loss of class credit) Education Code 48205.

Additionally, punctuality is equally as important. When children arrive after the morning has started, it detracts from the learning environment, often causing a classroom disruption. Furthermore, it can impact the student who is late by missing important class instructions or morning meetings which is a time for students to build community and make connections.

## **Support Outstanding School Attendance**

Support outstanding attendance at home by:

- Developing morning and evening routines with your child.
- Ensuring that your child gets enough sleep each day and a nutritious breakfast.
- Create a backup plan for getting to and from school.
- Teaching the benefits of good attendance and consequences of poor attendance.
- Helping your child to develop a positive school attitude by encouraging your child to participate in school activities.

## **Tardiness Procedures and Punctuality**

Children should be encouraged to be prompt as part of developing good habits. They are expected to be at school on time. If a child is late, the child should bring an excuse from home to the school office. A student will be classified as truant if they are tardy or absent for more than a 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year.

## **Attendance Policy**

The California Education Code 48200 states that “each person between the ages of 6 to 18 years not exempted is subject to compulsory full-time education. The maximum number of excused absences allowed in a school year is 10 days. Students who are absent without a valid excuse on three occasions or more are truant and will be reported to the attendance supervisor or the superintendent of the school district.”

**Tardiness EC 48260 (a)** Children should be encouraged to be prompt as part of developing good habits. They are expected to be at school on time. If a child is late, the child should bring an excuse from home to the school office. A student will be classified as truant if they are tardy or absent for more than a 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year. (Tardiness: EC 48260(a))

**Tuancy EC 48260, 48262 and 48263.6:** A student is considered truant after three absences or three tardies of more than 30 minutes each time or any combination thereof and the absences or tardies are unexcused. After a student has been reported as a truant three or more times in a school year and the district has made a conscientious effort to meet with the family, the student is considered a habitual truant. A student who is absent from school without a valid excuse for 10% or more of the schooldays in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date, is considered a chronic truant. Unexcused absences are all absences that do not fall within EC 48205.

**Chronic Absenteeism EC 60901** A student is considered a chronic absentee when he/she is absent on 10% or more of the school days in one school year, from the date of enrollment to the current date. Chronic absenteeism includes all absences – excused and unexcused – and is an important measure because excessive absences negatively impact academic achievement and student engagement.

**Inactive Status:** After ten (10) school days of consecutive unexcused absences with no response to phone calls, certified letters, home visits, or the SART process, a scholar will be placed on inactive status, withdrawn from school, and records will reflect that the scholar voluntarily withdrew from school. Scholars who are inactive are no longer part of the school’s enrollment count. Any scholar who becomes inactive can return to the school after following the school’s waiting list procedures, if applicable.

## **Absence Procedures**

1. The school will maintain a day-by-day record of each student’s attendance. Awards will be provided each month for students with perfect attendance.
2. You will receive a robo call from the Charter School Office at 9:00 am to confirm the absence.
3. The reason for the absence should be documented, in writing, by the parent or guardian within 48 hours of the student’s return to school. Please ensure the note includes the student’s name, date(s) of absence and reason for absence.
  - If a note has not been received, the parent will be asked to fill out a form.
  - We ask that students who were absent from school due to medical, dental, optometry, or chiropractic appointments submit a verified note signed by their physician.

## **Excused Absences**

When the student returns to school, the parent must provide the school’s main office with a note to explain the specific reason for the absence. Please note that an absence is not automatically excused because a parent provides written documentation as to why the student was absent from school.

Excused absences will be granted for the following reasons (Education Code 48205):

1. Due to the pupil's illness, including an absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health. The state board shall update its illness verification regulations, as necessary, to account for including a pupil's absence for the benefit of the pupil's mental or behavioral health within the scope of this paragraph.
2. Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
  - Please provide a doctor's note of absences and return to school clearance.
3. For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometrical, or chiropractic services rendered.
  - Please provide a doctor's note of absences and return to school clearance.
4. Death of an immediate family member. Funeral services and/or bereavement of a member of the pupil's immediate family
  - 1 day in California
  - 3 days outside of 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 the pupil's religion, attendance at a religious retreat, 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 of the school district.
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 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 school district.
10. For the purpose of attending the pupil's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.
11. For the purpose of participating in a cultural ceremony or event.
12. Authorized at the discretion of a school administrator, as described in subdivision (c) of Section 48260.
  - (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) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:
    - (1) "Cultural" means relating to the habits, practices, beliefs, and traditions of a certain group of people.
    - (2) "Immediate family" means the parent or guardian, brother or sister, grandparent, or any other relative living in the household of the pupil.

The school may respectfully disagree regarding the legitimacy of an absence when weighed against the benefits of attendance, however, the final decision rests with the Student Attendance Review Team (SART) that will refer to the rubric listed above. The SART team may consider extenuating and extraordinary circumstances.

### **Medical Absences and Accommodations**

Certification of an absence by a doctor when students have been absent for an extended period of time (3+ consecutive absences) is required. If your child requires crutches, casts, or splint, you must send in a doctor's note that states the limitations of your child's physical activities. This may include but is not limited to participate during physical activities and/or requires any accommodations.

### **Unexcused Absences**

When the school does not receive appropriate documentation within 72 hours of the absence, the absence will be labeled as an unexcused absence. Examples of unacceptable excuses for absences and/or tardies include:

1. Unverified absence (e.g., absence note that lists reason as “personal”)
2. Absence due to taking an early/extended vacation
3. A tardy of 30+ minutes

### Interventions for Addressing Chronic Absenteeism

School Attendance Review Team (SARTs) are established at local school sites to identify and intervene on behalf of students who exhibit problems with attendance pursuant to California Compulsory Attendance Laws (EC 48200). The goal is to address the barriers preventing regular school attendance at an early stage before the situation escalates and identify possible solutions to improve and support the students' attendance. SART is composed of the Principal, child's teacher, Vice Principal, school designee, parent, and in some cases, the student. For each determination of truancy for a student, notification of the truancy shall be sent to the parent or guardian by mail or another reasonable means. PUENTE will make every effort to notify parents of poor attendance and/or punctuality patterns.

Intervention Tier	Attendance Count	Interventions
<b>At-Risk</b> Students approaching chronic absenteeism (CA)	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Personalized phone calls made by the teacher and/or registrar</li> <li>● At-Risk - Attendance Letter sent home by the registrar</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 1</b> Students at CA	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tier 1 - Attendance Letter sent home by the registrar</li> <li>● Referral to Vice Principal for parent conference</li> <li>● At this time the school will hold a meeting with the parent/guardian to review and outline our school attendance policy. We would like to understand the barriers to your child's attendance so we can work together to make sure your child is in class and learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 2</b> Students still CA after Tier 1 interventions	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tier 2 - Attendance Letter sent home by the registrar</li> <li>● Referral to Principal for parent conference with School Attendance Review Team (SART)</li> <li>● At this time the school will hold a SART meeting during which the committee will formalize a signed contract with the student and the parent/guardian to address the absenteeism and/or punctuality problem and work with the family to provide support so that the student arrives to class on time. The contract is an agreement to improve punctuality.</li> <li>● In the event the parent/guardian does not attend the SART meeting, there will be an attempt to reschedule the meeting with the parent. If the rescheduled meeting is not attended, the parent will receive a Non-Attendance Letter and will be used as documentation of failure to attend a rescheduled SART meeting.</li> <li>● Home Visits if unable to schedule a parent conference or no response from the parent</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 3</b> Students still CA after Tier 2 interventions	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tier 3 - Attendance Letter sent home by the registrar</li> <li>● Referral to DCFS / Police Wellness Check</li> </ul>

## **Compulsory Education:**

Compulsory Education law states that students must enroll in school in the school district in which the residence of either the parent or legal guardian is located. If a parent is seeking a change in a public district outside of the resident district, then an interdistrict permit is required. Exceptions are for charter school, home school or other private school enrollments, and other online charter school options.

---

## **Uniform - Dress Code**

The goal of PUENTE Charter School is to prepare our students for high school, college and the professional world beyond elementary school. Our dress code policy is designed to ensure that students are clean, neat, and age-appropriately dressed from head to toe. PUENTE Charter School students are expected to abide by a dress code.

The uniform attire consists of the following:

Tops: White or navy blue polo shirt or blouse

Bottoms: Jeans or navy blue jumper, skirt, pants or shorts.

Physical Education (PE) Uniform (Tuesday's or Thursday's):

Tops: Gray shirt

Bottoms: Royal or navy blue shorts

Shoes:

Appropriate school shoes, no sandals or opened-toed shoes.

## **Change of Clothes**

Please make sure your child (TK/K grade levels) brings a change of clothes on the first day of school and maintains a change of clothes on-site throughout the school year. The change of clothes does not have to be the school uniform. We would like to ensure that we always have an extra set of clothes on hand in case of an accident or spill.

---

## **Education Equity: Citizenship, Immigration Status, or Religious Beliefs**

Children have a right to a free public education regardless of immigration or citizenship status or religious beliefs.

PUENTE Charter School personnel shall not inquire specifically about a student's citizenship or immigration status or the citizenship or immigration status of a student's parents or guardians; nor shall personnel seek or require, to the exclusion of other permissible documentation or information, documentation or information that may indicate a student's immigration status, such as a green card, voter registration, a passport, or citizenship papers. Where any law contemplates submission of national origin related information to satisfy the requirements of a special program, PUENTE Charter School personnel shall solicit that documentation or information separately from the school enrollment process. PUENTE Charter School will not release information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order.

Parents have the option to provide a school with emergency contact information, including secondary contacts, to identify a trusted adult who can care for a minor student in the event the parent is detained or deported. Parents have the option to complete Caregiver's Authorization Affidavits or other documents which may enable a trusted adult with authority to make educational and medical decisions for a minor student. Students have the right to report a hate crime or file a complaint if they are discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, or bullied on the basis of actual or perceived nationality, ethnicity, or immigration status. See section regarding Uniform Complaint Procedures for more information. The California Attorney General's website provides "know your rights" resources for immigrant students and family members at <https://oag.ca.gov/immigrant/rights>.

---

## **Education of Foster Children/Youth**

Children supervised by the Department of Children and Family Services or Department of Probation (in certain circumstances) and placed in licensed foster homes, short term residential therapeutic programs (STRP) (formerly referred to as group homes), with relative caretakers, or residing with biological parent(s) have special enrollment provisions. Education Code Section 48853.5 mandates that students in foster care must be immediately enrolled in school regardless of the availability of school records, immunization records, school uniforms, or the existence of fines from a previous school. Educators, school personnel, social workers, probation officers, caregivers, and other interested parties shall all work together to serve the educational needs of students living in foster care. Education Code Section 48853.5 allows students in foster care to attend their school of origin and, if applicable, matriculate to the secondary school in the same attendance area even when the child is placed with a family who resides in a different attendance area. The school district serving the student in foster care shall allow the youth to continue their education in the school of origin for the duration of the jurisdiction of the court. If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated prior to the end of an academic year, the student in foster care shall be allowed to continue their education in the school of origin for the duration of the academic school year.

The PUENTE Charter School homeless liaison Gabriela Hernández, can be reached at 323-780-2961 or via email at [Gabriela@puente.org](mailto:Gabriela@puente.org).

---

## **Education of Homelessness Children/Youth**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for Homeless Children and Youth entitles all school-aged children experiencing homelessness to access the same free and appropriate public education that is provided to students who have permanent housing. A student experiencing homelessness is defined as an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and may:

- Live in an emergency or transitional shelter;
- Live in substandard housing, car, garage, or other place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Live in another family's house or apartment due to a loss of housing or as a result of economic hardship (doubled-up);
- Live in a hotel or motel;
- Live temporarily in a trailer/R.V./motorhome or campsite;
- Live temporarily with an adult who is not their parent/guardian.

Students experiencing homelessness are identified through the Student Housing Questionnaire (SHQ), which is a required form in every enrollment packet and distributed annually to all families. Parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth can self-identify their current living situation on the Student Housing Questionnaire. Each school is required to have a Designated School Site Homeless Liaison who will follow up with the student/family. PUENTE Charter School homeless liaison, Gabriela Hernández, can be reached at 323-780-2961 or via email at [gabriela@puente.org](mailto:gabriela@puente.org). Self-identification may occur throughout the school year at our school site or directly with our homeless liaison.

Students who are permanently housed and students experiencing homelessness are expected to attend school regularly. However, students who are experiencing homelessness have federal rights and enrollment protections to promote school stability. Students experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth have the right to attend:

- The school at which the youth was last enrolled (school of origin);
- The school of residence;
- Any other school the student attended in the last 15 months to which they have a connection (school of origin);
- The school of origin's established feeder pattern. For example, the student can transition from their elementary school to the feeder middle school and from their middle school to the feeder high school with their peers, even if they no longer live within the attendance boundaries of those schools).

At the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, PUENTE Charter School shall ensure that transportation is provided, as appropriate and feasible, to and from the school of origin.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Los Angeles Unified policy requires immediate enrollment. Schools cannot delay or prevent the enrollment of a student who is experiencing homelessness due to the lack of immunization or school records, such as an



Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), 504 Plan or transcripts. To expedite enrollment, it is the responsibility of the enrolling school to request all necessary documents from the previous school(s), as well as refer parents and unaccompanied youth to all programs and services. Referrals may include but are not limited to community-based organizations, special education services, tutoring, preschool programs, before and after school enrichment programs, and any other services needed.

---

### **Education of Students with Disabilities Under Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying in any form toward individuals on the basis of their actual or perceived disability is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. PUENTE Charter School will promptly investigate any complaints of disability-based discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and take reasonable actions to stop future incidents.

PUENTE Charter School has specific responsibilities related to the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to school age individuals with disabilities under Section 504. PUENTE Charter School is required to provide a program designed to provide equal access to the educational program and activities for students with disabilities as adequately as that provided for students without disabilities. For students who are not eligible for special education services, but meet the federal definition of persons with disabilities under Section 504, a Section 504 Plan may be developed which indicates the accommodations, supplementary aids, and/or services that will be provided to assist the student in accessing the general education program. Under Section 504, PUENTE Charter School must provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in a manner that ensures that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate. Parents/ guardians must be notified in writing of any District decisions regarding the evaluation, identification, and/or educational placement of their student and their right to participate in and/or appeal these decisions under Section 504.

For further information about Section 504 and/or assistance in filing an appeal, complaint (see Uniform Complaint Procedures).

---

### **Education of Students with Disabilities and Special Education**

Students learn in a variety of ways with most students learning effectively in a traditional school setting. Students with disabilities may be eligible to receive special education services. These services are based on assessments and are determined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which includes the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) as equal participants. Special education services are designed to meet the unique educational needs of students with disabilities and are provided at no cost to parents/guardians. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are to be educated with their nondisabled peers in the general education environment at the school they would attend if nondisabled. The general education classroom with all appropriate supplementary aids and services where the student has the greatest opportunity to be integrated with their nondisabled peers is the first educational setting for an IEP team to consider. An IEP team should only remove a student from the general education classroom and environment when the nature or severity of a student's disability is such that education in general classes with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Parents/guardians of school-age children who suspect their child may have a disability and may need special education services should contact the administrator of their neighborhood public school. Parents/guardians of non-enrolled preschool-age children who suspect their child may have a disability and may be eligible for special education services should contact their child's teacher.

Further information concerning special education programs and services is provided in the LAUSD's publication, A Parent's Guide to Special Education Services (Including Procedural Rights and Safeguards), which is available at every District school and on the Division of Special Education website at <https://achieve.lausd.net/sped>. Assistance related to special education matters is available.

---

## **Educational Equity: Government Instruction Conferences EC 244**

The Sex Equity in Education Act exempts any discrimination based on male or female identity for pupils who seek to participate in state or national conferences, therefore, furthering California’s goal of providing an equal educational opportunity to all students by prohibiting the use of public resources when a program discriminates based on gender.

---

### **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

#### **Overview**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents/guardians the right to have access to their children’s education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a scholar turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents/guardians to the scholar.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent/guardian or eligible scholar in order to release any information from a scholar’s education record. PUENTE Charter School will maintain various scholar records, including, but not limited to, transcripts, enrollment records, disciplinary records, and immunization records. Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a scholar’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents/guardians and eligible scholars about directory information and allow parents/guardians and eligible scholars a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents/guardians and eligible scholars annually of their rights under FERPA.

PUENTE Charter School will not release information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order.

#### **Notification of Rights under FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and scholars who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible scholars”) certain rights with respect to the scholar’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the scholar’s education records within 45 days after the day PUENTE Charter School receives a request for access. Please note that the California Education Code permits access within 5 days of the request.

Parents/guardians or eligible scholars who wish to inspect their child’s or their education records should submit to the school principal or administrative designee a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school principal or administrative designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible scholar of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the scholar’s education records that the parent/guardian or eligible scholar believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents/guardians or eligible scholars who wish to ask PUENTE Charter School to amend their child’s or their education record should write the school principal or administrative designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible scholar, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible scholar of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible scholar when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the scholar’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent/guardian or scholar volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent/guardian, scholar, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a scholar seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the scholar's enrollment or transfer.

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

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

5. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from scholars' education records, without consent of the parent/guardian or eligible scholar, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent/guardian or eligible scholar, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents/guardians and eligible scholars have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a scholar without obtaining prior written consent of the parents/guardians or the eligible scholar –
  - To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
  - To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the scholar seeks or intends to enroll, or where the scholar is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the scholar's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
  - To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible scholar's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
  - In connection with financial aid for which the scholar has applied or which the scholar has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
  - To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the scholar whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer scholar aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible scholar if the scholar is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a scholar’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the scholar in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

If an PUENTE Charter School decides to release directory information, PUENTE Charter School shall provide an annual notice to parents/guardians, and “eligible scholars” in attendance, of the school’s directory information policy that includes:

- The categories of information that the school has classified as public directory information that may be disclosed without parental/guardian consent.
- A statement that directory information does not include citizenship status, immigration status, place of birth, or any other information indicating national origin (except where the school receives consent as required under law).
- The potential recipients of the directory information.
- A description of the parent’s/ guardian’s abilities to refuse release of the scholar’s directory information, and how to refuse release.

The deadline within which the parent/guardian or eligible scholar must notify the school in writing that he or she does not want the information designated as directory information.

## **Food Services**

### **School Meals Offered**

PUENTE’s school meal provider, School Nutrition Plus (SNP), is committed to providing quality food service and nutrition education. They have chefs and registered dietitians who recognize the health of our youth has a significant impact on school performance. SNP is a scratch-cooking operation and frequently uses local, seasonal produce on their menus and they are fully compliant with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

### **Meal Accommodations**

Students who have food or milk allergy intolerance and may need meal accommodations to participate in our school meal program. Our student meal provider requests a completed “Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations” form to process the accommodation. The form must be completed by a California State Licensed Healthcare Professional. The form is available in our office.

### **Community Eligibility Provision School**

We are pleased to inform you that PUENTE Charter School will be implementing a new option available to schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs called the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for 2023-2024 School Year.

Schools that participate in the CEP are able to provide healthy breakfasts and lunches each day at no charge for all students enrolled in that CEP school during the 2023-2024 School Year.

### **Free and Reduced Meals**

Commencing in SY 2023-2024, *Education Code (EC) 49501.5* requires public school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools serving students in grades TK–12 to provide two meals free of charge (breakfast and lunch) during each school day to students requesting a meal, regardless of their free or reduced-price meal eligibility. Charter Schools and Districts will still require eligible parents to submit an application in order to remain in compliance for accounting purposes only.

### **Meal Application**

Meal applications are requested to be completed each school year. The meal applications are held as strictly confidential information and used only by the school.

---

### **Student Lunches from Home**

Students

Students bringing lunches from home must have a complete meal. If you choose to send lunch with your child, we encourage the consumption of healthy foods. Students are not allowed to eat chips, candy, or unhealthy snack foods such as Twinkies or other snack cakes. We highly discourage parents from sending Lunchables to school for their child's lunch as they are not a healthy and balanced meal. Suggestions for a healthy lunch include a sandwich, fruit or vegetables, and whole wheat crackers. Water is suggested for students to bring as a drink for lunch. If students bring juice they are suggested to be 100% natural juice without added sugar.

### **Food Allergy Sensitive School**

Due to the potentially life-threatening nature of food allergies, schools may put in place strict rules regarding foods and beverages not allowed on campus. Our school is a PEANUT-SENSITIVE and no peanuts or peanut products are allowed on school at any time. This includes peanuts, peanut butter, or any other product that contains peanuts or peanut oils. Students bringing items containing peanut products on campus will have the food confiscated to protect the health of students with severe peanut allergies. If students on campus have other life-threatening food allergies, other foods may be restricted at any time the school becomes aware. Documentation from the student's doctor is required for the school to put any restrictions in place.

### **Sharing Food**

We do not permit students to share food in order to protect students with food allergies and intolerances. Please keep this information in mind for classroom celebrations.

---

### **Media Release and Consent Agreement**

Photographs and videotape taken during the course of the school year may be used for promotional school/educational purposes. If you do not want to opt out of having personal information released, you may indicate so in writing. You will have an option to opt out, included in your enrollment packet each school year.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

PUENTE is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment. PUENTE Charter School prohibits discrimination and harassment based on an individual's age, ancestry, color, disability (mental or physical), marital status, national origin, race, religion (including religious accommodation), sex (actual or perceived, including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition), 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.

Harassment based on any of the above-protected categories is a form of unlawful discrimination and will not be tolerated by PUENTE Charter School. Harassment is intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student or employee that creates a hostile environment and can result in disciplinary action against the offending student or employee. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including but not limited to, verbal remarks and name-calling, graphic and written statements, or any conduct that is threatening or humiliating. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, all of the Charter School's programs and activities.

The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission to or participation in PUENTE's programs or activities.

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

PUENTE's "Discrimination/Harassment Policy" complies with the requirements of Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990, and other applicable federal and state laws.

PUENTE is nonsectarian in all aspects of its programs and operations, including admissions and employment. PUENTE does not charge a tuition fee. PUENTE does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, or disability as set forth in Education Code Section 47605(d)(1) or other applicable state, local or federal law.

---

## **Personal Property**

### **Lost or Stolen Items**

Students are responsible for any personal items they bring to school and must watch their belongings carefully. PUENTE is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal items that are not allowed on campus. Because many clothing items look similar, we ask that you label clothing, lunchboxes, backpacks and other personal property. A label on items will help owners to identify their belongings. Unclaimed items that have been found will be kept in the Lost and Found Bin located by the Parent Board. Items in the Lost and Found Bin will be discarded periodically.

### **Personal Items**

We ask that student toys and novelties be kept at home because they interfere with learning. Bringing such items to class can be disruptive and items can be lost or broken. Students may be invited to bring specific items to class if they pertain to the theme of the week. If brought to campus, children will need to keep them in their cubby or they will be confiscated and held until picked up by a parent or guardian. These items include but are not limited to toys, audio or electronic devices/games, cell, fake nails, gum.

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones may be used before and after school ONLY. They must remain turned off and out of sight during school hours (including the after-school program). If students use cell phones during school or the after-school program, they will be confiscated and will be held for a parent to pick up.

## **Searching Student's Personal Property**

PUENTE recognizes its responsibility to maintain order on the school campus. Administrators are authorized to conduct searches of students and their personal items, as well as the property of the school, in accordance with this policy. Administrators may also search student's personal items (e.g., purses, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc.) when they are being carried by the student and when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or school rules.

The search should be conducted as follows:

- Outside the view of others, including students
- In the presence of two school administrators or two school employees

Immediately following the search of a student, documentation shall be made by the school administrator who conducted the search indicating whether or not improper items were found. The parents/guardians of a student searched in accordance with this policy shall be notified of the search as soon as possible.

---

## **Student Cumulative File**

A cumulative file will be established for each student enrolled in the PUENTE Charter School. A cumulative record, whether recorded by handwriting, print or other means, must be maintained on the history of a pupil's development and educational progress, including information from a transferring school. Documentation within a student record can be considered sensitive records and may be stored in either electronic or printed format within the central file. All cumulative records will be kept in a safe location.

A student cumulative request access log shall be maintained in each student's record, which lists all persons, agencies, or organizations requesting or receiving information from the records.

Student "directory information", as defined by Education Code section 49061(c), that is released as a stand-alone record shall not be defined as "sensitive records" (CA Education Code 49073). Any document that is part of a student record marked "Confidential", "Sensitive" or otherwise similarly labeled shall be treated as a "sensitive record."

---

## **Title IX**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is one of several federal and state anti-discrimination laws that ensure equality in educational programs and activities that receive federal funding. Specifically, Title IX protects male and female pupils and employees, as well as transgender pupils and pupils who do not conform to sex stereotypes, against discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment. California law also prohibits discrimination based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Under Title IX, pupils may not be discriminated against based on their parental, family, or marital status, and pregnant and parenting pupils may not be excluded from participating in any educational program, including extracurricular activities, for which they qualify.

---

## **Tobacco-free Campus**

The use of tobacco and nicotine products is prohibited on school or district grounds, buildings, and vehicles, and within 250 feet of a youth sports event. Tobacco products includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, or an electronic device (e.g., electronic cigarette, cigar, pipe, or hookah) that delivers nicotine or other vaporized liquids.

## Williams Complaint Policy & Procedure EC 35186

Every school must provide sufficient textbooks and instructional materials. Every student, including English learners, must have textbooks or instructional materials, or both, to use at home or after school. School facilities must be clean, safe, and maintained in good repair. There should be no teacher vacancies or mis assignments. If a school is found to have deficiencies in these areas, and the school does not take corrective action, then a complaint form may be obtained on our school's website.

Parents, students, teachers or any member of the public may submit a complaint regarding these issues. However, it is highly encouraged that individuals express their concerns to the school principal before completing the complaint forms to allow the school to respond to these concerns.

---

### Visitor Policy

While PUENTE Charter School encourages parents/guardians and interested members of the community to visit PUENTE Charter School and view the educational program, PUENTE Charter School also endeavors to create a safe environment for students and staff. A critical part of creating a safe campus environment is for the administration, as well as those individuals or classrooms receiving visitors, to have advanced knowledge of all visitors.

School administration must know at all times who is on campus and reserves the right to refuse entry to any visitor. To ensure the safety of students and staff as well as to minimize interruption of the instructional program, PUENTE Charter School has established the following procedures.

#### **Procedures**

- All parents, visitors, and volunteers should report to the Charter School Office or Main Office of the school immediately upon entrance. This will allow the school staff to account for all persons in the building, consistent with the above stated "purposes".
- All parents, visitors and volunteers must sign-in and sign-out on a Visitors Log where visitors will sign in the day, time, estimated duration and purpose of their visit.
- All parents, visitors and volunteers will receive a visitor's badge to wear during their stay at the school.
- Parents, visitors and volunteers are not permitted to make impromptu visits to classrooms during the school day without checking in with the office staff.
- Visitors, who wish to speak with a teacher or staff member may arrange a visit at the Charter School Office.
- Any person refusing to sign in and/or leave the school property voluntarily shall be immediately referred to the police department

---

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

Guiding principles for the school-wide instructional goals at PUENTE Charter School:

**Leadership** - PUENTE will make reflective leadership, collegial collaboration, and a democratic environment the foundational elements for the implementation of the school-wide instructional goals.

**Mastery** - PUENTE will adhere to the Common Core Standards as the guideline for student educational mastery.

**Character Building** - PUENTE follows an approach to education that incorporates values, ethics, emotional maturity, and a sense of civics emphasizing character as well as intellectual development.

**Goal-Oriented** - PUENTE Charter School uses assessments to gauge benchmarks for learning goals and promote research-based, data-driven experiential learning.



---

## **Curricula Overview**

The desired outcome of the culturally responsive teaching at PUENTE Charter School is a powerful double-focused one. At the forefront of our instructional design is (1) rich cultural components in the curriculum content and (2) a Balanced Literacy and CGI Math approach in support of Common Core State Standard mastery. Cultural heritage understanding, the development of social consciousness, intellectual capacity, and personal and political efficacy to combat prejudices and other forms of oppression and exploitation are integrated in our teaching to best support our students as the future global leaders.

For PUENTE, Funds of Knowledge represents a culture of excellence and progress in addition to our mission guided by the values of equity serving the needs of all our students. One of the leading advocates of the approach is Luis C. Moll, associate professor at the University of Arizona. Moll has been studying literacy instruction and directing field studies for more than a decade. His findings have made him a strong advocate for leveraging home and community resources to best support student learning. Conducting what he terms an "ethnographic analysis" revealed that many families have abundant knowledge that the schools did not know about--and therefore did not use in order to teach academic skills.

In practice, using Funds of Knowledge will allow PUENTE teaching staff to leverage student experiences and interests to develop culturally responsive content to be applied towards subject mastery and language mastery. Consistent with the tenets of socio-cultural theory, students will then use their own bank of knowledge including information, skills, and strategies, and develop more formal, scientific, conceptual knowledge analogous to schooling delineated by the Common Core State Standards for grades TK-5.

A Balanced Literacy approach to mastery of the common core standards is also part of our instructional design. This approach includes reading workshop, writing workshop, guided reading, shared reading, and word study. Science and Social Studies standards are addressed through Balanced Literacy. Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) is used to teach math for grades TK-5. Both approaches allow the students to take ownership of their work, become critical thinkers and learn 21st century skills.

PUENTE's goal is to provide its students with the necessary tools needed for deeper learning experiences and preparation needed for the following core concepts.

---

## **English Learners**

PUENTE Charter School will follow all federal, state, and judicial mandates for English Learners. The school is dedicated to providing ELL students with an exceptional education and transitioning them into English Proficiency through the use of the school's services and teaching methods.

PUENTE recognizes the importance of valuing students' native languages, and reinforces an appreciation for the cultures, customs, and languages of all its students through the school's core curriculum, enrichment programs, and focus on the Funds of Knowledge based curriculum.

All students who are identified as English Learners will take the English Language Proficiency Assessments for CA (ELPAC) annually, until they reclassify.

State law requires that parents of English learners are to be notified annually if they are identified as one of the following: Long-term English Learner or English learner at risk of becoming a Long-term English Learner. The school coordinator for English Language Development will be sending these notices at the beginning of each school year.

## **English Learner Reclassification**

English learners shall be reclassified to fluent English proficient when they are able to comprehend, speak, read and write English well enough to make academic progress at a level substantially equivalent to that of students of the same age or grade whose primary language is English. The proficiency shall be assessed as outlined in PUENTE's reclassification policy. Families will be updated

annually on their student's progress toward reclassification when their ELPAC scores are sent home. For more information, please ask our ELPAC coordinator, Diana Juarez.

---

### **Progress Reports**

Student progress reports are prepared three times each school year and sent home to the parent/guardian. Parent conferences are scheduled in the Fall and Winter to discuss student progress.

---

### **Special Education Services**

PUENTE Charter School recognizes the importance of providing educational opportunities to all students regardless of physical or special needs. To that end, PUENTE Charter School will provide special education services to the identified students and ensure that appropriate programs are implemented based on the student's Individualized Education Program in compliance with state and federal laws. Special education services are provided at no cost.

Ongoing, formal efforts will be made to identify students who are suspected of having disabilities and who show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Parents or guardians may refer their child for assessment for special education services. Teachers and other school personnel may also refer a child for an assessment. Within 15 days of the receipt of a referral for assessment, not counting school vacations, the parent or guardian will receive a written response from PUENTE Charter School.

Detailed information on special education assessment and Individualized Education Program will be shared with the parent/guardian prior to conducting the assessment. Special Education services are provided through contractual arrangement between the PUENTE Charter School and Comprehensive Therapy Associates & Total Education Solutions..

### **Special Education Assessment**

In order to conduct a special education assessment, an assessment plan with parent consent must be received. The purpose of the special education assessment is the following:

- To determine whether the child has a disability and requires special education and related services.
- To provide information regarding the child's present levels of educational performance.
- To provide information that will inform its decisions regarding the instructional and other needs of the child and the accommodations, modifications, and services that may be required.

Special Education assessments comply with Federal and State Policies such as:

- Assessment instruments are selected and administered so that they are not racially, sexually, or culturally discriminatory. Note: The use of intelligence tests for African-American students is prohibited in California. Not only may they not be administered by school districts, but findings from intelligence tests administered elsewhere may not be considered or contained in the records of African-American students.
- Assessments must be conducted in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the student knows and can do academically, developmentally and functionally unless the assessment plan indicates why it is not feasible to provide or administer.
- For students with Limited English Proficiency the assessment instruments are selected and administered in a manner that ensures that the assessment measures what is intended rather than the student's English language skills.

All assessments and reports must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date the Assessment Plan is received by the school. At that time an IEP meeting will be held and eligibility will be determined.

### **Special Education – Use of Assistive Technology – EC 56040.3**

Upon exiting the school district, students may continue to use the assistive technology devices provided by the school as determined by the IEP team offer for a maximum of two months until a replacement or comparable device is obtained.

---

## **Student Assessments**

The PUENTE Charter School instructional design aligns with the new California Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and mathematics, the English Language Development (ELD) standards, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the History-Social Science Content Standards for Public Schools. The core subjects at PUENTE Charter School are English language arts, mathematics, science and history-social science. Current state board of Education approved textbooks and materials, aligned with the California Common Core Standards, as well as other additional resources, to establish the scope and sequence for each of the following core curricular areas. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

The NorthWest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP assessment is given to children in grades TK–5 and is intended to provide information that can be used to monitor student progress on an annual basis and prepare students in grades 3-5 to take the CAASPP assessment. Throughout the school year, all students will take assessment tests, including the NWEA Map Assessment, administered by the class teachers in the fall, winter and spring. Results of the Assessment will establish a starting benchmark and on-going progress monitoring from which we will track and measure academic growth.

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System consists of the following assessments:

- Smarter Balanced English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics
- California Alternate Assessments for ELA, mathematics, and science
- California Science Test (CAST)

The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) - English Language Proficiency Assessments for California is administered to children whose primary home language is other than English. It consists of two separate ELP assessments: one for the initial identification of students as English learners (ELs), and a second for the annual summative assessment to measure a student's progress in learning English and to identify the student's level of ELP.

The physical fitness test (PFT) for students in California schools is the FITNESSGRAM. The main goal of the test is to help students in starting life-long habits of regular physical activity. Every fifth grader in the state of California will be tested in their PE class. The California State Physical Fitness Test consists of:

- Mile Run
- Back Saver Sit-and-Reach
- Push-ups
- Curl-ups (Sit-ups)
- Trunk Extension
- Body Mass Index (Height and Weight Ratio)

---

## **Student Retention**

PUENTE Charter School is committed to educational practices that are effective in enhancing the educational attainment of all students. Numerous studies have demonstrated that retention does not improve students' chances for educational success. Therefore, the practice of retention will be used only when there is compelling evidence that the student is likely to benefit academically and socially.

## Retention Criteria

1. Chronically absent
2. Scoring below grade level on NWEA MAP assessments
3. Reading below grade level based on standards based assessments (e.g. unit test, running records)

Before grade retention is considered, a student must have:

1. Demonstrated a dual discrepancy with both their performance level and slope of progress when compared with their peers.
2. Been served in RtI Tier 2 and /or Tier 3
3. Have at least 3 SSPT meetings prior to recommendation for retention.

Retention of students with disabilities will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be addressed through the IEP process.

## Process for Implementing Retention Recommendation

1. Preliminary discussion regarding the possibility of retention should be held in the winter between the parent and teacher.
2. A possible retention MUST be stated on the report card comments.
3. Make a joint decision- parent, teacher, principal and other professional staff no later than May 31.
4. Complete retention request forms no later than May 31.

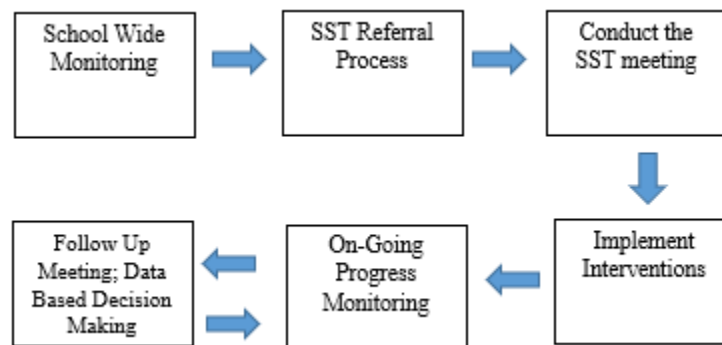
Per California Education Code, Section 48070.5 (e), parental notification is required at each reporting period. When a pupil is identified as being at risk of retention; a pupil's parent or guardian shall be provided with the opportunity to consult with the teacher(s) responsible for the decision to retain the pupil.

---

## Student Success Team ( SST)

The SST process is early intervention provided to struggling students. The SST process is a function of the general education program and not of special education. The purpose of the SST is to function as a school-based problem solving team that reviews student progress, strengths, areas of need and interventions to reduce the underachievement of students. The SST will:

1. Determine areas of need to accelerate learning for all students
2. Identify achievement gaps
3. Recommend differentiated supports needed to close achievement gaps to promote success for all students



## The SST Process:

1. Teachers will review the progress of *all* their students in ELA and Math.
2. Teachers will meet with school administrators to make recommendations of students who may benefit from the SST process. Teachers must provide evidence that RTI 2 & 3 supports are being/were provided.
3. An SST meeting will be scheduled and conducted. Parents are invited to attend.
4. The interventions discussed at the SST meeting will be implemented and on- going progress monitoring will occur for 6-8 weeks. After 6-8 weeks another SST meeting will be scheduled and held.

5. At the follow up meeting, the team will review the student's progress and determine the most appropriate next steps such as:
  - Modify the intervention (i.e., instructional strategy, grouping, duration and frequency)
  - Continue the intervention
  - Adjust the level of tiered support, based on student outcome data
  - Exit the Student Support and Progress Team process and make decisions regarding educational needs and next steps such as special education assessment

It is highly recommended that before students are referred for special education assessment either by a parent or a teacher go through the SST process.

---

### **Think Together After School Program (Expanded Learning Opportunities Program)**

Think Together, an After School Program provider, serves as PUENTE Charter School after school provider. Program is offered to TK-5th grade and includes homework assistance, organized games, and enrichment activities. A separate application is required for enrollment for this program. This program operates Monday–Thursday from 2:30 pm–6pm and on Friday from 12:30pm–6pm. For questions or more information please contact , Think Together Site Coordinator for PUENTE Charter School via email [puentelc@thinktogether.org](mailto:puentelc@thinktogether.org) or phone 310.499.6791..

PUENTE Charter Schools collaborates with Think Together to provide additional instructional days as per the expanded learning opportunities program.

---

### **Acceptable Use of Technology**

PUENTE Charter School makes every effort to equip parents/guardians with the necessary technological tools and information needed for learning. There are several responsibilities assumed by the parent/guardian. Please help your child to develop a set of rules/expectations by monitoring the proper use and care for the laptop at home. We understand that accidents do happen, but by following the guidelines set forth, we can reduce or eliminate several mishaps by being proactive with our actions.

- Laptops, and all technology equipment associated with the device are on loan to students and remain the property of PUENTE Charter School.
- All users of the school technological equipment must comply at all times with PUENTE Charter School policies.
- All use of the technology equipment must support education.
- Students are expected to keep the equipment in good condition: Keep the laptop away from extreme heat, cold, food, drinks, pets, and very small children. Students should not leave the laptop in a vehicle, put stickers or markings on the laptop.
- Please store the laptop on a desk or table. Do not place items on top of a laptop when it is not in use and do not store it on the floor.
- Do not change the desktop backgrounds, screensavers, modify files, data or passwords.
- Do not download music, games, images, videos, or install or remove software, change system settings without the permission of a teacher.
- Do not attempt to access sites blocked by the school's filtering system.
- Families are expected to report any damage to their device as soon as possible. This means no later than the next school day.
- Do not disassemble or attempt any repairs or modifications.
- Equipment may not be loaned to any other person for any reason. Families are held financially responsible for any loss of components.
- Please charge the laptop fully at the end of each day.
- Notify the School Administration and IT Manager upon occurrence of any loss to, damage to, or malfunctioning of any part of the mobile device for any reason.
- If equipment is stolen, the school must be notified.
- Please return the mobile device in the same condition in which it was issued.

- PUENTE Charter School 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 District technology.

## Technical Support

Technical support is available for PUENTE Charter School’s technology equipment. If you are in need of technology assistance please contact our IT Manager, Hector Espinoza via email at [Hector@puente.org](mailto:Hector@puente.org) to set up a live troubleshooting appointment.

## STUDENT CONDUCT

Respect is fundamental to the PUENTE Charter School educational culture and therefore will be emphasized and expected of all students.

### Discipline

It is a primary goal of PUENTE Charter School to provide a safe learning environment for all of our students. To accomplish this, PUENTE follows a proactive approach to student discipline that focuses on positive student behavior. PUENTE makes available to families information necessary to file student concerns and complaints. This documentation supports school procedures that prohibit students from harassing, intimidating, and bullying others. When students make choices that disrupt the learning environment or pose a danger to themselves or others, PUENTE utilizes a progressive disciplinary plan that is cumulative in nature. Behaviors such as fighting, severe disruptions in the classroom, threats, and possession of illegal substances or weapons may result in suspension or expulsion. The cumulative discipline plan provides appropriate consequences for continued inappropriate behavior. If behaviors are repeated or become more severe, the consequences, i.e., length of suspension or possibility of expulsion, become more severe.

Cumulative Discipline Agreement Plan			
Transgression	Description	Examples of Transgression	Action Taken by Teachers/Staff
<u>Tier 1</u> Mild Behavioral Violation	A mild behavioral violation negatively impacts the classroom flow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Inappropriate language</li> <li>● Making noises</li> <li>● Not following classroom rules</li> <li>● Off task</li> <li>● Disrespectful comments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Redirect</li> <li>● Seat changes</li> <li>● “Teachable moment”</li> <li>● Private conversation with student</li> <li>● Communication with parent</li> </ul>
<u>Tier 2</u> Moderate Behavioral Violation	A mild behavioral violation considerably impacts the classroom flow.  Teacher will complete Behavioral Documentation Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abusive language/comments</li> <li>● Threats</li> <li>● Bullying</li> <li>● Physical attack</li> <li>● Leaves class without permission</li> <li>● Theft</li> <li>● Destruction of school property</li> <li>● Defiance (continued mild behavioral violations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restorative justice consequences (following through with repairing relationships)</li> <li>● Parent conference</li> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● Apology(ies) to party/ies harmed</li> <li>● Loss of student privileges</li> <li>● Special assignment related to violation</li> </ul>

		continue after initial actions taken.	
<b>Tier 3</b> Severe Behavioral Violation	A severe behavioral violation involves serious violations that break the school Code of Conduct and/or California law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Persistent bullying</li> <li>● Fighting, physical aggression</li> <li>● Physical attack to student/staff</li> <li>● Vandalism</li> <li>● Graffiti</li> <li>● Possession of weapons or look-alike weapons</li> <li>● Possession of a prohibited item</li> <li>● Sexual harassment</li> <li>● Sexual assault</li> <li>● Hate speech</li> <li>● Fighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restorative justice consequences</li> <li>● Parent conference</li> <li>● Behavior contract</li> <li>● Special assignment related to violation</li> <li>● Counseling referral (if applicable)</li> <li>● Suspension and/or expulsion (depending on violation)</li> <li>● Citation/arrest (depending on violation)</li> <li>● Other responses as determined by the CEO and Principal.</li> </ul>

---

### **Harassment and Bullying**

PUENTE is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is intimidating because of the individual's race, color, national origin, physical disability, or sex. Harassment can occur any time during school hours or during school related activities. Harassment of any student by another student, employee, or teacher is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

Bullying is any deliberate and unwanted, severe or pervasive physical, verbal, or electronic act, conduct or communication, committed by a pupil(s) that is repeated, or likely to be repeated, and has, or can be reasonably predicted to have, the effect of one or more of the following:

- Reasonable fear of harm to person or property;
- Substantially detrimental effect on physical or mental health;
- Substantial interference with academic performance;
- Substantial interference with the ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities, or privileges.

Annual training will be provided to all staff who work with students, to prevent bullying and cyberbullying. You may find a list of education web pages describing the staff training at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/se/bullyres.asp> If you or your child should experience any bullying on campus, at school events, or on the way to or from school, please contact our Vice Principal, Diana Juarez available to assist you in identifying and stopping this behavior.

---

### **Inappropriate Behavior**

Inappropriate behaviors include: pushing or running; rude or unkind comments; distracting other students; disrespectful conduct with other students or supervising adults; playing with or throwing food; throwing toys or other objects in the classroom or play yard.

In the halls, Multipurpose Room and classroom areas, the following behaviors are expected:

- Walk quietly.
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Respect school property and the property of others.

Respond appropriately to directions from all school personnel.

---

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS/Restorative Justice)**

The discipline policy PUENTE Charter School will adhere to a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) philosophy and Restorative Justice principles with modeling and reinforcement of positive behavior and lifestyle choices. A PUENTE guiding principle is to focus intentionally on a healthy and positive school climate. We use alternatives to suspensions to support students when behavioral missteps occur, which include teacher conversation, parent/family involvement and redirection.

Restorative Justice principles are based on principles that focus on building and maintaining positive relationships to create a strong school community and also includes processes to repair harm and restore relationships. Importantly, embedded in our instructional design are the on-going opportunities for students to work cooperatively with each other, be respected and demonstrate respect for others, learn conflict resolution strategies, and take responsibility for his/her daily behavior.

During the term of its charter, PUENTE has maintained a zero percent expulsion/suspension rate. Our strong emphasis on the home-to-school connection with parent involvement and our instructional design contributes greatly to this outcome.

The PUENTE instructional team members are trained during professional development meetings to use effective (PBIS/Restorative Justice) classroom management strategies to maximize instruction and minimize student misbehavior, and how to understand, distinguish, and address different types of behaviors. Our school-wide and classroom management systems are built on the philosophy that effective management means that more time is spent on proactive strategies rather than reactive strategies.

We use an effective range of lower-level consequences (non-verbal cues, conferencing with student, loss of privileges, etc.). Positive reinforcements in building our positive school culture include first to choose a play activity and reflective consequences include not being able to participate in an activity. Students who do not adhere to stated expectations for behavior and who violate the school's rules may expect consequences for their behavior. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- A verbal warning
  - Individual conference with the teacher
  - Loss of privileges
  - Individual behavior contract with parent involvement
  - Referral to the Principal or other designated school staff member
  - Notice to parent/caregiver by telephone or letter
- 

### **School Bus Safety**

All pupils in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 6, shall receive written information on school bus safety (*i.e.*, a list of school bus stops near each pupil's home, general rules of conduct at school bus loading zones, red light crossing instructions, school bus danger zone, and walking to and from school bus stops). 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.

---

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Suspension is intended to remove the student from his/her classmates and school environment giving the student time to reflect on his/her disruptive behavior. The length of the suspension is determined by the principal, not to exceed two days.



Suspensions shall be initiated according to these steps:

- Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified immediately of the suspension and asked to attend a conference.
- A conference conducted by the Principal and/or Vice Principal with the student and his or her parents and the teacher or staff member who referred the student. This conference will be held as soon as possible.
- The parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the offense committed by the student as well as when the student may return to school.

**Suspension EC 4890:**

A pupil shall not be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion, unless the superintendent of the school district or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has committed an act as defined pursuant to any of subdivisions (a) to (r), inclusive:

- (a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.  
(2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- (b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.
- (c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- (d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- (e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- (f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- (g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- (h) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit the use or possession by a pupil of the pupil's own prescription products.
- (i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- (j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (k) (1) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.  
(2) Except as provided in Section 48910, a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts enumerated in paragraph (1), and those acts shall not constitute grounds for a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to be recommended for expulsion. This paragraph is inoperative on July 1, 2020.  
(3) Except as provided in Section 48910, commencing July 1, 2020, a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 5, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts specified in paragraph (1), and those acts shall not constitute grounds for a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to be recommended for expulsion.  
(4) Except as provided in Section 48910, commencing July 1, 2020, a pupil enrolled in any of grades 6 to 8, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts specified in paragraph (1). This paragraph is inoperative on July 1, 2025.
- (l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- (m) Possessed an imitation firearm. As used in this section, "imitation firearm" means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to

- conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- (n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 287, 288, or 289 of, or former Section 288a of, the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.
  - (o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for purposes of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.
  - (p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
  - (q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, that is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
  - (r) Engaged in an act of bullying. For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the following meanings:
    - (1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
      - (A) Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
      - (B) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the pupil's physical or mental health.
      - (C) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with the pupil's academic performance.
      - (D) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with the pupil's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
    - (2) (A) "Electronic act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the schoolsite, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
      - (i) A message, text, sound, video, or image.
      - (ii) A post on a social network internet website, including, but not limited to:
        - (I) Posting to or creating a burn page. "Burn page" means an internet website created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1).
        - (II) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
        - (III) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
      - (iii) (I) An act of cyber sexual bullying.
      - (II) For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described in this subclause, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
      - (III) For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific

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

(B) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) and subparagraph (A), an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the internet or is currently posted on the internet.

- (3) “Reasonable pupil” means a pupil, including, but not limited to, a pupil with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of that age, or for a person of that age with the pupil’s exceptional needs.
- (s) A pupil shall not be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this section unless the act is related to a school activity or school attendance occurring within a school under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of the school district or principal or occurring within any other school district. A pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated in this section and related to a school activity or school attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- (1) While on school grounds.
  - (2) While going to or coming from school.
  - (3) During the lunch period whether on or off the campus.
  - (4) During, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity.
- (t) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this section, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (a).
- (u) As used in this section, “school property” includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- (v) For a pupil subject to discipline under this section, a superintendent of the school district or principal is encouraged to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion, using a research-based framework with strategies that improve behavioral and academic outcomes, that are age appropriate and designed to address and correct the pupil’s specific misbehavior as specified in Section 48900.5.
- (w) (1) It is the intent of the Legislature that alternatives to suspension or expulsion be imposed against a pupil who is truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from school activities.
- (2) It is further the intent of the Legislature that the Multi-Tiered System of Supports, which includes restorative justice practices, trauma-informed practices, social and emotional learning, and schoolwide positive behavior interventions and support, may be used to help pupils gain critical social and emotional skills, receive support to help transform trauma-related responses, understand the impact of their actions, and develop meaningful methods for repairing harm to the school community.

#### **Harassment, Threats or Intimidation - EC 48900.4**

In addition to the grounds specified in Sections 48900 and 48900.2, a pupil enrolled in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive, may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the superintendent or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation, directed against school district personnel or pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.

#### **Hate Violence - EC 48900.3**

In addition to the reasons set forth in Sections 48900 and 48900.2, a pupil in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive, may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the superintendent or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of, hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233.

#### **Sexual Harassment - EC 48900.2**

In addition to the reasons specified in Section 48900, a pupil may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the superintendent or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has committed sexual harassment as defined in Section 212.5.

For the purposes of this chapter, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall not apply to pupils enrolled in kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive.

### **Terroristic Threats EC 48900.7**

(a) In addition to the reasons specified in Sections 48900, 48900.2, 48900.3, and 48900.4, a pupil may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the superintendent or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has made terroristic threats against school officials or school property, or both.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school district property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.

---

### **Limitations on Imposing Suspension EC 48900.5**

Suspension, including supervised suspension as described in Section 48911.1, shall be imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct. A school district may document the other means of correction used and place that documentation in the pupil's record, which may be accessed pursuant to Section 49072. However, a pupil, including an individual with exceptional needs, as defined in Section 56026, may be suspended, subject to Section 1415 of Title 20 of the United States Code, for any of the reasons enumerated in Section 48900 upon a first offense, if the principal or superintendent of schools determines that the pupil violated subdivision (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e) of Section 48900 or that the pupil's presence causes a danger to persons.

---

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Camera Surveillance on School Property**

For the safety of our students, staff and visitors, the School District employs camera surveillance equipment for security purposes. This equipment may or may not be monitored at any time.

Surveillance cameras will generally be utilized only in public areas where there is no "reasonable expectation of privacy." Public areas may include school buses; building entrances; hallways; parking lots; front offices where students, employees, and parents come and go; gymnasiums during public activities; cafeterias; and supply rooms. However, it is not possible for surveillance cameras to cover all public areas of District buildings or all District activities.

District surveillance cameras will not be installed in "private" areas such as restrooms, locker rooms, changing areas, private offices (unless consent by the office owner is given).

---

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

Reporting Requirements Child abuse is any deliberate behavior that is inflicted onto a child from an adult. Examples of child abuse may include, but is not limited to, physical abuse, sexual abuse, including commercial sexual exploitation of a minor, neglect, willful cruelty, and mental suffering.

The California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Law requires that any teacher or other staff member who has a reasonable suspicion that a student has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused or neglected must make an immediate report to the proper authorities. Any PUENTE staff member who has a reasonable suspicion that child abuse has occurred or is occurring is required by law to file a suspected child abuse report with an appropriate child protective services agency. Either the local police, Sheriff 's Department, or the Department of Children and Family Services will be contacted immediately. Suspected child abuse reports are confidential as to the identity of the employee making such a report.

- California law permits representatives of child protective agencies (Police, Sheriffs, and Children's Services) to interview victims of child abuse during school hours on school premises.
- Legislation enacted in 1987 now authorizes that a child who is to be interviewed at school may select an adult who is a member of the school staff to be present at the interview. However, the staff member may not discuss the facts or circumstances of the case with the child or anyone else. The sole purpose of the staff person's presence at the interview is to lend support to the child and enable him or her to be as comfortable as possible.
- When a request is made for the presence of a staff member at a child abuse interview, the Principal or designee shall inform the staff member so selected of the purpose of his/her presence in the interview and of the confidentiality requirements. The Principal shall also inform the staff member that he/she has the legal right to decline to be present at the interview.
- When the child is to be removed from school and taken into custody by the Child Protective Service representative, the Principal or designee must be informed. The representative must leave his/her name and phone number where he/she may be reached and where the child is being taken. The school official shall provide the representative with the name, address, and phone number of the pupil's parents or guardian. Parent notification is the responsibility of the Child Protective Services representative.

---

### **Emergency Card**

Scholars may only leave campus with the adults named and listed on their emergency card unless the parent/legal guardian has provided written authorization on a case by case basis. Additionally, the office will only release students to individuals who are 18 years or older. Adults will be asked to show proper identification in order to sign scholars out.

Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping all scholar emergency contact information current and informing the PUENTE Charter School office in writing of any changes as soon as possible (e.g., address changes, phone number changes). It is important for families to keep the emergency contact information current so all communications are received without delay or interruption.

---

### **Emergency Preparedness**

The safety and welfare of our students and staff are our highest priorities. At PUENTE Charter School we work diligently to make sure that students and staff are prepared for emergencies. We have developed safety protocols and emergency plans in order to prepare for natural disasters and emergency situations (e.g., fire, earthquake, lockdown). We stock emergency supplies to sustain students and staff.

PUENTE Charter school has a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan which describes the safety procedures specific to our school. Training on the emergency plan is provided to all school staff members annually and an evacuation map is posted in every classroom.

Emergency drills (e.g., earthquake drills, fire drills, lockdown drills, active shooter) are conducted throughout the school year so that all staff and scholars are prepared should an emergency occur. During regular school hours, scholars are required to follow their teacher's or administrator's instructions during all emergency drills and situations.

Parents are asked to make sure that their students actively participate and take emergency drills seriously. These drills help make public schools the safest place for students during an emergency.

---

### **Emergency Response**

In the event that there is an emergency, parents should remember that public schools are among the safest places in the community. In general, schools will respond to emergencies by moving students to the safest possible location. During fires or earthquakes, students will be moved out of the classrooms to a safe assembly area. During a lockdown, students will be moved indoors, to use the buildings as protection. During an emergency, parents who want to pick up their children may be asked to go to the Request Gate located on the school's perimeter and show identification. This is a specific location that schools will use to release students. Please remember that students will only be released to a person whose name is listed on the student's Emergency Card. Parents must make sure that the student's Emergency Card is current and correct. Please notify your child's school anytime the emergency contact information changes. During a threat of violence, students will be sheltered in a locked classroom away from anything that can hurt them. During an emergency when the campus must be protected, parents will not be able to pick up their children until the school campus is declared to be safe by law enforcement or the incident commander on site. Parents need to understand that the students are being sheltered in a secure classroom for their safety and will be released only when it is safe.

---

### **Entrance Health Screening**

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.

---

### **Epinephrine Auto-Injectors**

PUENTE Charter School shall obtain a prescription for epinephrine auto-injectors ("EpiPen") from an authorizing physician that includes at least one regular EpiPen for PUENTE Charter School.

Each school year, the PUENTE Charter School school shall provide office staff and staff who volunteer to be EpiPen administrators with training opportunities on EpiPen administration. If a scholar is, or reasonably believed to be, suffering from an anaphylactic reaction, only trained staff shall administer the EpiPen to the scholar. During the administration of the EpiPen or as soon as practicable thereafter, or if no trained individual is present at the time of the anaphylactic reaction, the school will immediately call 9-1-1 to request an emergency response and stay with the scholar until paramedics arrive. The school shall also contact the scholar's parent/guardian as soon as practicable upon learning of the scholar's anaphylactic reaction.

---

### **Gun-Free Safe Schools**

California prohibits any person from possessing a firearm on, or within 1,000 feet from, the grounds of a public or private school, unless it is with the written permission of PUENTE Learning Center. This does not apply to law enforcement officers, any active or honorably retired peace officers, members of the military forces of California or the United States, or armored vehicle guards engaged in the performance of, or acting in the scope of, their duties. A person may also be in possession of a firearm on school grounds if the firearm is unloaded and in a locked container or within the locked trunk of a motor vehicle. A violation of this law is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for up to six months, a fine of up to \$1,000, or both imprisonment and fine.

---

## **Health Care Coverage EC 49452.9**

Your child and family may be eligible for free or low-cost health coverage. For information about health care coverage options and enrollment assistance, go to [www.CoveredCA.com](http://www.CoveredCA.com). Additionally, California law allows all low-income children under 19 years old, regardless of immigration status, to enroll in Medi-Cal at any time in the year. Families can apply in person at their local county human services office, over the phone, online, with a mail-in application, or at a local health center. For more information about Medi-Cal enrollment, visit [www.health4allkids.org](http://www.health4allkids.org).

---

## **Illness or Injury at School or School Activity**

All injuries occurring at school or during a school activity must be reported to the nearest staff member in charge or to the school main office. A school staff member will assist scholars in need of help for sudden illness occurring at school or at a school activity. The school shall call the appropriate agencies (e.g., ambulances, police, fire) in cases of serious injury.

Scholars who are unable to remain at school or at a school activity because of illness will be sent home. Parents/guardians listed on the scholar emergency card will be contacted to make transportation arrangements. No scholars shall be allowed to leave the campus without parent/guardian consent. Scholars may only leave the campus with people listed on their emergency cards; proper identification (e.g., driver's license) must be presented to the school main office. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any changes to the contacts on the scholar emergency cards.

---

## **Lice Policy**

Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, and when children share things like combs and brushes are shared. PUENTE Charter School follows the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines for School concerning head lice: "Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Confirmation to the school from the parent/caregiver that 'treatment has begun' is the communication needed."

If the instructor suspects a student has head lice:

- The student will refrain from wearing headphones
- Playtime will be closely monitored so as not to involve head-to-head contact for the child
- The teacher will update the parent concerning the child's constant scratching during the school day
- Recommend treatment with FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store.
- Notice will be provided to parents in the affected classroom.

---

## **Medication at School Annual Notice**

1. Talk to your child's doctor about making a medicine schedule so that your child does not have to take medicine while at school.

2. If your child is regularly taking medicine for an ongoing health problem, even if he or she only takes the medicine at home, give a written note to the school nurse or other designated school employee at the beginning of each school year. You must list the medicine being taken, the current amount taken, and the name of the doctor who prescribed it (EC 49480).
3. If your child must take medicine while at school, give the school a written note from you and a written note from your child's doctor or other health care provider, who is licensed to practice in California. Provide new, updated notes at the beginning of each school year and whenever there is any change in the medicine, instructions, or doctor (EC 49423).
4. As parent or guardian, you must supply the school with all medicine your child must take during the school day. You or another adult must deliver the medicine to school, except medicine your child is authorized to carry and take by him or herself.
5. All controlled medicine, like Ritalin, must be counted and recorded on a medicine log when delivered to the school. You or another adult who delivered the medicine should verify the count by signing the log.
6. Each medicine your child must be given at school must be in a separate container labeled by a pharmacist licensed in the United States. The container must list your child's name, doctor's name, name of the medicine, and instructions for when to take the medicine and how much to take.
7. Pick up all discontinued, outdated, and/or unused medicine before the end of the school year.
8. Medicinal cannabis may be administered at school by parent according to local district adopted policy, which must include: no disruption of educational environment or exposure of cannabis to other students, parent administration only – no staff members to administer cannabis, removal of any remaining cannabis and packaging from school site, parent method to sign in and out for administration and medical recommendation to be kept on file according to confidential health records. The use of smoke or vape forms of cannabis is expressly forbidden on school campus.
9. Know and follow the medicinal policy of your child's school. The school board may amend or rescind any of their policies for any reason in a public board meeting.

---

### **Medication at School (Administration Policy)**

During the scholar enrollment process, parents/guardians must indicate if their children have any chronic health problems, medical conditions, medications or allergies on the Registration/Enrollment Form. The parent or legal guardian of any pupil taking medication on a regular basis must inform the school of the medication being taken.

Our school has a written policy to assure the safe administration of medication to students during the school day. If your child must have medication of any type, including over-the-counter drugs, given during school hours, you have the following choices:

1. You may come to school and give the medication to your child at the appropriate time(s).
2. You may obtain a copy of the medication form from our office, attached.
  - Take the form to your child's doctor and have them complete the form by listing the medication(s) needed, dosage, and number of times per day the medication is to be administered.
  - This form must be completed by the physician for both prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
  - The form must be signed by the doctor and by you, the parent or guardian.
  - Prescription medicines must be brought to school in a pharmacy-labeled bottle which contains instructions on how and when the medication is to be given.
  - Over-the-counter drugs must be received in the original container and will be administered according to the doctor's written instructions.
3. You may discuss with your doctor an alternative schedule for administering the medication (i.e. outside of school hours).



4. Please have your physician fill out an emergency action plan for children needing an epi-pen, asthma medications, or seizure medications. We also need a plan of care for children with diabetes signed by the physician.

The school shall not furnish any medications. School personnel are prohibited by law from giving any medication (e.g., prescriptions, over-the-counter pain relievers, cold medicine) to a scholar unless the scholar's physician has given written instructions and the scholar's parent/guardian has provided written consent.

In order for a designated school personnel to assist/supervise a scholar self-administering medication, including insulin to diabetic scholars, the PUENTE Charter School school shall obtain both a written statement from the physician detailing the name of medication, the date, the dosage information and directions for administering the medication and a written statement from the parent/guardian indicating the capability of the scholar to self-administer the medication.

All medications require physician and parent/guardian authorization. Once authorization is obtained, the medication must be given to the school main office in original containers, labeled with the name of the scholar, the name of the medication, the date, the dosage information and directions for storing and administering the medication. Over-the-counter medications should be in original sealed packages with directions for administration. Medications will be stored in a secure location and medication administration will be documented in a medication log maintained for each scholar. This form will be incorporated into each scholar's permanent file upon transfer or graduation.

Scholars may only carry and self-administer certain medications (e.g., inhaled asthma medications, EpiPens) with the proper documentation. This documentation includes:

1. A written statement from an authorized health care provider detailing the name of the medication, the date, the dosage information and directions for administration, and confirming that the scholar is able to self-administer the medication; and
2. A written statement from the parent/guardian of the scholar consenting to the self-administration, providing release for the school to consult with the health care provider of the scholar regarding any questions that may arise with regard to the medication, and releasing the school and school personnel from liability in the case of adverse reaction.

All other medications shall be stored in the school main office. Certain Asthma Action Plans may be sufficient for scholars to carry and self-administer asthma medication. A scholar may be subject to disciplinary action if the medication is used in a manner other than as prescribed. School staff shall not prescribe or give advice regarding medication.

---

### **Mental Health EC 49428**

In order to initiate access to available pupil mental health services, you may contact our principal Ms. Meza via email [brenda@puente.org](mailto:brenda@puente.org). Local resources include <https://dmh.lacounty.gov/>.

---

### **Physical Examination**

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.

---

### **Social-Emotional Services (SEL)**

Addressing the mental health and social-emotional development of all students, staff and community is a vital component, especially during Distance-Learning. PUENTE addresses these sensitive issues by following best practices in the areas of:

- School-based mental health services
- Behavioral support systems
- Family engagement and support practices
- Staff supports
- Maintaining student recognitions, awards and traditions
- *Partnering with the community to build capacity*
- 3 Tiers of Supports Plan

Tier 1 Whole Group	Tier 2 Small Group	Tier 3 1-1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Calm Classroom</li> <li>● Family Circles</li> <li>● Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher support</li> <li>● Teacher &amp; Vice Principal support</li> <li>● Teacher, Vice Principal &amp; parent support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Counseling</li> <li>● Parenting classes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers to maintain on-going behavior logs on Behavior Flip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff to keep documentation of interactions with families</li> <li>● Follow-up/Progress Meeting</li> </ul>	

### **Student ID**

Students will be issued an official PUENTE Student Identification badge when they safely return to school. Students will be asked to wear their ID at all times while in the building or on PUENTE grounds.

### **Suicide Prevention and Intervention**

Student suicide rates are of concern to all members of the school community. One child, ages 12 and older, dies by suicide every five days in California. Local Districts were required by California law to provide suicide prevention education, according to age-appropriate and sensitive local policies, for grades 7 to 12. Legislators have determined that training in mental health and coordination around improved services is extended to our elementary students. A shared goal by all staff educators is to keep a safe place to learn, free from harm to any of our students.

PUENTE Charter School recognizes that youth suicide is a serious problem across the state of California. These policies and procedures outline PUENTE Charter School’s approach to youth suicide prevention and intervention. This policy shall be available to all staff and reviewed and updated each school year.

The suicide prevention curriculum is to be age appropriate, sensitive to developmental understanding and provided for students in elementary school per AB 1767 (Ramos) in grades Kindergarten through grade 6, as of 1/1/2020.

Requires local educational agencies (LEAs) that serve students in grades 7 to 12 to adopt policies on the prevention of student suicides and also require the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop and maintain a model suicide prevention policy. Districts and Charters are to provide suicide prevention policies in a prominent place on existing internet website.

### **Prevention**

Suicide prevention is most effective when staff, students, parents, and community members have adequate information about prevention. The following resources will be available to our learning community.

PUENTE Charter School Mental Health Team	
Janette Rodriguez	Comprehensive Therapy Associate
Diana Juarez	Vice Principal
Brenda Meza	Principal

### List of Resources:

- Los Angeles Unified School District Mental Health Department (213)241-3841
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK
- Child & Youth Your Life Your Choice Helpline [www.yourlifeyourvoice.org](http://www.yourlifeyourvoice.org) 1-800-448-3000 / Textline Text VOICE to 20121
- American Association of Suicidality [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)
- Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention K-12  
<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/Services/SP/Documents/2017/heard-toolkit-07-01-17.pdf>

### STAFF Resources

- Review of policies and procedures during a professional development session to include training about the scope of youth suicide.
- Living Works Online Youth Summit Training
- Information about the signs of stress and depression and where to send students for support.
- Information on risk factors for suicide
- Information about signs of suicidal thinking
- Information about how to intervene when a student presents signs of suicidal thoughts
- Resources included in Parent Handbook

### Student Resources

- Mental Health classes that teach children coping skills and mindfulness practices will be taught by LAPD Hollenbeck PAL
- Calm Classroom Mindfulness practices practiced daily
- “Family Circles” practiced to encourage students to discuss problems or feelings in a safe environment
- Behavior Flip App behavior management system used to track student behaviors.

### Parent Resources

- Comp Therapy, an annual workshop including the Information about the signs of stress and depression and a parent’s role in helping, risk factors for suicide, Information about signs of suicidal thinking.
- Resources for families about communication strategies and mental health
- Resources available for our school community via PUENTE Learning Center

### Protective Factors

Protective factors are the positive conditions, personal and social resources that promote resiliency and reduce the probability for youth suicide as well as other high-risk behaviors.

These include:

- Presence of social support
- Family support system

- Problem solving skills and history of coping skills
- Good impulse control
- Having a safe place to discuss feelings
- Coping skills
- Presence of hopefulness
- Pets
- Being involved in activities

### **Warning Signs & Risk Factors**

Warning signs should be taken seriously. If a staff member notices warning signs, he/she should alert a member of the mental health team as soon as possible. These include:

- References to suicide
- Giving away meaningful possessions
- Withdrawal from friends
- Not wanting to participate or attend class
- Declining academic performances/failure to complete work
- Frequent talk about death or frequently sad or feeling hopeless
- Mood swings
- Impulsive or aggressive mood
- Victim of abuse
- Dramatic changes in personality/appearance
- Bullying or being bullied

### **Family Risk Factors:**

- Child sexual abuse
- Use of extreme physical punishment
- Lower family socioeconomic status
- Changes of parents/family (e.g., divorce, remarriage, recent death of loved one)
- Poor parent-child attachment
- Parent alcohol problems/drug use
- Low parental monitoring
- Family history of suicide or suicide attempt

### **Intervention**

The following procedures will be observed when it comes to a staff member's attention that a student is experiencing a crisis and may include suicidal thinking or behavior:

- Staff members must take threat of self-harm behavior seriously. The staff member will then share this information verbally with a member of the mental health team immediately.
- If the information comes from another person such as a peer or a parent, the staff member will refer the situation to a mental health team member immediately, who will schedule a meeting with the student. If a mental health team member is not available, a member of student support staff trained in risk assessment will meet with the student immediately.
- The student support/mental health team member will further discuss the situation with the student to obtain information about the crisis and assess their needs. If additional support is needed, the mental health/student support team should reach out to the Los Angeles Unified School District Mental Health Department for consult (213) 241-3841 for support.
- The parent or guardian must be notified of the risk assessment and informed of the severity. An appointment with a mental health professional will be made ASAP.
- Share concerns and provide recommendations for safety with the parent or guardian

- Provide Mental Health Resource List and information about outside referrals.

## Postvention

### Procedures for Assisting the Suicidal Student:

- Keep the student safe and under close supervision. Never leave the student alone. Designate one or more staff members to stay with and support the individual in crisis while help is being sought. Call 911 if student needs emergency medical help.
- Notify the school administrator or designee who will immediately communicate with the designated crisis intervention team members and/or law enforcement.
- Notify the guardians what has occurred and arrange to meet them wherever appropriate (as student might need emergency transportation to hospital).
- Consult with Department of Mental Health (800-854-7771) as necessary to assess the student's mental state and to obtain a recommendation for needed treatment.
- In the event that the situation requires transportation to a hospital emergency department for medical treatment, contact administrator to assess the situation, call 911, and expedite the transition to the hospital.
- Explain that a designated school professional will follow-up with parents and student regarding arrangements for medical and/or mental health services.
- Make arrangements, as necessary, for class work assignments to be completed at home if the student is unable to attend school.
- Hold a mandatory debriefing for staff, administrators, and crisis response team members who directly dealt with the student in crisis.
- Document actions taken as outlined in school incident reporting protocol. (Dissemination of information about at-risk students is governed by provisions of the United States Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Public Law 93-380, as amended by Public Law 93-586, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Public law 94-142, and 20 A MRSA. §§ 6001 — 6001-B).
- Upon re-entry, it must begin with a re-entry meeting. Confidentiality is extremely important in protecting the student and enabling school personnel to render assistance. The re-entry meeting will be attended by the student's guardian(s), appropriate support team members, the building administrator, and the student, if developmentally appropriate.

## Vision and Hearing Screenings

Screening of the student's vision and hearing will be done at the school site in accordance with State mandates. If parents/guardians do not wish to have their child examined at school (including vision and hearing screenings), they must file an annual written statement to that effect with the school's administrators. Parents/guardians will be notified of any findings as a result of the mandated screening tests that require further attention.

**Vision:** Upon first enrollment of a child at a California elementary school, and at least every third year thereafter until the child has completed the eighth grade, the child's vision shall be appraised by the school nurse or other authorized person.

**Hearing:** Hearing screening is mandated in kindergarten/first grade and in second, fifth, eighth, tenth/eleventh grade and upon first school entry (California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Section 2952 (c)(1)). Hearing screening in California public schools must be conducted by a credentialed school audiometrist.

## PARENT AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

PUENTE Charter School we strive to create a warm and welcoming school environment for parents. We view our work as a partnership among school leaders, teachers, students, parents, and the community. Because of this, we encourage parents to get involved in our school. While we encourage parents to volunteer, it is not a requirement of enrollment. You will receive information throughout the year

about volunteer opportunities. To participate in the offerings of parent education and to provide parental input to the local training programs for parents, please contact our Vice Principal, Diana Juarez, more information on how you may contribute.

## **Communication**

PUENTE Charter School staff is committed to providing an exemplary educational experience for all children and their families. We encourage honest, open and respectful communication between parents/caregivers, teachers and administrators. Because all staff have specific, assigned duties during the school day, we ask that parents/guardians call the Charter School Office 323-780-2961 to schedule appointments to speak with any of the PUENTE Charter School staff. PUENTE believes that the communication between parents/guardians and the school is integral to the success of a student. Parents can expect that all communication will receive a response within 48 hours or two (2) school days whenever possible.

## **Instructional Staff Office Hours**

All teachers and staff members have ParentSquare accounts where they can be easily contacted. You may also contact teachers by leaving a message with the main office to leave a message. *Instructional staff will respond as soon as possible.*

Each teacher is available by cell phone and in person. Remember, teachers are teaching throughout the day and may be unable to return calls during the school day.

Communication is a two-way street. We expect teachers to respect you at all times and we expect you to respect teachers and school officials at all times, as well. This requires an awareness of tone, volume, and language usage.

Our school is a calm, civil learning community of learning that must remain free of profanity at all times. Any disruptions to our calm, civil learning community may lead to removal from campus.

## **Infinite Campus Parent Portal**

Infinite Campus is a district-wide student information system designed to manage attendance, grades, schedules, assessments and other information about the students in PUENTE Charter School. Additionally the Infinite Campus Parent Portal provides you access to update parent contact and emergency card information.

You will have access to the Campus Portal which is a confidential and secure website that allows parents/guardians to login and view their child's progress in school. There is also an app available for both iOS and Android devices. The goal of the Campus Portal is to create a better partnership between parents and teachers.

Calls and texts are regularly placed home using this system to inform parents of school events, reminders of schedule changes, holidays, or other important announcements (e.g., student absences or truancy).

## **Parent/Family Newsletter**

A newsletter will be posted on ParentSquare and hard copies (upon request) can be sent home with your child at the start of the month. The newsletter contains important information for parents/caregivers as well as a summary of the upcoming month's academic activities. This is provided to encourage conversation at home between parents/caregivers and their children with regard to what was learned in school each day. The newsletter often contains educational resources that parents/caregivers may obtain to reinforce at home the lessons being taught in the classrooms.

---

## **Parent Involvement & Committees**

PUENTE Charter School recognizes the unique and critical role that parents play in the long-term academic success of their children. Parents play an integral role in the development of student success. PUENTE Charter School places great value in the participation of

parents in the activities at the school. As partners, we share in the responsibility to ensure your child's success. All families are invited and encouraged to participate in each group.

### **Adult Education**

Enrollment in PUENTE's adult education classes is open to all parents/caregivers. Classes include English as a Second Language, Computer Applications, Computer Repair, GED Preparation, Adult High School Diploma, and Reading Academy. Morning, afternoon and evening classes are offered. All are offered tuition-free.

### **Coffee with the Administration Team**

Meetings are held where deep discussions and active participation in regards to school updates including the development of our Local Control Accountability Plan. Join the Principal and Vice Principal for monthly gatherings to share, discuss and participate in our school updates including the development of our Local Control Accountability Plan.

### **Community Connections Nights**

Workshops for all parents/caregivers, adult students, and families! Each month various resources in the community will be highlighted. These include mental health and wellness, nutrition and cooking, financial literacy, and Know your Rights workshops.

### **Charter School Advisory Committee**

Reviews admissions procedures; parental involvement; curriculum and instruction; student assessment; and any other operations of the charter schools. The Advisory Committee also reviews the LCAP in order to recommend approval by the full board, and provides educational and management expertise and guidance as needed by PUENTE throughout the year.

### **English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)**

Responsible for advising the principal and staff on programs and services for English learners. This committee will also help with the development of the school's needs assessment and ways to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance.

### **Family Nights**

We strongly encourage all parents/caregivers and Charter School students to attend Family Night Meetings. Strengthening the home/school connection and relationship through engaging interactives and recognition of students who have attained perfect attendance will be the focus of the meetings.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents/Guardians will be expected to meet periodically throughout the school year with teachers to review their child's progress report. Special conferences may be scheduled as needed in addition to the regular Parent/Teacher conferences throughout the year with your child's teacher.

### **School Wellness Committee (SWC)**

Establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the level wellness policy.

---

### **Parent Participation in School Meetings and Conferences LC 230.8**

If the parent's employer has 25 or more employees, the parent must be allowed to attend school meetings and events for your children, up to a maximum of 40 hours each year without discrimination or fear of job loss. Purposes to attend child-related activities include: enrollment in grades 1-12, to address child care or school emergency, behavior or discipline problem that requires immediate parent attention, sudden school closure, or natural disaster. (Parent" means a parent, guardian, stepparent, foster parent, or grandparent of, or

a person who stands in.) If an employer discharges, threatens to discharge, demotes, suspends or otherwise discriminates against the parent, the employee may be entitled to reinstatement and reimbursement for lost income or benefits. See Labor Code 230.8 for more details.

---

### **Parent Volunteer Policy**

Parents/guardians who wish to volunteer on campus or serve as drivers or chaperones on school field trips must abide by all applicable laws, agree to abide by the policies of PUENTE and must fulfill all of the requirements necessary to become a volunteer before performing volunteer work.

#### Requirements and Guidelines

- Volunteers must complete the application and pass a live scan background check
  - All volunteers must provide TB clearance within the last 4 years
  - All volunteers must attend orientation prior to first day
  - All volunteers must follow the dress code guidelines
  - All volunteers must sign in and out at the front desk and wear ID at all times
- 

### **Rights of Parents and Guardians to Information**

The parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools have the right and should have the opportunity, as mutually supportive and respectful partners in the education of their children within the public schools, to be informed by the school, and to participate in the education of their children, as follows:

1. Within a reasonable period of time after making the request, to observe their child's classroom(s).
2. Within a reasonable time of their request, to meet with their child's teacher(s) and the principal.
3. To volunteer their time and resources for the improvement of school facilities and school programs under the supervision of district employees, including, but not limited to, providing assistance in the classroom with the approval, and under the direct supervision, of the teacher.
4. To be notified on a timely basis if their child is absent from school without permission.
5. To receive the results of their child's performance on standardized tests and statewide tests and information on the performance of their child's school on standardized statewide tests.
6. To request a particular school for their child, and to receive a response from the school district.
7. To have a school environment for their child that is safe and supportive of learning.
8. To examine the curriculum materials of their child's class(es).
9. To be informed of their child's progress in school and of the appropriate school personnel whom they should contact if problems arise with their child.
10. To have access to the school records of their child.
11. To receive information concerning the academic performance standards, proficiencies, or skills their child is expected to accomplish.
12. To be informed in advance about school rules, including disciplinary rules and procedures, attendance policies, dress codes, and procedures for visiting the school.
13. To receive information about any psychological testing the school does involving their child and to deny permission to give the test.
14. To participate as a member of a parent advisory committee, school site council, or site-based management leadership team.
15. To question anything in their child's record that the parent feels is inaccurate or misleading or is an invasion of privacy and to receive a response from the school.



16. To be notified, as early in the school year as practicable, if their child is identified as being at risk of retention and of their right to consult with school personnel responsible for a decision to promote or retain their child and to appeal a decision to retain or promote their child.

### **Parent Complaint Resolution Procedure**

The following procedure outlines the steps to be used by a parent, guardian, or community member who has a suggestion, question, comment, concern or complaint about PUENTE Charter Schools policy, team member or particular situation. PUENTE Charter School encourages families and team members to resolve problems collaboratively and respectfully. Teamwork, respect, and prompt resolution of conflicts are very important to PUENTE Charter School.

## **Complaint Contact Information**

<p><b>Concerns about Teacher, Staff Member, or PUENTE Community Member</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make an appointment to share and present your concerns and develop a plan to resolve the matter within 60 days with: Principal, Brenda Meza, at <a href="mailto:brenda@puente.org">brenda@puente.org</a> or 323-780-2961 or HR Director, Tesa Marquez at <a href="mailto:tesa@puente.org">tesa@puente.org</a> or 323-780-2962.</li> <li>2. After concerns have been addressed, if you are still not satisfied, schedule a meeting with the VP of Finance and Administration, Angelica Castro at <a href="mailto:angelica@puente.org">angelica@puente.org</a> or 323-780-8900.</li> <li>3. After concerns have been addressed, if you are still not satisfied, schedule a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer, Jerome Greening at <a href="mailto:jerome@puente.org">jerome@puente.org</a> or 323-780-0076 to make a plan to address your concern.</li> <li>4. After concerns have been addressed, if you are still not satisfied, send an email to the PUENTE Learning Center Board Chair, Chun Wong at <a href="mailto:cwong@asolva.com">cwong@asolva.com</a>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Board Chair will share your concern with the PUENTE Learning Center Board.</li> <li>● The PUENTE Learning Center Board of Directors will review and address your concern in writing.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Concerns about a Board Member</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make an appointment to share and present your concerns and develop a plan to resolve the matter within 60 days with PUENTE Learning Center Board Chair, Chun Wong at <a href="mailto:cwong@asolva.com">cwong@asolva.com</a>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Board Chair will review and address your concern in writing.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Concerns about the Chief Executive</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make an appointment to share and present your concerns and develop a plan to resolve the matter within 60 days with the Chief Executive Officer, Jerome Greening at <a href="mailto:jerome@puente.org">jerome@puente.org</a> or 323-780-0076.</li> <li>2. After concerns have been addressed, if you are still not satisfied, send an email to the PUENTE Learning Center Board Chair, Chun Wong at <a href="mailto:cwong@asolva.com">cwong@asolva.com</a>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Board Chair will share your concern with the PUENTE Learning Center Board.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PUENTE Learning Center Board of Directors will review and address your concern in writing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Concerns about the Principal</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make an appointment to share and present your concerns and develop a plan to resolve the matter within 60 days with the Principal, Brenda Meza, at <a href="mailto:brenda@puente.org">brenda@puente.org</a> or 323-780-2961.</li> <li>2. After concerns have been addressed, if you are still not satisfied, schedule a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer, Jerome Greening at <a href="mailto:jerome@puente.org">jerome@puente.org</a> or 323-780-0076 to make a plan to address your concern.</li> <li>3. After concerns have been addressed, if you are still not satisfied, send an email to the PUENTE Learning Center Board Chair, Chun Wong at <a href="mailto:cwong@asolva.com">cwong@asolva.com</a>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board Chair will share your concern with the PUENTE Learning Center Board.</li> <li>The PUENTE Learning Center Board of Directors will review and address your concern in writing.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

**Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP)**

This document contains rules and instructions about the filing, investigation and resolution of a Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) complaint regarding an alleged violation by PUENTE Charter School of federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs, including non-compliance with laws relating to pupil fees and our Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

This document presents information about how we process UCP complaints concerning particular programs or activities that are subject to the UCP.

A UCP complaint is a written and signed statement by a complainant alleging a violation of federal or state laws or regulations, which may include an allegation of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or charging pupil fees for participation in an educational activity or non-compliance with the requirements of our LCAP. A complainant is any individual, including a person's duly authorized representative or an interested third party, public agency, or organization who files a written complaint alleging violation of federal or state laws or regulations, including allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and non-compliance with laws relating to pupil fees or non-compliance with the requirements of our LCAP. If the complainant is unable to put the complaint in writing, due to a disability or illiteracy, we shall assist the complainant in the filing of the complaint.

The responsibilities of the PUENTE Charter School

- We shall have the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- We shall investigate and seek to resolve, in accordance with our UCP process, any complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations including, but not limited to, allegations of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying or noncompliance with laws relating to all programs and activities implemented by PUENTE Charter School that are subject to the UCP.

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

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

- A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.
- A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment.
- A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

The LCAP is an important component of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the revised school finance system that overhauled how California funds its K-12 schools. Under the LCFF we are required to prepare an LCAP, which describes how we intend to meet annual goals for our pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities identified pursuant to California *Education Code (EC)* § 52060(d).

We ensure annual dissemination of a written notice of our complaint procedures to all students, employees, parents or guardians of its students, school and district advisory committee members, and other interested parties that includes information regarding allegations about discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Our UCP Annual Notice shall also include information regarding the requirements of *EC* §§ 49010 through 49013 relating to pupil fees and information regarding the requirements of *EC* § 52075 relating to the LCAP.

Our UCP Annual Notice shall be in English and in the primary language, pursuant to section 48985 of the Education Code, or mode of communication of the recipient of the notice.

The following is responsible for receiving and investigating complaints and ensuring our compliance:

Name or title: Jerome Greening

Unit or office: CEO, PUENTE Charter School

Address: 501 S. Boyle Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90033

Phone: 323.780.0076 E-mail address: [jerome@puente.org](mailto:jerome@puente.org)

The person or office responsible for compliance and investigations is knowledgeable about the laws and programs assigned to investigate.

PUENTE Charter School will investigate all allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying against any protected group as identified in *EC* §§ 200 and 220 and Government Code (GC) § section 11135, including any actual or perceived characteristics as set forth in Penal Code (PC) § 422.55 or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any program or activity we conduct, which is funded directly by, or that receives or benefits from any state financial assistance.

Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying complaints shall be filed no later than six months from the date the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred, or six months from the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.

All complainants are protected from retaliation.

We advise complainants of the right to pursue civil law remedies under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying laws.

If PUENTE Charter School finds merit in a complaint regarding Pupil Fees, Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP), Education of Pupils in Foster Care, Pupils who are Homeless, and former Juvenile Court Pupils now enrolled in our school district, Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil, and Physical Education Instructional Minutes (grades one through eight), we shall provide a remedy. In the case of complaints regarding Course Periods without Educational Content, Reasonable Accommodations to a Lactating Pupil, and Education of Pupils in Foster Care, Pupils who are Homeless, and former Juvenile Court Pupils now enrolled in our charter

school, the remedy shall go to the affected pupil. In the case of complaints regarding Pupil Fees, Physical Education Instructional Minutes and LCAP, the remedy shall to go all affected pupils and parents/guardians.

- A pupil fees complaint may be filed with the principal of a school or our superintendent or his or her designee.
- A pupil fees complaint and/or an LCAP complaint may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance.
- A pupil fees complaint shall be filed no later than one year from the date the alleged violation occurred.
- We ensure an attempt shall be made in good faith to engage in reasonable efforts to identify and fully reimburse all pupils, parents and guardians who paid a pupil fee within one year prior to the filing of the complaint.
- We will provide an opportunity for complainants and/or representatives to present evidence or information.

Refusal by the complainant to provide the investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, or to otherwise fail or refuse to cooperate in the investigation or engage in any other obstruction of the investigation, may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegations.

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

The complaint will be investigated and a written report with a Decision will be issued to the complainant by us within 60 days from the date of the receipt of the complaint, unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of time.

This report will contain the following elements:

- i. The findings of fact based on the evidence gathered.
- ii. Conclusion of law.
- iii. Disposition of the complaint.
- iv. The rationale for such a disposition.
- v. Corrective actions, if any are warranted.
- vi. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal our Decision to the CDE.
- vii. Procedures to be followed for initiating an appeal to CDE.

An appeal is a request made in writing to a level higher than the original reviewing level by an aggrieved party requesting reconsideration or a reinvestigation of the lower adjudicating body's decision.

A complainant may appeal our Decision of a UCP complaint regarding all specified federal and state educational programs subject to the UCP.

To appeal a UCP complaint Decision the complainant must file a written appeal within 15 days of receiving the Decision to CDE. This appeal to the CDE must fully explain the basis for the appeal, stating how the facts of our Decision are incorrect and/or the law is misapplied.

In addition the appeal shall be sent to CDE with: (1) a copy of the original locally filed complaint; and (2) a copy of our Decision of this original locally filed complaint.

For more information you may go to the CDE website: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc/ucpmonitoring.asp>



501 S. Boyle Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90033

Uniform Complaint Procedures Form

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Check the appropriate box:

- Student  Parent/Guardian  Employee  
 Public Agency  Other Organization

Student Name (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Alleged Violation \_\_\_\_\_ Location of Alleged Violation \_\_\_\_\_

For allegations of noncompliance, please check the program or activity referred to in your complaint, if applicable:

- |                                                     |                                                            |                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education            | <input type="checkbox"/> After School Education and Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Vocational Education                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian Education  | <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidated Categorical Aid      | <input type="checkbox"/> Career/Technical Education                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Nutrition                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster/Homeless Youth                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant Education          | <input type="checkbox"/> No Child Left Behind Programs     | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Occupational & Workforce Development Programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education          | <input type="checkbox"/> Every Student Succeeds Act Prog.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco-Use Prevention Education                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil Fees                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Control Funding Formula     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lactating Pupils                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Education        |                                                            |                                                                                 |

For complaints of discrimination, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying (employee-to-student, student-to-student, and third party to student), please check the protected classes (actual or perceived), upon which the alleged conduct was based, listed below:

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

It is the policy of PUENTE Charter School that complainants are not retaliated against for making a complaint pursuant to these policies and that the identity of complainants alleging discrimination will remain confidential as appropriate, and PUENTE Charter School will maintain the integrity of the process.

**For complaints of bullying that are not based on the above listed protected classes, and other complaints not listed on this form, please contact Jerome Greening, Principal, listed at the bottom of this form for additional information.**

PUENTE Charter School UCP Complaint form (revised 7-1-19)





Uniform Complaint Procedures Form

1. Please give the facts about your complaint. Provide details such as the names of those involved, dates, whether witnesses were present, etc., that may be helpful to the complaint investigator.

Multiple horizontal lines for writing the complaint details.

2. Have you attempted to discuss your complaint with any PUENTE Charter School personnel? If so, with whom and what was the result?

Multiple horizontal lines for writing the response to question 2.

3. Please provide copies of any written documents that may be relevant or supportive of your complaint.

I have attached supporting documents. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please hand-deliver, mail or fax your complaint/documents to the Compliance Officer to:

Jerome Greening, CEO
jerome@puente.org
501 S. Boyle Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90033
Phone (323) 780-0076 | Fax (323) 780-0359