



Valley Oaks Charter School

2017-2018 Parent Handbook

Policies, Procedures, Parent Rights, and Curriculum

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! In this handbook, we have provided the revisions and updates to Valley Oaks Charter School policies, procedures and parent rights. Please take time to review the information and use it as a reference guide throughout the year. Please see Annual

Notice to Parents posted on our website for a complete copy of your rights and responsibilities. Many of these legal items may or may not directly relate to our charter school program but by law, parents must be informed each year. If you have any questions, please contact your resource teacher or your school administrator.

Background

In 2000, there was growing interest among parents for the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office (KCSOS) to consider starting a program that would give homeschooling parents a public school alternative. As a result, Valley Oaks Charter School (VOCS) petitioned the State of California in order to provide an avenue that would afford structure and accountability for students and families in Kern County who have opted to homeschool. Over the years, this kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) program has allowed parents to have flexibility in the design of lessons and use of teaching strategies that allowed them to be an integral part of the type of educational program they wanted for their students, while still operating within the framework of California's public school system. Currently the program serves over 1,000 students, grades K-12, at five sites in Kern County. Furthermore, the high school is fully accredited.

Since Valley Oaks Charter School is chartered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS), all policies and regulations guiding that organization apply to Valley Oaks Charter School (VOCS). Copies of KCSOS board policies and VOCS board policies are available upon request. Any modification to the policies must be approved by the Governing Board. Procedures are guidelines developed by the school staff for consistent operation of the school. They are subject to change to best serve our programs.

Valley Oaks Charter Mission

The mission of the school is to support parents seeking assistance and accountability in their homeschooling endeavors. To provide high quality learning experiences, parents, working in partnership with credentialed teachers will access the vast and diverse resources of the school and community including the museums of Kern County.

Policies, Procedures and Rights

Acceptable Use Policy

Electronic information services (Internet) are available to students and teachers at school programs operated by Valley Oaks Charter School. Valley Oaks Charter School strongly believes in the educational value of such electronic services and recognizes their potential to support curriculum and learning. The goal in providing these services is to promote educational excellence by facilitating research, innovation, and communication. Student access at school will be for educational purposes and under staff supervision. Valley Oaks Charter School is currently making Internet services available through our school-based local area networks.

As a member of a school community and as representatives of their school in the global electronic community, students are expected to abide by a *Code of Conduct*. Access to the Valley Oaks Charter School Internet will be limited to students who have agreed to and signed the provided *Code of Conduct*.

Student Code of Conduct for Electronic Use

1. Personal Responsibility:

Students will accept personal responsibility for reporting any misuse of the network to the Internet teacher or system administrator. Students will understand that all the rules of conduct described in the Valley Oaks Charter School discipline code apply when on the network.

2. Acceptable Use:

The use of assigned accounts will be in support of education and research and will support the educational goals and objectives of Valley Oaks Charter School. Students are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using the electronic information service.

In addition students:

- May use Valley Oaks Charter School's Internet access for academic research and class projects.
- May use other organization's networks or computing resources, and will comply with rules that are appropriate to that network.
- Will understand that accessing or sending any material in violation of any law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.
- Will not use Valley Oaks Charter School Internet access for commercial activities.
- Will not use Valley Oaks Charter School Internet access for product advertisement.
- Will be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws that the student can be prosecuted for violating those laws.

3. Privileges:

Students understand that the use of Valley Oaks Charter School's information system is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in restrictions or modifications of those privileges. The system administrator(s) may close an account at any time deemed necessary. The administration, staff, or faculty may request that the system administrator modify or suspend specific user accounts.

4. Network Etiquette and Privacy:

Students understand and will abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

BEING POLITE. Students will not send or encourage others to send abusive messages.

USING APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE. Students understand that they are representatives of our school and district on a non-private system and that what is said and done can be viewed globally.

GUARDING PRIVACY. Students will not reveal home addresses or personal phone numbers or the addresses or personal phone numbers of other students.

USING ELECTRONIC E-MAIL. Students understand that electronic mail (e-mail) sent through Valley Oaks Charter School's network is not guaranteed to be private. Valley Oaks Charter School reserves the right to monitor or review e-mail sent over the Valley Oaks Charter School's Internet access system. Inappropriate language or advocacy of illegal activity in e-mail messages may result in loss of system privileges and/or other disciplinary measures.

Students understand that e-mail via the Valley Oaks Charter School's Internet connection must be school related and must abide by the guidelines outlined here. Students will immediately report any threatening, obscene, or harassing e-mail to school staff.

5. Security:

If students identify a security problem, they will notify the system administrator at once. Students will understand that all use of the Valley Oaks Charter School's system must be under their own accounts and that any user identified as a security risk will be denied access to the information system.

6. Social Media:

The district intends to and will collect data from pupils' social media, and may use such data in disciplinary actions involving students and/or district employees. The information gathered and/or

maintained will pertain directly to school or student safety. Pupils and their parent/guardians may inspect this information and request correction or deletion.

7. Vandalism:

Vandalism in the electronic community is any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or any other agencies or networks that are connected to the system. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading, downloading, or creation of computer viruses. Students understand that any vandalism will result in the loss of computer services, disciplinary action, and legal referral.

8. Valley Oaks permits personal devices to be used at school, which is also regulated by the Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement. Students' use of their personal devices may involve unintentional disclosure of personally identifiable information about your student via non-district software programs (apps) your student has on the personal device, or which other students may have on their personal devices, some of which are known to collect and use personal information for purposes having nothing to do with the district's educational program. Your permission for your student to bring and use a personal device on campus will be the subject of a written agreement and may be part of the Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement. Refusal to sign the Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement or other agreement will prevent your student's use of a personal device in such educational programs. If you do not consent to such disclosures via data collecting software present on the personal devices of other students, your student will not participate in such educational program and may be transferred to a technology-free classroom or environment.

Accreditation

Valley Oaks high school is fully accredited through 2018 by the Schools Commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). VOCS K-8 is guided by the goals for school improvement set by the stakeholders. If you have questions regarding VOCS status with WASC, you may contact:

Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Accrediting Commission for Schools
533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200, Burlingame, CA 94010
Phone (650) 696-1060

Admissions

Admission to Valley Oaks Charter School will be given to all students whose parents make a request to the charter school pursuant to California Education Code Section 1981(b), who meet the established criteria, and who follow through on required admission procedures.

Prerequisites associated with enrollment are 1) attendance at an orientation session, 2) an adult at home who is willing to work daily providing direct instruction to the student, 3) a willingness to meet a minimum of at least one time per reporting period with a credentialed teacher to demonstrate attendance/student work, 4) student documentation: a birth certificate, an up-to-date immunization record, a social security number, and 5) other documentation that provides information regarding the student's educational needs.

Preference for year-to-year admission to Valley Oaks Charter School is given to those students previously enrolled at the charter school who withdrew in good standing, children of the staff, siblings of students already enrolled, and students who have documented evidence of being previously homeschooled. Upon acceptance in Valley Oaks Charter School, parents sign a Master Agreement contract agreeing to be full partners in the education of their students.

Additionally, in accordance with the provisions of the California charter school requirements, Valley Oaks Charter School will:

- Be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment, and all operations
- Not charge tuition
- Not discriminate on the basis of religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability

- Admit all pupils who wish to attend the charter. If this number exceeds capacity, there will be a random public drawing for new students
- Serve students who have gone through the prescribed enrollment process and have signed a Master Agreement
- Keep immunizations or waivers and proof of age on file

Consistent with the home schooling structure of Valley Oaks Charter School, parents will be required to attend an orientation session and will sign a Master Agreement that defines their role as full partners in the education of their student. Admission information will be available on the internet or upon request from the school office.

Preference for admittance to Valley Oaks Charter School will be given to:

- Previously enrolled students who left in good standing
- The siblings of students already enrolled in the school
- The children of staff

The procedure to enroll in the school includes:

- Formal Request for Enrollment
- Attendance at parent/student orientation
- Acceptance and placement in the program
- Signing Master Agreement

California Education Code 51746 requires that a formal determination be made that full-time independent study is the most appropriate educational alternative for a pupil with special needs. Valley Oaks Charter School staff work closely with parents to complete this process and make a determination that is in the best interest of each pupil. Upon acceptance in Valley Oaks Charter School, parent/guardian signs a Master Agreement contract agreeing to be full partners in the education of his/her students.

Agriculture

Participating in Hokit Farm at Valley Oaks (Bakersfield campus) teaches students about science and a positive work ethic. Students learn the basics of animal and plant production, plant propagation, composting, and animal care. Classes are conducted on the grounds during the enrichment class times and at other times arranged with the agriculture teachers. Parents of kindergartners and first graders should stay with their children at all times. Parents of second through eighth graders are encouraged to assist their children in these activities so that they can reinforce the science being taught.

Students should only be on the farm when an adult (parent or teacher) is actively supervising them. Students will be required to practice safe procedures at all times. Working on the farm involves some activities that carry larger responsibility for safety: working with tools, handling animals, walking on uneven ground, and working where insects and manure may be present. If parents have concerns about these factors they should discuss them with staff members.

Attendance

Students are required to work on assignments on a daily basis and complete 180 days of work. Anything less than 180 days indicates a less than adequate effort to give the student a quality education. Since VOCS follows Independent Study codes, attendance is defined by the quantity and quality of work. When you meet with your resource teacher you should have all assigned work completed and graded. If there is a problem with what has been assigned, contact the resource teacher immediately. Lessons can be modified or tutoring options can be discussed.

When students do not complete and turn in an acceptable amount of quality work, the resource teacher cannot give full attendance credit. The Master Agreement and Attendance Work Record (AWR) define the learning expectations agreed to by the home teacher doing the daily instruction and the resource teacher. Failure to complete this work will put the

student in jeopardy of being placed on probation.

According to law [E.C. section 48205], your child may be excused for absence only when it is:

1. Due to his/her illness.
2. Due to quarantine under the direction of a city or county health officer.
3. For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered (including confidential medical services).
4. For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of your immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than one day if the service is conducted in California, and not more than three days if the service is conducted outside California.
5. For the purpose of jury duty in the manner provided by law. [E.C. § 46010, et seq.]
6. Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the pupil is the custodial parent.
7. Absence for Religious Purposes: With your written permission, your child may be excused to attend religious services away from school. However, your child will be required to complete a certain number of minutes for that day. Such absences are limited to four days per month. [E.C. § 46014]
8. For justifiable personal reasons including but not limited to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service, observance of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion, attendance at religious retreats, attendance at an employment conference, or attendance at an educational conference on the legislative or judicial process offered by a nonprofit organization when the pupil's absence is requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designated representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the governing board.
9. For the purpose of spending time with a member of his/her immediate family who is an active duty member of the uniformed services (Ed Code § 49701), and has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment to a combat zone or combat support position. Such absences will 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 his/her naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen.

Attendance Alternatives

No student is expected or required to enroll in Valley Oaks Charter School. Any student in Kern County or adjoining counties who meets the admission requirements is eligible to enroll in Valley Oaks Charter School. Students who wish to leave the charter school may elect to use the following options:

- Enroll in the public school that serves their attendance area
- Attend any alternative educational facility recommended by the public school that has jurisdiction over the area of their residence
- Enroll in another charter school or private school
- Any other educational alternative that is compliant with legal requirements

These options are open to all students at any time. However, in the students' best interest, the school strongly recommends that such transfers are made before the school year begins or at mid-year.

There is one option for choosing a school within the district which the parent lives (intradistrict transfer) and a variety of options for selecting schools in other districts (interdistrict transfer). There are general requirements and limitations for each option as described below:

Intradistrict Attendance Option – The District will determine the number of available spaces at each of its schools for students wishing to transfer to another school. Students who currently reside in the attendance area of a school cannot be displaced by students wishing to transfer from within the district, but outside the school's attendance area. Further the district retains the authority to maintain appropriate racial and ethnic balances among its respective schools and may therefore deny a transfer request if necessary to maintain these balances. The selection process to determine which, if any students will be allowed to transfer is random and unbiased. A student's academic or athletic performance cannot be a basis to accept or deny a transfer request. The district is not required to provide transportation assistance to a

student who transfers to another school in the district under these provisions.

Inter-district Transfer Agreements – Two or more districts may enter into an agreement for the inter-district transfer of students. Reasons for these transfers include: attendance where parent is employed, attendance where caregiver resides, school district of choice, or open enrollment. For more information, please contact the District Office of your student's District of Residence.

California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is a multistate consortium working collaboratively to develop a student assessment system aligned with 21st century skills and academic content standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Smarter Balanced assessments (of which CAASPP is one) are designed to measure student progress toward college and career readiness. Each spring your student (grades 3rd – 8th) will be asked to take part in these online assessments, which will span a three to four day testing period. Students in 5th and 8th will also take the science CST during the same testing window. Students in 5th and 7th grades will also take the Physical Fitness Test during the same testing window. A parent/guardian may submit a written request to excuse his or her child from any or all parts of the CAASPP assessments for that school year.

California Physical Fitness Test (PFT) The California Physical Fitness Test (PFT) provides information that can be used by students to plan personal fitness programs; teachers to design the curriculum for physical education programs; and parents/guardians to understand their children's fitness levels. All California public school students in grades five, seven, and nine are required to take the PFT, whether or not they are enrolled in a physical education class. Students who are physically unable to take the entire test battery are to be given as much of the test as conditions permit. A number of options for each fitness area are provided so that students, including those with disabilities, have the maximum opportunity to participate in the tests. The teacher or the student may select the test for each fitness area.

CalWorks and SSI Forms

If forms need to be signed by the school to verify that a student is attending school, those papers will be signed after the student has successfully completed one attendance period (approximately 20 school days).

CAMP KEEP (Kern Environmental Education Program)

Each year sixth grade students can attend the five-day Camp KEEP Ocean or Camp KEEP Cambria Pines. This activity is an optional program that requires a fee paid by the family. Resource teachers can provide additional information for enrollment. Fifth graders are eligible ONLY if there are open spaces not filled by sixth graders. The school will keep a first come, first served list should such an opening occur.

Closed Campus

Since student safety is our top priority, Valley Oaks Charter School is a closed campus. Students may not leave campus at any time unless accompanied by parent or the parent has provided prior approval and the request has been approved by site administration. Neither the county office nor any officer or employee shall be liable for the conduct or safety of any pupil during such time as the pupil has left the school grounds pursuant to Education Code § 44808.5.

Conferences with Parents and Students

Valley Oaks Charter school is dedicated to a high level of communication among parents, students, and teachers. Parents/guardians and students, kindergarten through eighth grade, must meet with their resource teacher at least once per reporting period, more if desired or necessary. Students must accompany the parent/guardian to meet with their resource teacher a minimum of one time per reporting period.

Constitution Test-Eighth Grade

Valley Oaks Charter provides a support course to assist parents in helping their 8th grade students meet the requirement to pass (by a 70% minimum) the VOCS United States Constitution Test to be administered on site. Students, with

parent instruction, will be responsible for the following information:

1. Preamble
2. History of the development and signing of the Constitution
3. How the Constitution has been interpreted over time
4. Provisions of the Constitution
5. Bill of Rights and major amendments
6. Role of the citizen as it relates to the Constitution
7. Key people

Discipline

Learning self-discipline is an important part of a student's education. Parents are encouraged to teach their children the positive character traits of honesty, respect for others, self-reliance, independence, integrity, and kindness. While participating in school-sponsored events, all students of Valley Oaks must conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates these qualities.

The staff of Valley Oaks Charter School wants to provide the best educational opportunities possible for all students. In order to have an environment that facilitates a safe and sound education for all students, a standard of behavior is expected from all students. When this standard of behavior is not met, the nature, seriousness, and frequency of the inappropriate behavior will determine the action taken.

The discipline procedure for Valley Oaks Charter School applies:

- While students are on school grounds
- While students are going to and from school
- During nutritional breaks
- During or while going to or coming from a school sponsored activity
- While attending any activity sponsored by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools

The following are unacceptable behaviors that may lead to suspension or expulsion:

1. Dress that does not meet school standards
2. Unauthorized use of electronic or mechanical devices including CB radios, cellular phones, laser pens, boom boxes, walkmans, game boys, portable DVD players, lighters, etc.
3. Disruptive behavior
4. Insubordination (i.e. not obeying directions, refusal to work)
5. Profanity/obscenities
6. Unauthorized use of computer technology
7. Gambling
8. Fighting, threatening, physical aggression, bullying
9. Defacing/destroying school or private property
10. Theft or attempted theft
11. Possession of weapons, firearms, look-alike weapons, explosives, fireworks
12. Sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, color, sex, disability, national origin, ethnicity, or religion
13. False alarms, bomb threats, 911 calls, threats against persons, hoaxes
14. Use or possession of tobacco, tobacco products, or drugs
15. Hazing

A comprehensive discussion of the rules and offenses related to student discipline can be obtained through the school office. You have a right to review the school rules regarding student discipline. Please contact the school office if you wish to do so. [E.C. section 35291]

Involuntary Transfer of a Student Convicted of a Violet Felony or Misdemeanor Where Victim Enrolled at Same School
(E.C. section 48929)

Pursuant to Board Policy, a student perpetrator who has been convicted of a violent felony or a misdemeanor involving a firearm may be involuntarily transferred to another school site if the victim of the offense is enrolled at the same school as the perpetrator. District policy provides that (i) the school first attempt to resolve their conflict using restorative justice or counseling, if the victim will participate; (ii) the student perpetrator be notified of his/her right to request a meeting with the school principal before the principal makes a recommendation; (iii) the Superintendent or his/her designee make a recommendation to the governing board; and (iv) the board deliberate in closed session as may be necessary to maintain the confidentiality of student information. The board's decision will be final.

Electronic Communication Devices Policy

The following policy sets guidelines for limited use of electronic communication devices on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities.

Students may possess and use electronic communication devices on school district property and at school-sponsored activities subject to the following:

- Use of devices on school grounds: All electronic communication devices, Compact Disc Players, MP3 players, and Cellular Phones, must be turned off during the official instructional day, including during lunch. Electronic communication devices may be used before and after the official instructional day. Students may also use devices during class instruction with teacher approval for class assignment/work/research only.
- Permission for other uses: If a student wishes to use an electric communication device at an unauthorized time he/she must request permission from the school principal or his/her designee to determine the validity of the request.
- Student Responsibility: It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their devices are turned off and secured at all times.

Any student who violates the above is subject to disciplinary action, including confiscation of the electronic communication device for the remainder of the official instructional day.

Valley Oaks Charter School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic communication devices or any charges incurred as a result.

Parent Liable Responsibility/Withholding Records

Parents are liable for all the damages caused by the willful misconduct of their minor children that result in death or injury to other students, school personnel, or school property. Parents are also liable for any school property loaned to the student and willfully not returned. This year parent liability may be as much as \$25,000 in damages and another maximum of the same amount for payment or reward, if any. We expect these amounts to be indexed and rise annually. [E.C. §48904]

The school may withhold grades, diplomas, or transcripts of the student responsible until such damages are paid or the property returned or until completion of a volunteer program in lieu of payment money. [E.C. 48904]

If your child commits an obscene act or engages in habitual profanity or vulgarity, disrupts school activities or otherwise willfully defies the authority of school personnel, and is suspended for such misconduct, you may be required to attend a portion of the school day with your child. [E.C. §48900.01]

Release of Student to Peace Officer

If a school official releases your child from school to a peace officer for the purpose of removing him/her from the school premises, the school official shall take immediate steps to notify you or a responsible relative of your child, except when a student has been taken into custody as a victim of suspected child abuse. In those cases, the peace officer will notify the parent or responsible relative that the child is in custody and the place where the child is being held, unless the child would be endangered by disclosure of the place. [E.C. section 48906]

Student Search

The school principal or designee may search the person of a student (including backpack, purse, bag, etc.) or student's

locker if there is a reasonable suspicion to believe the student may have a concealed weapon, narcotics, stolen property, or contraband. Evidence gathered from video surveillance tape systems in posted areas is specifically admissible in discipline hearings, as no one has a reasonable expectation of privacy in those circumstances.

Suspension and Expulsion

Students may be suspended from school activities by the principal for up to 10 days of activity for infractions of the discipline code and Grounds for Suspension listed in State Education Code §48900. For more serious offenses as defined State Education Code 48915, the administration will ask the Governing Board to expel a student from Valley Oaks. Students who are in violation of the school discipline policies and procedures will be subject to suspension and expulsion. The behavior standards for Valley Oaks Charter School shall be communicated to students and parents through an orientation, the Student Parent Handbook and postings. Additionally, these behavior standards shall be aligned with the behavior standards found in California Education Code Sections 48900 through 48902. For minor behavioral infractions, the student will be notified at a meeting between the school, parent, and student that the student's behavior has resulted in suspension. Prior to an expulsion hearing, the school administration will notify the student and his/her parents in writing of any expellable violations. If the school administration determines that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of others in the school, there will be an immediate suspension pending the expulsion hearing. For behavior infractions, the school's administration will make all decisions concerning suspension and will make recommendations to the Governing Board regarding expulsion. The parent has the right to be present and speak at the behavior expulsion hearing. If the parent contests the findings of the VOCS Governing Board, a written appeal may be made to the Kern County Board of Education. For behavioral expulsions, the student will be referred to the community school program operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office.

Due Process Protections and Complaints

Uniform Complaint Procedures

The district has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. The district will investigate and seek to resolve any complaints alleging failure to comply with such laws and/or alleging unlawful discrimination, intimidation, or bullying in accordance with the district's uniform complaint procedures. The district has adopted a uniform complaint policy and procedures for use when addressing complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in district programs and activities based on actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other characteristic identified in E. C sections 200 or 220, Penal Code section 422.55, or Government Code section 11135, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

The district has established procedures to address allegations of unlawful discrimination and complaints alleging violation of state or federal laws governing educational programs. It is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of ethnic group identification, religion, age, sex, color, or physical or mental disability.

If there is a problem that a parent or student wants to have solved, the correct procedure is to:

- Discuss the problem with the resource teacher and try to resolve the situation.
- File a written complaint with the administration. Be specific about details – time, place, people involved, and what the resolution attempts have been up to that point. The administration will investigate and verify the details of the situation described in the report.
- Meet with administration to discuss resolution of the problem.
- If a resolution is not agreed on, the written complaint along with a report from the administration will be forwarded to the chair of the Governing Board. The decision made by the chair in consultation with other members of the board will be final.

In all dealings, the tone of all parties must be respectful. All procedures will be handled as confidentially as possible. Complainants will be protected against retaliation as a result of the filing of any complaint or participation in any complaint process.

You may contact the site principal, Valley Oaks Charter School, 661-852-6700 (Bakersfield) or 661-822-6900 (Tehachapi) to obtain a copy of the formal complaint procedures.

In addition to the above procedure you have a right to:

- (1) Direct your complaint to the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Compliance Office.
- (2) Direct your complaint to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- (2) Appeal to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction a complaint that has not been resolved to your satisfaction by the school district.

In addition to this procedure, you may wish to:

- (1) Direct a complaint to appropriate agencies for investigation.
- (2) Consult with an attorney to determine if you have legal rights that may be pursued through available civil law remedies. You may wish to contact the following low-cost or free legal service:

Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance
615 California Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93304
(661) 325-5943

Complaints Regarding Employees

The appropriate principal will handle a complaint by parent informally and try to reach mutual agreement. (See Procedure for Handling Complaints, Non-Due Process, 12/7/88.) [E.C. § 49061(c), 49070 (a) (3)]

Complaints Regarding Discrimination and the Education of Disabled Students

Valley Oaks Charter is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education.

Our programs and activities shall be free from discrimination based on gender, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, lack of English skills, ethnic group, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or any other unlawful consideration. We promote programs which ensure that these discriminatory practices are eliminated in all district activities. [E.C. § 56501]

You have certain rights under the law, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The California Department of Education and the Office for Civil Rights of the U. S. Department of Education have authority to enforce these laws and all programs and activities that receive Federal funds. [E.C. § 260, et seq., and the above cited federal statues]. Complaints or inquiries regarding compliance with Section 504 or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act may be directed to the District Section 504 Coordinator or to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C. If you wish further details in this regard, or wish to file a complaint, please contact Division Administrator or other appropriate agency.

Student Sexual Harassment

Students in grades 4 through 12 may be suspended or expelled for sexual harassment. The Board of Trustees prohibits sexual harassment in the educational environment by any person in any form. Sexual harassment is in violation of federal and state laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1982.

Within the educational environment sexual harassment is prohibited between students, employees and students, and supervisors and students. Repeated or unwarranted verbal or physical sexual advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements, or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone in the educational environment which are offensive or objectionable to the student or which cause the student discomfort or humiliation, or which interfere with the student's performance, are prohibited. Action will be taken when necessary to eliminate such practices or remedy their effects.

Students who engage in such harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion (Education Code sections 212.5; 230; 48900.2). The principal or designee shall discuss the district's sexual harassment policy with his/her students and employees and assure them that they are not required to endure sexually insulting, degrading or exploitative treatment or any other form of sexual harassment. The principal or designee shall provide staff in-service or student instruction and counseling as needed (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972).

Students and staff are encouraged to immediately report incidents of sexual harassment to the principal or designee. The principal or designee shall promptly investigate each complaint of sexual harassment in a way that ensures the privacy of all parties concerned. In no case shall the student be required to resolve the complaint directly with the offending person.

Dress Code Policy

Valley Oaks is a parent choice homeschooling program. Students who choose to attend campus classes and school related activities are expected to abide by the following dress code. The dress code is provided as a means to best support student learning and safety. It is our desire to have parents be full partners in encouraging and enforcing appropriate dress. VOCS students will wear clothing that is appropriate in nature while on school grounds and/or involved in school activities. The school staff will make the final determination of what is or is not appropriate to enforce this policy.

Valley Oaks defines "appropriate" dress as:

- Pants (not showing skin and /or undergarments, no sagging)
- Shorts-mid-thigh or longer (no inappropriate graphics or words)
- Skirt / Dress-mid-knee or longer
- Top/Shirt/Dress bodice (not revealing, collared style)
- T-shirt (VOCS or school-related, appropriate words/logos)

Dress that may NOT be appropriate:

- Any type of clothing with inappropriate or vulgar graphics or words.
- Hats or beanies worn indoors - students may wear hats or protective covering during school activities that are held outdoors.
- Any type of clothing that is revealing. No skin should be showing at the waistline. No part of any undergarment should be showing. This includes see-through materials, bare midriffs, bra straps, spaghetti or no straps, tank or tube tops, low-cut tops, and sagged pants.
- Any clothing that is inappropriately sized.
- Any clothing related to gang activity.
- Any clothing that is dangerous with spikes, studs, chains, etc.
- Anything that may draw attention to the style or student and away from learning such as body-piercings (small conservative ear piercing are acceptable), visible tattoos, unnatural-colored hairstyles.
- No flip-flops, beach-style, high-heels, spike-heel, or stiletto-heel shoes allowed.

If a student arrives for an activity inappropriately dressed, the staff member will have the option of the following:

- 1) Giving the student the opportunity to modify his/her appearance
- 2) Calling the parent to bring a change of clothes
- 3) Sending the student home to change

Enrichment Classes – optional

In order to provide the best possible experience for all participants, follow these procedures: enrichment sessions are offered by Valley Oaks Charter School to provide classroom instruction and group activities for students who are primarily educated in their homes. (Younger siblings not enrolled in enrichment but who accompany a parent in the enrichment classes must be supervised by the parent at all times and must have no expectation for materials, supplies, or

other resources.) There are several premises for providing these optional classes:

- Giving students the “classroom” experience in the absence of grade level peers in the home
- Providing students the opportunity to take classes from credentialed teachers, allowing parents time to observe and gather strategies and techniques that can be used in the home environment
- Providing courses that are difficult to teach in the home environment (team sports, reader’s theater, science labs, etc.)
- Teaching courses that some parents have difficulty teaching (algebra, writing, music)
- Giving assistance in meeting graduation requirements
- Providing an outlet for student socialization

In addition to instruction in CORE subjects (math, science, English language arts, social studies), other disciplines addressed include but are not limited to visual arts, performing arts and industrial arts, agriculture, foreign language, and physical education.

Tehachapi/Frazier/Taft/Kern River Valley

Resource teachers at the remote sites will give parents the information they need to have their children attend site enrichment classes in these areas. Based on space available, parents and students from Frazier Park, Kern River Valley, and Taft sites are welcome to attend Bakersfield enrichment sessions with prior approval. However, Bakersfield students may not attend any satellite site enrichment classes unless pre-approved by administration. Due to space limitations, Tehachapi students must attend enrichment at the Tehachapi site.

Field Trips - optional

Field trips are an important part of the education of each child. These trips are aligned to the state standards and grade level content. Parents should investigate the community resources and arrange experiences for their children that support the learning.

School sponsored optional field trips will be scheduled each month. Parents need to accompany their children on the short-term field trips not only for supervision, but for knowing how to review and reinforce the learning at home. For field trips that extend over a period of days, school chaperones will be selected at the discretion of the trip leader in conjunction with the administration.

Fog Days/Snow Days/School Closure

The school will operate on a normal schedule regardless of weather conditions. VOCS does not close the office on days when other schools declare fog delays. In the event that the entire school staff cannot travel to the office because of safety issues, the school office will close. However, instruction in the home is expected to continue. When spotty fog conditions exist, parents should use their best judgment in determining whether they will attend enrichment classes or meetings. If the decision to stay home is made, the parent and student need to contact the office and the teachers, in order to obtain assignments that may have been missed. Satellite sites should check with their own front office to follow the correct school closure procedure.

Grading Instruction

Kindergarten – Eighth Grade

A parent may select from a variety of grading options. Samples include:

- Checklist of skills mastered
- Complete/Incomplete
- Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
- Number grading (5 high, 1 low)
- Traditional grades (A, B, etc.)

Valley Oaks Charter School strongly suggests that parents of 7th and/or 8th graders implement a grading system in order to support the transition from Jr. High to High School. Each parent should discuss grading options with the resource teacher. The Governing Board believes that grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians identify the student’s areas of strength and those areas needing improvement.

Health

Kindergarten/First Grade Health Examinations

Good health including good oral health is important to your child's learning and successful academic career. State law requires that for each child enrolling in the first grade, the parent must present a certificate, signed by a physician, verifying that the child has received a physical examination within the last 18 months. Likewise, state law requires that by May 31st of your child's first school year in a public school, proof of an oral health assessment on your child by a licensed dentist must be presented. You may file a written objection with the school district or a waiver stating the reasons if you are unable to obtain such services. You must understand that your child may be sent home if you fail to provide the certificate or waiver, or if your child is suspected to be suffering from a contagious disease.

Immunizations

Valley Oaks Charter School strongly suggests that the parent/guardian investigate the pros and cons and options of immunizing your child with your doctor. It may be convenient to have your child immunized at the same time that a physical examination is conducted. The school strongly recommends that you discuss these with your doctor prior to embarking on an immunization plan. Immunization services may be available to you at no cost through the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program. Immunizations must be up-to-date before admission to any K-12 school program is granted. To enter or transfer into public and private elementary and secondary schools (grades kindergarten through 12), children under age 18 years must have immunizations as outlined below. New 7th grade entry requirements went into effect July 1, 1999. A varicella requirement for kindergarten entry went into effect July 1, 2001. A new Tdap requirement for 7th grade entry went into effect July 1, 2011.

VACCINE	Required Doses
Polio	<p>4 doses at any age, but 3 doses meet requirement for ages 4-6 if at least one was given on or after the 4th birthday; 3 doses meet requirement for ages 7-17 years if at least one was given on or after the 2nd birthday.</p> <p>(Receipt of a dose up to, and including, 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the school entry immunization requirement.)</p>
Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis	<p>Age 6 years and under: [DTP, DTaP or any combination of DTP or DTaP with DT (diphtheria and tetanus)] 5 doses at any age, but 4 doses meet requirements for ages 4-6 years if at least one was on or after the 4th birthday.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Age 7 years and older: [Tdap, Td, or DTP, DtaP or any combination of these] 4 doses at any age, but 3 doses meet requirement for ages 7-17 years if at least one was on or after the 2nd birthday. If last dose was given before the 2nd birthday, one more (Tdap) dose is required.</p> <p>(Receipt of a dose up to, and including, 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the school entry immunization requirement.)</p>
. Tdap Booster (tetanus, reduced diphtheria, and pertussis)	<p>7th grade: 1 dose on or after 7th birthday.</p> <p>(Tdap, DTaP, or DTP given on or after 7th birthday will meet the requirement. Td does not meet the requirement. 8th-12th grade students transferring from outside of California must meet the requirement.</p>

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Kindergarten	Kindergarten: 2 doses both on or after 1 st birthday. (Two doses of measles-containing vaccine required. One dose of mumps and rubella-containing vaccine required. Receipt of a dose up to, and including, 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the school entry immunization requirement.) ----- 7 th grade: 2 doses both on or after 1 st birthday. (Two doses of measles-containing vaccine required. One dose of mumps and rubella-containing vaccine required. Receipt of a dose up to, and including, 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the school entry immunization requirement.) Grades 1-6 and 8-12: 1 dose on or after 1 st birthday. (Receipt of a dose up to, and including, 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the school entry immunization requirement.)
Hepatitis B	3 doses at any age (Not required for 7 th grade.)
Varicella	1 dose (Physician-documented varicella/chickenpox disease history or immunity meets the varicella requirement. 2 dose varicella requirement for ages 13-17 years applies to transfer students who were not admitted to a California school before July 1, 2001.)

The immunization law changes that went into effect in January 2016 through SB 277 generally require students to be immunized before enrolling in school but there are exemptions which impact Valley Oaks Charter School (VOCS) and its school operations. The exemptions include a short-term personal beliefs exemption, a medical necessity exemption, an exemption for private home-based instruction OR independent study, and an exemption for students with exceptional needs.

The personal beliefs waiver continues for applicable grade level spans. A waiver in place before the deadline (December 31, 2015) continues for the remainder of the grade span in which the student is placed (either K-6th span or 7th – 12th span). The waiver applies whether originally filed with VOCS or with another program from which a student has transferred.

The medical necessity exemption continues the old practice of permitting doctors to indicate that a particular student has a medical condition that does not permit certain immunizations. Other immunizations may still be required and this exemption lasts only as long as the medical condition is present.

Students with exceptional needs who have an individualized education program (IEP) should continue to receive all necessary services identified in their IEPs regardless of their vaccination status.

Valley Oaks is chartered as an independent study program and students enrolled in independent study programs are exempt from the immunization requirement if they do not receive “required” classroom-based instruction. Classroom-based instruction in a charter school occurs only when charter school pupils are engaged in educational activities required of those pupils for 80 percent or more of the year and are

under the immediate supervision and control of an employee of the charter school who possess a valid teaching certification. Instruction constituting less than 80 percent of the instructional time does not qualify as classroom-based instruction. Because VOCS K-8 enrichment activities are voluntary, and students are not required in any way to attend or participate, nor do they comprise 80% or more of the school year, they do not constitute classroom-based instruction.

Therefore, parents may continue to file an immunization waiver for their students and students will be allowed to participate in any of the optional (non-required) enrichment opportunities offered by VOCS. However, students on waivers must file a new, updated waiver when entering a new grade span (6th graders going to 7th, students who have never been enrolled in a public school, such as kindergarten students).

The law does not allow parents/guardians to elect an exemption simply because of inconvenience (a record is lost or incomplete and it is too much trouble to go to a physician or clinic to correct the problem).

If an outbreak of a communicable disease occurs at a school, the non-immunized student will be excluded for his/ her own safety until such time as directed by health officials or district administration. [Health and Safety Code section 120335].

Diabetes Screening

Every district shall provide an information sheet regarding Type 2 Diabetes to the parent or guardian of every incoming 7th grade student. (E.C. §49.452.7). The information letter developed by the California Department of Education can be found on the Valley Oaks website www.valleyoakscharterschool.org or at the CDE website www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/type2diabetes.asp. Parents of 7th graders will also receive this information sheet upon signing a Master Agreement.

Information for Use in Emergencies

For the protection of your child's health and welfare, we ask that each year you fill out and return the provided Emergency Information Card. [E.C. §49408] Should your emergency information change at any time during the school year, please immediately contact the office with the revised information so that we may update our records.

Medical and Hospital Services

Valley Oaks Charter School does NOT provide insurance on individual students. However, you may purchase accident insurance through the district for medical and hospital services covering your child. The insurance provides coverage for your child while on school grounds or in school buildings during the time your child is required to be there because of his/her attendance during a regular school day of the district; or while being transported by the district to and from school or other place of instruction; or while at any other place as an incident to school-sponsored activities and while being transported to, from and between such places. [E.C. §49472] If interested in purchasing supplemental insurance, please contact Elsa Lara at the SISC office (student insurance services) 661-636-4736.

Medications; Epinephrine; Use of Sunscreen Permitted

If your child must take medication during the course of school activities the parent is responsible for administering that medication to his/her own child. If your child is on a continuing medication regimen for a non-episodic condition, you are required to notify the school of the medication being taken, the current dosage, and the name of the supervising physician. [E.C. 49480]

State law now allows students with doctor authorization to carry and self-administer auto-injectible epinephrine, inhaled asthma medication, or diabetes testing/medication only if the school district receives a written statement of instructions from the physician detailing the name of the medication, the method, amount, and the time schedules by which such medication is to be taken. A copy of that authorization should be given to the school for placement in your student's file. Students may also carry and use sunscreen without a doctor's note or prescription, and may also wear sun-protective clothing. [E.C. §35183.5]

Identification Cards

Each student is issued a student identification card for Valley Oaks Charter school use. It will include a photo ID and a bar code. The card has the following uses:

1. Checking in and out library books, textbooks, and other instructional materials
2. Identification to purchase discounted Bakersfield Symphony tickets
3. Admission to other activities throughout the year
4. Admission to California Living Museum (CALM)

Special admission cards will be provided for families for entrance into Kern County Museum. See *Museum* for additional information.

Instructional Time-K-8

Homeschooling offers some unique challenges and opportunities for learning. Experience indicates that the best way to handle schooling at home is to set up a structure that is a predictable routine for the family. The routine teaches students discipline and gives them a secure environment from which to proceed. However, almost everything a family does can be an inspiration for great learning. Educators call these "teachable moments" when there is a real-world reason to learn something. Don't "do school" and then give your children the rest of the time off. Integrate learning with everything you do.

The number of hours spent on formal instruction in the home is grade level and developmentally specific and, therefore, will not be absolute or identical in all circumstances. However, VOCS recommends the following guidelines:

For core subjects (math, language arts, social studies, science,) formal instruction should be:

- Kindergarten – second grade daily minimum of 3-4 hours
- Third – eighth grade daily minimum of 5 hours

In addition to the above core subjects Physical Education must be taught 100 minutes per week for 1-6 grades and 200 minutes per week for 7-8 graders.

This time can include field trips or other extra curricular activities. However, every day every student should be reading a significant amount, doing math, and writing. If students are finishing work in much less time, the difficulty level and/or amount of work given should be reassessed.

Parents/guardians must provide personalized instruction and sit down and work with their children daily Monday through Friday for the 180 days of school attendance. Presenting lessons, overseeing homework, checking answers, adding supplemental assignments and projects, and being supportive of the educational process is mandatory. Going over the work completed, correcting mistakes, and giving immediate feedback needs to happen daily.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) (E.C. sections 52060-52077)

The district is required to adopt a three-year Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and to update the LCAP on or before July 1 of each subsequent year. The LCAP is required to identify annual goals, and specific actions geared toward implementing those goals, and must measure progress for student

subgroups across multiple performance indicators based on eight priorities set by the state. The priorities must be aligned to the District's spending plan. The LCAP must be approved before the annual district budget can be adopted. Once the budget and the LCAP are adopted at the local level, the plan is reviewed by the county superintendent to ensure alignment of projected spending toward goals and services. The following are the eight state priorities:

1. Providing all students access to fully credentialed teachers, instructional materials that align with state standards, and safe facilities;
2. Implementation of and student access to state academic content and performance standards;
3. Parent involvement and participation;
4. Improving student achievement and outcomes along multiple measures;
5. Supporting student engagement;
6. Highlighting school climate and connectedness;
7. Ensuring all students have access to classes that prepare them for college and careers; and
8. Measuring other important student outcomes related to required areas of study.

The board of education is required to establish a parent advisory committee (PAC) and English learner parent advisory committee (ELPAC) to provide advice to the board of education and the superintendent regarding the LCAP. (ELPACs are required if enrollment in the district includes at least 15 percent English learners and the district enrolls at least 50 pupils who are English learners. Districts are not required to establish a new ELPAC if an English learner parent committee has already been established). PACs must include parents or legal guardians of low income students, English learner students, and foster youth.

Each district is required to consult with its teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, local bargaining units, parents, and pupils in developing the LCAP. As part of this consultation process, districts must present their proposed plans to the PAC and ELPAC. The advisory committees can review and comment on the proposed plan. Districts must respond in writing to the comments of the PAC and ELPAC. Districts are also required to notify members of the public that they may submit written comments regarding the specific actions and expenditures proposed in the LCAP.

Districts must hold at least two public hearings to discuss and adopt (or update) their LCAPs. The district must first hold at least one hearing to solicit recommendations and comments from the public regarding expenditures proposed in the plan and then adopt (or officially update) the LCAP at a subsequent hearing.

Districts are required to post the LCAP approved by the board of education, and any updates or revisions to the LCAP, on the district's website, and establish policies for filing a complaint of noncompliance under E.C. section 52075 using the uniform complaint procedures. Information regarding the requirements for the LCAP and the complaint process must be provided to pupils, parents/guardians, and employees on an annual basis.

Learning Center Use

Teaching parents/guardians may use the Learning Center at 2020 K Street to make instructional materials

for use in their home learning situations. At that facility, parents/guardians can use die cuts, make board games and learning boards, copy instructional packets, preview computer software, and create other helpful hands-on materials. The lab is open for materials for scout groups, church activities, etc. but those will be at your own expense. The lab can be used during regular operating hours. However, children under 12 are not permitted in the lab for safety and supervision reasons but may use the designated children's area while the parent works in the lab. To use the lab for your children's lessons, pick up a payment card from the front desk or from your resource teacher. The card should be returned immediately after use to the Learning Center Staff upon check out. Please remember that these are shared cards and need to be available for use by all families. Plan your visit to the Learning Center accordingly and do not keep the card in your possession for more than a few days. The card may not be used for laminating purposes or copies, however, you may laminate at the lab if you choose to pay for it yourself.

Management Plan for Asbestos-Containing Material

A complete, updated management plan for asbestos-containing material in school buildings is available at the Kern County Superintendent of School Office.

Mandated Reporters

All staff members of Valley Oaks Charter School are mandated reporters. If staff members have any suspicions about possible abuse or neglect of a child, they are required by law to report their suspicions to Child Protective Services.

Materials and Resources

All materials are the property of Valley Oaks Charter School and must be returned at the end of each school year, when leaving the program during the school year, or upon termination following the probation process. Per the Master Agreement, parents agree to pay for any lost, damaged, or unreturned materials. Continuing families who do not have a cleared account will not be issued materials for the new school year until all checked out materials/resources have been returned and/or paid for and the account is cleared. Eighth grade students whose materials have not been returned prior to the graduation ceremony will not be permitted to participate.

Media Release

During the course of the school year, you or your student may be photographed, video taped, or interviewed for productions, performances, staff development, newspaper, website, etc. Use of your student's name, image, voice, photograph, videotape, sound recording, and/or other audio-visual electronic materials for school related purposes (school newspaper, talent show, plays, musical performances, etc.) are permissible with your consent. Parents of all new and re-enrolled students should have indicated on the enrollment form to either give or deny permission for their student's image reproduction. These enrollment/reenrollment forms have been placed in the students' files and are not updated unless request is made by the parent. Please contact the office to amend your form should you change your decision at any time during the school year.

Museum/CALM Memberships

Valley Oaks families have special membership at Kern County Museum (KCM) and California Living Museum (CALM). Parents are encouraged to take full educational advantage of CALM and the Kern County Museum. At KCM students can be admitted along with accompanying parents when they present a special membership card and their photo ID cards at the ticket booth. AT CALM students must present their VOCS student ID card which will be checked against a VOCS list held at the museum and which is updated monthly. Parents will be admitted free with the student. Be aware that some special events are not included in your free admission and some events will have a discounted admission required. If you are not sure, contract the museum regarding the event you wish to attend.

Parental Involvement

Board Representation

Valley Oaks Charter School governing board meeting minutes will be used to document level of parent representation on the governing board and rates of participation by parent representatives. Minutes from the Valley Oaks Parent Advisory Committee meetings will be used to document the selection process for Valley Oaks Charter School governing board parent representatives.

Valley Oaks Parent Advisory Committee

The Valley Oaks Parent Advisory Committee will maintain records of the meetings that include date, time, agenda and parents in attendance. Parents will be informed of the Valley Oaks Parent Advisory Committee and its schedule through the orientation meeting, Student/Parent Handbook, weekly e-mail announcements, and the school website on the internet. Valley Oaks Charter School welcomes all parents who are interested in joining VOPAC (Valley Oaks Parent Advisory Committee) to support their students. There will be many activities throughout the year that will be enhanced by the support and guidance from VOCS parents. Please inquire with your resource teacher, or at the front desk, if you're interested in participating.

Parent Workshops, Trainings and Education

The level of participation by parents in parent workshops, parent trainings and educational experiences designed for parents will be measured by sign-in sheets for every workshop, training and educational experience offered by Valley Oaks Charter School for its parents.

Parent Participation and Rights

Since parents are the primary providers of educational experiences, they have full access to all materials and activities that pertain to their children. In addition, parents are encouraged to observe and participate in enrichment classes and field experiences. The learning that takes place at these times can then be effectively integrated into the learning at home.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

This act covers the educational rights of children and youth in homeless situations. The school has a responsibility to identify children who are experiencing homelessness and to offer appropriate services to the family, child, or youth. If a child is defined by law as "homeless" the school will inform that child about educational/enrollment provisions of the law. If you are aware of a child who is homeless, please let the school know immediately. Contact VOCS administration for further information.

Williams Uniform Complaint Act

The Education Code 35186 requires that schools provide sufficient textbooks and instructional materials to use in the class and to take home to complete work. It also requires facilities to be clean, safe, and maintained in good repair. If you have a complaint about the school regarding these issues, you can file a complaint on forms obtained in the Human Resources Department of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office or it can be downloaded from the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office's website at www.kern.org or the California Department of Education's web sit at www.cde.ca.gov.

Parental Rights: Education Empowerment Act of 1998

The Education Empowerment Act of 1998 establishes various rights for parents, in addition to other rights identified in the Annual Notice. Your rights, as a parent or guardian, include the following:

Inspection of Instructional Materials

All primary, supplemental instructional materials and assessments, including textbooks, teacher's manuals, films, tapes, and software shall be compiled and stored by the classroom instructor and made available promptly for your inspection in a reasonable time frame or in accordance with procedures determined by the governing board of the school district.

Observation of School Activities

You have the right to observe instruction and other school activities that involve your child in accordance with procedures determined by the governing board of the school district to ensure the safety of pupils and school personnel and to prevent undue interference with instruction or harassment of school personnel. Reasonable accommodation of parents and guardians shall be considered by the governing board of this school district. Upon written request by you, school officials shall arrange for your observation of the requested class or classes or activities in a reasonable time frame and in accordance with procedures determined by the governing board of this school district.

Consent for Evaluations

Your child may not be tested for a behavioral, mental, or emotional evaluation without your informed written consent. Unless you give written permission, your child will not be given any test, questionnaire, survey, or examination containing any questions about your child's, or your personal beliefs or practices in sex, family life, morality, or religion.

Affirmation or Disavowal of Beliefs

A pupil may not be compelled to affirm or disavow any particular personally or privately held world view, religious doctrine, or political opinion. This law does not relieve pupils of any obligation to complete regular classroom assignments.

Health Component of Any Program or Class

Parents may exempt students from the health component of any course or class if that instruction conflicts with a parent or guardian's religious training or beliefs.

Dissection of Animals

If your child chooses not to participate in the dissection of animals, and if the teacher believes that an adequate alternative education project is possible, then the teacher may work with him/her to develop and agree upon an alternative education project for the purpose of providing your child an alternate avenue for obtaining the information required by the class. The school will need a signed note from you indicating your child's objection. [E.C. section 32255]

Excused from Instruction Due to Religious Belief

Whenever any part of the instruction in health or family life education conflicts with religious training and beliefs or personal moral conviction, or those of your child, your child shall be excused from such instruction upon your written request. [E.C. section 51240]

Other rights of parents and guardians

These rights include your right:

1. To observe in your child's classroom (upon reasonable notice).
2. To meet with your child's teacher and the school principal (upon reasonable notice).
3. To volunteer your time and resources at the school.
4. To be notified on a timely basis if your child is absent from school without permission.
5. To be notified concerning your child's classroom and standardized test performance.
6. To request a specific school and teacher and to receive a response from the school district. (This does not obligate the school district to grant the request.)

7. To have a safe learning environment for your child.
8. To examine curriculum materials of your child's class.
9. To be informed of your child's progress and appropriate school personnel to contact in the event of problems.
10. To access student records for your child.
11. To receive information concerning expectations for student learning.
12. To be informed in advance about school rules, policies, dress codes, and procedures for visiting the school.
13. To receive information about any psychological testing of your child and to deny permission for such testing.
14. To participate as a member of any school site councils or parental advisory councils at the school, in accordance with governing membership.
15. To question, and receive an answer regarding, items in your child's record that appear inaccurate, misleading, or that invade privacy.

Personal Development (SLOs)

Students, grades K – 8th are encouraged to integrate the Personal Development goals into their yearly course of study. These goals are listed on the website or you may request a copy from your resource teacher. Also given with the Personal Development goals (that coincide with the Student Learning Outcomes - SLOs) are grade level projects that are thematically correlated to each level's course of study.

Pesticide Warnings

The district has implemented an integrated pest management (IPM) program designed to effectively control pests using a combination of techniques. Pesticides that pose the least possible hazard and are effective in a manner that minimizes risks to people, property, and the environment may be used according to established regulations and treatment thresholds.

Pursuant to the Healthy Schools Act of 2000, the district is required to notify staff, parents, or guardians of the name of all pesticide products expected to be applied at the school facility during the upcoming year. These warnings will be visibly posted onsite. Should you choose to receive an individualized notification, please contact the office to register for pesticide application notification.

If you wish to receive notification of individual pesticide applications at the school facility, please contact the front desk for the proper form. You will receive notification at least 72 hours prior to the application. Further information regarding pesticide application may be obtained at the website for the California Department of Pesticide Regulation at <http://apps.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm/>

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Policy

The Governing Board believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The Governing Board expects that students, parents, and school staff will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty.

Students, parents/guardians, staff and administrators shall be responsible for creating and maintaining a positive school climate that encourages honesty. The school will not accept work submitted that is not the original work of the student. When a resource is being cited, care must be given to give credit to the originator of the work. That credit should be stated in a format that is appropriate to the developmental age of the student.

When parents are given teachers editions, they are to use them to plan lessons, assist students with concepts, and evaluate lessons. Teacher Editions and supplemental answer documents shall not be misused.

Students found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

Probation Policy

At Valley Oaks Charter School (VOCS), parent and student are responsible for keeping all appointments with the resource teacher. Submitting satisfactory completed graded original work, in all subject areas, on or before the due date, submitting lesson plans, and showing academic progress as determined by the resource is required. Maximum assignment period is four school weeks.

Academic probation will take effect if parent and/or student fail to meet the above criteria as well as the terms of probation listed below. The terms of probation include:

- If parent and student fail to meet scheduled appointments, fail to turn in satisfactory graded completed work, and/or fail to show academic progress during any assignment period, the parent and student will be put on academic probation for a minimum of four school weeks.
- Per Master Agreement, further grounds for academic probation are habitual tardies and frequent appointment cancellations/reschedules as determined and documented by the resource teacher.
- Students earning less than 70% of days possible as reported on the Assignment Work Record (AWR) for any report period will be placed on academic probation.
- During the probation period, the parent and student must meet weekly with the resource teacher. All assigned work must be provided, graded and completed, and evaluated as satisfactory by the resource teacher/subject teacher.
- Parent and student may not attend extracurricular activities, as determined by resource teacher/subject teacher and administrator during the probation period including but not limited to: vendor services, field trips, enrichment classes, workshops, and/or other extracurricular activities, unless otherwise approved by the administrator.
- Parents and students who have been on academic probation (one or two times) during the year will not be eligible for the Core Subject Instructional Grant (special orders) for the following year.
- Academic probation may also include additional responsibilities designed by the administrator and/or the resource teacher with the approval of the administrator (i.e. attending tutoring, intervention classes).
- If parent and student fail to meet the terms of a single probation, the student will be dropped from VOCS and referred to his/her district of residence.
- Parent and student may be on academic probation no more than two times in one academic school year. If after two probations (a maximum of eight school weeks), the student's performance is again unsatisfactory he/she will be dropped from VOCS and referred to his/her district of residence.
- If parent and student successfully meet the terms of academic probation as outlined, probation will no longer be in effect.

New Enrollees

- Students enrolling for the first time with Valley Oaks Charter School may be put on an initial trial period, at the discretion of the designee/administrator. This probationary period will be approximately four (4) weeks. If the student is meeting scheduled appointments and turning in satisfactory work, then the student will be taken off probation.
- If the student fails to meet these expectations, then the student will be dropped from the program and referred to their district of residence.

Re-enrollees

- A student who failed to meet the terms of probation and was dropped from Valley Oaks Charter School may not request enrollment any sooner than the last day of the semester following the semester in which the academic probation occurred. Students must seek approval from administration prior to re-enrollment.
- When re-enrolling, students must meet the terms of probation for a period of four school weeks in order to continue enrollment at Valley Oaks Charter School.

Prospectus of School Curriculum

The curriculum of every course offered by the schools of the district is compiled annually by each school in a prospectus which contains the titles, descriptions, and instructional aims of every course offered by each school. Each school prospectus is available for review upon request at each school site. [E.C. §§ 49063 and 49091.14]

Pupil Records

As a parent, you have a right to inspect and review your child's school records, including records possessed by a vendor under contract with the district to provide online services or products, and also including any information about your child collected from social media if the district is operating a social media collection program. To access individual student records, please contact your child's school. You also have a right to challenge the contents of your child's records, have an administrator assist you in interpreting the records, request amendment to ensure they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of your child's privacy rights, seek expungement of those records, have a district-level hearing to appeal the decision not to change records, and file a complaint with the state and/or United States Department of Education if the district fails to comply with state and federal law with regard to your child's records. If your child's records include information concerning any disciplinary action taken in connection with your student, you have the right to include in the record a written statement or response concerning the disciplinary action. To review policies related to the review and/or expungement of your child's records, please contact your child's school. You also have the right to inspect all instructional materials which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any applicable program. If you would like a copy of your child's records, the cost of such duplication is \$.10 per page.

For further information or assistance contact the Family Policy Compliance Office, U. S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605. [E.C. §49063 and §49070; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34 CFR Part 99]

A log or record must be maintained for your child's record which lists all persons, agencies or organizations requesting or receiving information from the record and legitimate interest therefore. This log can be inspected at Valley Oaks.

Release of Directory Information

The law allows schools to release 'directory information' to certain persons or organizations. Directory information may include a student's name, address, telephone information, e-mail, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of

members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the student. If you wish that the district withhold any of this information, contact the school principal. By law the District must give notice to parents of the District's decision to release designated directory information, and must allow a parent to inform the District in writing that any or all of the information designated as directory information should not be released without parent consent. If you do not want directory information about your student to be disclosed without your written consent, you must inform the school where your student attends within 30 days from the date of receipt of this notification.[E.C. §49061(c), §49070]

Safe Place to Learn Act

Kern County Superintendent of Schools is committed to providing a safe school environment that allows all students equal access and opportunities in KCSOS' academic and other educational support programs, services, facilities, and activities. Kern County Superintendent of Schools prohibits, at any school or school activity, unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any student based on the student's actual race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Students who engage in discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or retaliation will be disciplined. For a copy of Kern County Superintendent of Schools' anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, anti-intimidation, and anti-bullying policies or to file a complaint of a violation of these policies using the Uniform Complaint Procedures form, please contact Kern County Superintendent of Schools' Coordinator for Nondiscrimination as the Administrator, Division of Human Resources (661) 636-4000.

School Accountability Report Card

The School Accountability Report Card is available on request and is accessible at the following internet site: www.valleyoakscharterschool.org . This contains information about the school regarding the quality of the district's programs and its progress toward achieving stated goals.

School Safety Plans

Each school site has established a Safety Plan. Notice of the plan details is available to the public through the district office on request, and copies are provided to local law enforcement.

Sex Offender Information: "Megan's Law" (Penal Code §290.4)

The California Department of Justice operates a website that lists designated registered sex offenders in California. The district does not disseminate this information but you may visit <http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov> to learn more and find helpful information for you and your family.

Smoking/Tobacco Free School

Use of tobacco products at any time by students, staff, parents, or visitors, is strictly prohibited in district-owned or leased buildings, on district property, and in district vehicles. This prohibition applies to all employees, students, and visitors at any school-sponsored instructional program, activity, or athletic event held on or off district property. Prohibited products include any product containing tobacco or nicotine, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew, clove cigarettes, betel, and nicotine delivery devices such as electronic cigarettes. Exceptions may be made for use or possession of prescription nicotine products.

Any employee or student who violates the district's tobacco-free schools policy shall be asked to refrain

from smoking and shall be subject to disciplinary action as appropriate. Any other person who violates the district's policy on tobacco-free schools shall be informed of the district's policy and asked to refrain from smoking. If the person fails to comply with this request, the Superintendent or designee may direct the person to leave school property, request local law enforcement assistance in removing the person from school premises, and/or prohibit him/her from entering district property for a specified period of time.

Special Education

Valley Oaks Charter School shall comply with all laws affecting students with exceptional needs, including all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), its amendments, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. It is important to provide all students educational opportunities regardless of special needs and the charter school does not discriminate against any student based on his or her disabilities. Additionally, Valley Oaks Charter School is a member of the Special Education Local Plan Agency (SELPA) operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. All policies and procedures of that SELPA are followed. To best serve students, Valley Oaks Charter School follows California Education Code §51746, which requires full-time independent study to be the most appropriate educational alternative for the pupil. Homeschooling is one way of delivering individualized instruction to students with special needs. With teacher parent collaboration, breaking up learning into smaller time blocks, removing distractions, and tailoring learning to the unique needs of the child can be accomplished in a homeschool environment. If a child requires other specialized instruction that cannot be delivered at home, enrollment at Valley Oaks Charter School may not be appropriate.

Once enrolled, if parents have reason to believe that their child may have a disability which requires special services or accommodations, this concern will be referred to the Parent Student Advisory Team to begin the process for evaluation. If necessary, student will be referred to the Division of Student Services Special Education staff to determine whether the student is eligible for special instruction or services. (EC §§ 56020, et seq. and 56301)

Parents will be notified in writing of all district decisions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their student if he/she has a disability or suspected disability. All such notifications will include a statement regarding procedural safeguards, including but not limited to, the parent's right to examine relevant records.

A call may also be made to the Search and Serve office serving Kern County, 661-636-4817. This call will initiate a screening or referral of the child to consider special education.

Any request for assessment must be made in writing and received by the District. If a request for assessment is made via e-mail, the request will be considered received by the District when the e-mail is opened.

Textbooks and Instructional Grant for Core Materials

The core textbooks and educational materials to educate your student are provided by the school, based on the curriculum "grid". For parents who have ideas about other materials they want to use, the school may be able to accommodate reasonable requests through a materials school grant program. The guidelines for selection and distribution of textbooks and educational materials are:

1. There is a recommended course of study and materials are available to any family who does not have a preferred curriculum.

2. There is no set amount of money per student allotted.
3. Being a public school, materials purchased by the school may not be religious. If parents elect to use religious materials for home instruction, they must purchase those materials. The resource teacher can provide support in learning sequence using those materials.

Core Subject Instructional Grants Parent Guidelines:

1. A budgeted amount is allotted for special order grants each year. This amount is subject to change pending budget allocations.
2. There will be one comprehensive order per year per family.
3. Special order grants are for CORE (language arts, math, science, social studies) curriculum only.
4. The Core Subject Instructional Grants (CSIG) form must accompany each order. Parents should fill this out prior to meeting with resource teacher, but it must be reviewed, approved, and submitted by the resource teacher.
5. In addition to the CSIG Request Form, all special order grants must include an itemized list of requested materials. These may be submitted on the CSIG order form, and/or photocopied from a catalog with the requested information highlighted (catalog vendor name, item name or title of book, item/title description, item/title number, item/title price, quantity), and/or as a printed check out cart page from website. All orders must be on standard 8 ½" x 11" paper.
6. All orders must include:
 - clearly stated vendor name
 - item name/title of book
 - item number
 - item description
 - item price
 - quantity desired
7. Parents must attend a mandatory special order meeting prior to submitting an order for the following year. Parents who attended a mandatory meeting prior are exempt from the meeting but must complete the required forms in order to be considered for a special order grant. **Those who do not attend the meeting will not be allowed to make special orders.**
8. Orders must be submitted through your resource teacher.
9. Orders will be placed first come, first served and only after all borrowed materials from the prior year have been returned to the school, checked in through the library system, and a statement showing your cleared account is attached to your CSIG order forms. Please realize that incomplete orders (missing information per #5 and/or not submitted with the CSIG Request Form, a catalog photocopy, or a website cart check out sheet) will be returned to the parent for completion and will lose submission order status. Deadline for ordering for the following school year is June 5th.
10. Special orders will be placed only per annual posted schedule, so please do not ask for exceptions. Items ordered are subject to back-order, discontinuation, shipping and mailing schedules, and/or "busy" season. Your resource teacher will contact you when your order arrives. If there is a problem with your order you will be contacted and will be given the opportunity to select a replacement for any items that are unavailable. (You may want to contact vendors personally as to availability prior to placing your order with VOCS.)
11. Special orders must come from the approved list. Your resource teacher can make that list available to you upon request.
12. The school reserves the right to refuse to purchase any materials that it deems to be excessive in price, ineffective educationally, or materials that would ordinarily be purchased by a family for home educational use. Examples of items that have been requested but denied include:
 - Religious materials
 - Furniture including chalk /white boards
 - Computers including parts or wiring for computers

- Recreation equipment (trampolines, dart boards...)
- Games/books that are more fun than educational
- Private lessons
- Any materials that can be checked out of the library
- Any materials that are of poor quality

This list is not inclusive. Other items not listed may be denied by the school. Please note that should a book(s) with religious content inadvertently be ordered by the school, the parent will be required to purchase that book(s). Additionally, no special orders will be processed until all materials from the prior year have been returned and your account is clear. Further, any parent/student who has been on probation during the school year is not eligible for special order grants.

Vendor Services

Instruction at community facilities is offered through VOCS to supplement home instruction especially in the areas of fine arts and physical education. The school strives to provide top quality programs within its own structure and continues to seek out school-conducted activities to meet these needs internally. However, the following guidelines are given for those who desire to participate in community-based instruction.

1. Students must be in good standing with the school and be receiving at least 95% attendance credit.
2. Students may participate in group lessons (minimum of 5 students) at pre-approved locations. Locations can only be changed at the semester.
3. Enrollment into a vendor service is accepted only at the beginning of each semester.
4. Before participating, each student must inform the registrar who will give the parent a letter to take to one of the approved locations. That letter authorizes billing for services.
5. VOCS will pay for one activity up to \$40.00 per four week session, September through May. Failure to attend without informing the school may result in a bill for the expense of the class. The billing for the class or activity is periodic and final billing is due by June 5th. The school cannot pay for any bills turned in after this date.
6. The parent must make sure that:
 - The correct paperwork has been filed.
 - He/She has received approval from the front desk before beginning a class.
 - The vendor has received approval for a student to begin a class from the front desk.
 - Activities are approved prior to the class or activity.
 - He/She checks paperwork to note the level of security clearance of the instructors.
 - He/She takes responsibility for enrolling his/her children, making sure they attend, and getting the children to and from the classes.
 - The facility is clean and safe for students.

The school maintains a list of current vendors. (However, new vendors will be considered in June and July for the next school year if a parent goes through the new vendor request process.) It is the parent's responsibility to seek out a vendor and make sure the vendor goes through the approval process before classes can be taken. All vendors agree to:

1. Provide instruction in a class setting (minimum of 5 students per session).
2. Have a proven track record of good service to students.
3. Provide a background check on/fingerprint instructors.
4. Accept a purchase order as part of the payment process.
5. Fill out the required agreement which includes listing Valley Oaks as "also insured" on their insurance policy.

6. Inform the school about attendance of students in the class.

Work Permits

Students who wish to be employed while they attend school may do so under the conditions established by the State of California Department of Labor and Valley Oaks Charter School. The employment should never interfere with enough quality time to complete required studies. Conditions of issuing work permits include:

1. A student must be enrolled in good standing with the school and passing all classes.
2. The number of employed hours shall not exceed statutory limits nor interfere with the student's education.
3. New students may receive a work permit as soon as a Master Agreement is signed and it is determined that they were in good standing with their previous school.
4. The student must be enrolled in a full schedule of coursework.

The principal or designee will call an employer and invalidate a work permit if any of the following conditions occur:

1. The student drops.
2. The student misses appointments and/or does not turn in sufficient work in a given period of time.
3. The resource teacher determines that schoolwork is unsatisfactory and requires additional study time.

Process of Getting a Work Permit

1. Student gets verbal agreement of employment from employer.
2. Student obtains a Request for Work Permit form from the school secretary.
3. Paperwork is signed by the student, parent, and employer and is turned into the secretary.
4. An official Work Permit is issued.

Further Information is Available

Further information regarding our district schools, programs, policies and procedures is available to any interested person upon request to the Division Administrator of Special Education, Division Administrator of Instructional Services, Division Administrator of Student Services, or the Director of Valley Oaks Charter School. [E.C. § 48209.13, FERPA, 34 CFR § 99.7(b)]

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