



America's Finest Charter School

Student & Family Handbook

2022-2023

Welcome to America's Finest Charter School

What a great summer it has been! We have been working very hard to welcome our families back to campus this fall! Cleaning, painting and preparing for a fantastic year has filled the time. The campus has been improved greatly and we can't wait to see you all very soon.

We are very excited and confident that America's Finest Charter School will be a school that will allow our students the opportunity to achieve their American Dream!

We have great teachers, a superb educational program and an excellent after school arts program. We are dedicated to your child's success and making sure you are a vital part of the educational process. You will be receiving more information about the growth of your child this year and will have more opportunities to meet with staff and our administrative team to better understand how you can assist your child. We look forward to celebrating throughout the year with you as your child learns and grows.

Here are some other ways you can become involved this year:

- *Join our English Learners Advisory Committee (This is for parents of children where English is their Second Language.)*
- *Volunteer in your child's class or with the Arts in the Afternoon program*
- *We need a group of parents to support our federal funding programs by joining the school's School Site Committee.*
- *Mostly, we encourage you to communicate with your child's teacher and become involved with your child's learning.*

We have added a Behavior Specialist to our team this year. Ms. Hoey will be serving at both campuses this year. Her role will be to further assist our students and families who have social emotional needs as well as help train our staff in this area. I know many of you have gone through quite a bit the past few years and adding this staff member is a response to some of the challenges we have all faced.

As I enter my fortieth year in education, my belief has always been that loving children into learning is where education begins. Building a relationship with you and your child is the foundation of a great school year for your student. The combination of a great relationship, committed teachers and the use of information to track your child's progress will be a winner for everyone!

Please feel free to make an appointment with me by calling Ms. Gloria at 619-694-4809.

Mr. Tim Bagby, Executive Director

Board of Directors: President **Gary Rubin**
Secretary **Helene Rubin**
Member **Yosaren Panza**
Member **Stewart Halpern**
Member **Stuart Terry**

A.F.C.S. Executive Director - Tim Bagby



Mr. Bagby will be the next Executive Director of America's Finest Charter High School. He started with AFCHS in April of 2018 and helped get the campus moved to its permanent home starting in January of 2019. Mr. Bagby received his Bachelor's degree in education and music from Concordia University in Chicago, Illinois in June, 1983. He completed his Master's degree in Educational Leadership in May of 2003 at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Mr. Bagby is married to his wife Kim and has his fifth child Darrin still at home who will be a senior at Hoover High School. Mr. Bagby loves serving at AFCS

because it is a positive place for young people to grow and become the best version of themselves.

A.F.C.S. K-8 Principal -Kim Bagby

Mrs. Bagby is the TK-8 Principal at America's Finest Charter School. She received her Bachelor's degree in education and music from Concordia University Chicago in February, 1988, and completed her Master's in Educational Leadership in May of 2010 at Grand Valley State University.

Outside of school Mrs. Bagby enjoys watching her son's basketball games, gardening, and spending time with her four grandchildren. Mrs. Bagby is honored to serve at AFCS because nothing brings her more joy than being a part of the process that supports students achieving their dreams.



Administration:

Confidential Administrative Assistant/Human Resources: Gloria De Leo

Confidential Administrative Assistant/Student Services: Hilary Dinh

Payroll / Compliance: Andrea Vazquez

AFCS Classroom Teachers

TK/Kindergarten	Anna Dioguardi
TK/Kindergarten	Giselda Johnson
First Grade	Edith Souza
First Grade	Patricia Thorne
Second Grade	Allen Becker
Second Grade	Luis Reyes
Third Grade	Sharlene Cook
Third Grade	Ann Linn
Fourth Grade	
Fourth Grade	Hannah Stoner-Cubos
Fifth Grade	Danielle Phillips
Fifth Grade	Elizabeth Wheeler
Sixth Grade	Maureen Kelley
Sixth Grade	

Seventh and Eighth Grade Teachers

Math	Maggaly Kolsrud
English	Laurie Nemec
Social Studies	Cameron Struyk
Science	Matthew Tusi

Additional Staff

Special Education Coordinator	Katelin McLeod
Education Specialists	Jorge Loera, Eric Van Dien, Anthony La Chica, and Michelle Hitt
Speech & Language Pathologist	Arianne Testa
Language Development Coordinator	Kimberly Palser
Reading Interventionist	Daly Toeuk
Visual Arts Instructor	Holly Reiber
Behavior Specialist	Maggie Hoey

America's Finest Charter School

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

AFCS's basic educational philosophy is simple: We believe all students can learn and can follow their American Dream in the 21st Century by "seizing the attributes of working hard, always doing their very best, helping others and never giving up."

OUR VISION

Our VISION is to accelerate our students' academic achievement by developing

- 1) healthy students,
- 2) proficient readers and writers with
- 3) higher-order thinking skills who are capable of
- 4) problem solving and are
- 5) self-motivated,
- 6) competent,
- 7) lifelong learners, and
- 8) prepared for the workforce of the 21st Century. Our school will raise awareness and cultivate an appreciation for the American values and work ethics in order for all students to "Seize the American Dream."

OUR MISSION

America's Finest Charter School will help our students achieve their American Dream.

OUR MOTTO

AFCS will prepare students to **Seize the American Dream** by focusing on the following values: **"Work Hard, Learn Everything You Can, Always Do Your Very Best, Help Others, and success will follow."**

- **Quality** is reflected in everything we do. The road toward EXCELLENCE is paved by quality work. We believe in striving for excellence and not settling for mediocrity. We will build a learning community that will focus on academic achievement by reflecting on the quality of each daily task and academic performance. We want all our students to produce quality work by becoming aware of what quality work looks like and endeavor to produce such work.
- **Compassion** is exemplified in our concern and commitment to everyone, recognizing that we all share universal traits as human beings; yet, we all embrace and celebrate our unique cultural identities. Our aim is to demonstrate compassion by being of service to our community, by always improving on what we have accomplished and finding ways of helping others in the community. We, at AFCS, want our students to become productive citizens by giving back to the school and community.
- **Effort** in education is observed as working hard and struggling through confusion without giving up. We will encourage students to persevere the struggle, to persist by staying on task and continuing to struggle until they learn the task. “Effort” will be demonstrated in our school’s commitment to each student. We will lead by example, showing our commitment to our students and practicing positive character and leadership skills to them. AFCS will be a learning community that will help students work until their goals are met.

America’s Finest Charter School
730 45th Street
San Diego, CA 92102
619-694-4809

Lunch:

America's Finest Charter School serves lunch to all students. Lunch will be free once you turn in the application. Lunch applications need to be turned in when you turn in the Admissions Application. For more information please call the school office.

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to attend school every day and be on time. Students may be excused from attendance when there is a verified illness or quarantine, to receive medical or dental services, for a family emergency or funeral, court appearances, and when the parent requests in writing an excuse for the purpose of attending religious instruction or retreats (not to exceed four hours per semester). The student is encouraged to make up all missed assignments and tests that reasonably can be provided. It is recommended that you request a study contract for your child for all excused absences. Please contact your child's teacher or the school office for more information.

Truancy: *Absence or tardiness for reasons that are not acceptable to the school nor approved by the parents/guardian; absences where evidence shows that the parent/guardian (a) has misrepresented facts regarding the absence with the intent to have it excused, or (b) has refused to cooperate to keep the student in school as required by law.*

Absence

*Parents are required to call the school on **each** day the student is absent and give specific reasons for the absence. Our phone number is 619-694-4809.*

Tardy Students

Late students must sign in at the school office and get a pass to enter class. Late attendance falls under the same rules as absences and may be considered excused, unexcused or a truancy accordingly.

Exclusion from Attendance

Students may be excluded from attendance at school if they:

- 1. Are under the legal age of attendance, except as otherwise provided by law.*

2. *Do not present evidence of immunization or a parent request for exemption from the immunization requirement.*
3. *Are reasonably suspected of having active tuberculosis or reside where any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease subject to quarantine exists, or has recently existed, unless written permission of the health officer is provided.*
4. *Have not had a health screening before or within the first 90 days of attending first grade. Such students may be excluded for up to five days unless the parent/guardian has presented an appropriate waiver or the school has exempted the student from this requirement in accordance with law.*
5. *Have filthy or vicious habits, or suffer from contagious or infectious diseases, the Governing Board shall periodically review its decisions to exclude students of filthy or vicious habits or suffering from contagious or infectious diseases.*

Child Health and Disability Prevention Program

Parents of children who enter school in kindergarten or First Grade have an obligation to obtain or waive a health screening for their child. Free health screenings for low-income children are available under the Child Health and Disabilities Prevention Program.

Dental Health Exam

*To make sure your child is ready for school, a new California law, now requires that your child have an oral health assessment (dental check-up) or waiver on file by **May 31st** in either kindergarten or first grade, whichever is his or her first year in public school. Dental assessments, completed up to 12 months before your child enters school, also meet this requirement.*

Fever and Sick Policy

Should your child exhibit signs and symptoms of illness that include any of the following: fever (100.4 or more), vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained skin rash, or general malaise, please do not bring your child to school. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms at school, we will attempt to contact you to have the child picked up. They will not be permitted to return until they are free of fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting for 24 hours without the need to use fever reducing medicine. In the event of an emergency, or if we are unable to make contact with the student's

parent or guardian or other emergency contacts, school staff will call 911. Please make sure that your emergency contacts are kept up to date. If you need to update emergency contact information please contact the school office.

Immunizations

To protect the health of all students and staff, America's Finest Charter School encourages immunization of all school students against preventable diseases. Students registering for school must present an immunization record that shows at least the month and year of each immunization in accordance with the law. Students shall be excluded from school or exempted from immunization requirements only as allowed by law. Your child needs the following immunizations:

- Polio – 4 doses, 3 doses meet requirement if last dose was after 4th birthday*
- DPT – 5 doses, 4 doses meet requirement if last dose was after 4th birthday*
- MMR – 2 doses*
- Varicella (Chicken Pox) – 2 doses*
- Hepatitis B series - 3 doses*
- TDAP Booster – Required for all students entering 7th grade*

Parental Rights and Responsibilities

America's Finest Charter School recognizes that parents/guardians of school students have certain rights as well as responsibilities related to the education of their children.

Parents/guardians shall have the opportunity to work with schools in a mutually supportive and respectful partnership and to help their children succeed in school.

Within this framework, the school's primary responsibility shall be to provide a high-quality curriculum and instructional program in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables all students to meet the academic expectations of the school.

Parent Rights

The rights of parents/guardians of school students include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. To observe the classroom in which their child is enrolled or for the purpose of selecting the school in which their child will be enrolled.*

2. *To meet with their child's teacher and the School Director of the school in which their child is enrolled.*
3. *To volunteer their time and resources for the improvement of school facilities and school programs, including providing assistance in the classroom with the approval, and under the direct supervision, of the teacher.*
4. *To be notified on a timely basis if their child is absent from school.*
5. *To receive the results of their child's performance and the school's performance on standardized tests and statewide tests.*
6. *To request a particular school for their child and to receive a response from the school.*
7. *To have a school environment for their child that is safe and supportive of learning.*
8. *To examine the curriculum materials of the class(es) in which their child is enrolled.*
9. *To be informed of their child's progress in school and of the appropriate school personnel whom they should contact if problems arise with their child.*
10. *To have access to the school records of their child.*
11. *To receive information concerning the academic performance standards, proficiencies or skills their child is expected to accomplish.*
12. *To be informed in advance about school rules, attendance policies, dress codes and procedures for visiting the school.*
13. *To receive information about any psychological testing the school does involving their child and to deny permission to give the test.*
14. *To refuse to submit or to participate in any assessment, analysis, evaluation or monitoring of the quality or character of the student's home life; any form of parental screening or testing; any nonacademic home-based counseling program; parent training; or any prescribed family education service plan.*
15. *To participate as a member of a parent advisory committee, school site council or site-based management leadership team in accordance with any rules and regulations governing membership in these organizations.*

16. *To question anything in their child's record that the parent/guardian feels is inaccurate or misleading or is an invasion of privacy and to receive a response from the school.*

America's Finest Charter School will obtain informed written parental consent before testing any student for a behavioral, mental or emotional evaluation. A general consent, including medical consent used to approve admission to or involvement in, a special education or remedial program or regular school activity, shall not constitute written consent for these purposes.

All students shall have the right to obtain confidential medical care or confidential counseling related to the diagnosis or treatment of a drug- or alcohol-related problem, or mental health treatment or counseling, without the consent of his/her parent/guardian.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents/guardians may support the learning environment of their children by:

1. *Monitoring attendance of their children*
2. *Ensuring that homework is completed and turned in on time*
3. *Encouraging their children to participate in extracurricular and co curricular activities*
4. *Monitoring and regulating the television viewed by their children*
5. *Working with their children at home in learning activities that extend the classroom learning*
6. *Volunteering in their children's classroom(s) or for other school activities*
7. *Participating in decisions related to the education of their own children or the total school program as appropriate*

Challenging Student Records

The custodial parent/guardian of any student may submit to the Director a written request to correct or remove from his/her child's records any inaccurate, unsubstantiated, uninformed or misleading information concerning the child. A Parent may also request to remove information if it violates the privacy or other rights of the student.

Child Abuse Reporting

America's Finest Charter School has a responsibility to protect students by prompt reporting of known and suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. School employees are obligated to report all known or suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect in accordance with the law. Employees will not investigate any suspected incidents but rather cooperate fully with agencies responsible for reporting, investigating and prosecuting cases of child abuse and neglect.

Mandated reporters include but are not limited to teachers; instructional aides; teacher's aides or assistants; classified employees; certificated pupil personnel employees; administrators, and all other employees of America's Finest Charter School.

Reasonable suspicion means that based upon facts, a reasonable person in a similar position, drawing on his/her training and experience, may suspect child abuse or neglect.

Parents/guardians may file a complaint with the Director or Board of Education, against a school employee or other person whom they suspect has engaged in abuse of a child at a school site.

Communication: School-Home

Because parents/guardians have a right to be informed about their child's academic achievement and may use this information to support student learning, America's Finest Charter School encourages frequent communication to parents/guardians about student progress.

The Director and teacher may communicate by means of conferences, class newsletters, mail, telephone, and/or school visits by parents/guardians.

Discipline Policy and School Rules

America's Finest Charter School (AFCS) desires to provide an orderly, caring and nondiscriminatory learning environment in which all students can feel comfortable and take pride in their school and their achievements. AFCS believes in a school environment which promotes an atmosphere of teaching and learning. Learning takes place when there are high expectations, encouragement, positive motivation and acceptance. Teachers shall encourage and reward success and achievement, participation in community projects, and positive student conduct.

The school shall prepare students for responsible citizenship by fostering self-discipline and personal responsibility. High expectations for student behavior, effective classroom management

and parent involvement can minimize the need for discipline. Staff shall use preventative measures and positive conflict resolution techniques whenever possible.

Clear definition of acceptable student conduct provides the basis for sound disciplinary practices.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Code of Conduct

Students Code of Conduct

AFCS students are expected to be safe, orderly and respectful of the rights of others. All students at America's Finest Charter School will:

- 1. Attend school every day and be on time.*
- 2. Be kind and respectful to everyone. Foul language is not permitted.*
- 3. Wear appropriate clothing. No baggy or revealing clothes allowed.*
- 4. Walk quietly on campus.*
- 5. Keep the school building, grounds, furniture and materials in good condition. Bathrooms need to be kept clean.*
- 6. Refrain from chewing gum on campus. Snacks will only be eaten during times designated by the classroom teacher.*
- 7. Refrain from bringing personal electronic devices (including air buds), toys or slime. They will be confiscated and returned to parents/guardians.*
- 8. Check bikes, skateboards and scooters in at the front office. They will be held in a safe place.*

9. *Keep cell phones turned off and NOT visible during school hours or they will be kept by the classroom teacher until the end of the school day. This includes recess and P.E. as well as After School Programs.*

10. *Not bring food that needs to be microwaved. Microwaving food is for staff only.*

Harassment

Students will express themselves in a polite and non-violent manner and treat each other with dignity and respect. Harassment, bullying, or any form of intimidation or exploitation, is prohibited. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

Conflict Resolution

The school shall promote nonviolent conflict resolution techniques in order to encourage attitudes and behaviors that foster harmonious relations. AFCS may include programs in conflict resolution, including, but not limited to, instruction in effective communication and listening, critical thinking, problem-solving processes and the use of negotiation to find mutually acceptable solutions. Conflict resolution programs shall not supplant the authority of the staff to take appropriate action as necessary to prevent violence, ensure student safety, maintain order in the school, and institute disciplinary measures.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student. For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property.

Community Service

Community Service is important for all students to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Community service may additionally be assigned, as part of, or instead of disciplinary action. The Board, School Director, principal or principal's designee may, at his/her discretion, require a student to perform community service on school grounds, or with written permission of the student's parent/guardian off school grounds, during non-school hours. Such service may include, but is not limited to, community or school outdoor beautification, campus betterment, and teacher, peer or youth programs.

This community service option is not available for a student who has been suspended, pending expulsion. However, if the recommended expulsion is not implemented or the expulsion itself is suspended, then a student may be required to perform community service for the resulting suspension pursuant to this section.

Suspension/Expulsion

The suspension and expulsion policy was established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at AFCS. When the policy is broken it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. A summary of the policy is below. For the complete policy please refer to the AFCS Charter Petition available in the school office or on our website at www.americasfinestcharterschool.org

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student will be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at the School or at any other school or a School sponsored event at any time including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Charter Director with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Director. The conference may be omitted if the Director or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Instructional Director or designee determines that the pupil has committed an expellable offense.

School Disturbances

America's Finest Charter School has taken steps to be prepared to cope with campus disturbances and to minimize the risks they entail. In the event of a disturbance that threatens students or staff, the Director has the authority to call in law enforcement personnel for

assistance and may dismiss school. Students who participate in disturbances may be subject to disciplinary action.

Prohibited Activities

1. **Disturbing the Peace:** *It is a misdemeanor to intentionally cause or attempt to cause a riot by engaging in conduct which urges a riot or urges others to act forcefully or violently, or to burn or destroy property under circumstances which produce a clear, present, and immediate danger of such acts occurring. Anyone who, in a public place, fights, challenges another to fight, or uses offensive words likely to provoke a fight is guilty of a misdemeanor.*

2. **Disruption of School Operations:** *Students shall be subject to disciplinary action for any exercise of free expression which so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises or the violation of lawful school regulations, or the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school, such as may occur when students:*

a. *Organize or participate in unauthorized assemblies on school premises.*

b. *Participate in sit-ins or stand-ins which deny students or employees normal access to school premises.*

3. **Refusal to Disperse:** *Persons who assemble for the purpose of disturbing the public peace or committing any unlawful act are severely guilty of a misdemeanor if they do not disperse when desired or commanded to do so by a public officer. Persons who remain present at the place of any riot, rout or unlawful assembly after being lawfully warned to disperse are guilty of a misdemeanor.*

4. **Boycotts:** *Students participating in any protest that involves nonattendance at school or at a school activity where attendance is required shall be identified as truant, regardless of any parental approval of their act.*

Computer/Internet Use

All students affiliated with America's Finest Charter School are expected to use good judgment when using computing resources, including Internet access and e-mail. This also includes appropriate personal behavior while using the computers. The rules of reasonableness, respect, courtesy, common sense and legal requirements apply to all of the electronic communications.

Inappropriate use of computing resources or inappropriate behavior while using the resources include, but are not limited to:

- *Any activities that may be construed as illegal including any wagering, betting, or selling. It is inappropriate to conduct any commercial activities (personal for-profit activities) or fund-raising unless sanctioned by the school on computers supplied by the school.*
- *Harassment or illegal discrimination with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership or activity in a local commission.*
- *Transmission or storage of offensive, racist, sexist, obscene or pornographic information or materials.*
- *Downloading software (including games, wallpaper, and screensavers) from the Internet unless authorized specifically by the school.*
- *Use of profanity or abusive, slanderous, vulgar or defamatory language.*
- *Misuse of the school property, such as theft or damage to equipment or software, knowingly running or installing viruses, attempting to circumvent the installed data protection methods or attempting to degrade the performance or integrity of any campus network or computer system. Students using the computers must agree to adhere to the terms of the Student Computer Use Policy and other related policies found in the Student Handbook. All students are to respect the rights and feelings of those people who may be working near them or who may otherwise come into contact with material displayed or stored on their computer, either intentionally or unintentionally.*

Anyone found abusing the equipment, violating these rules, or being discourteous to others may be asked to leave the computer labs and revocation of use privileges may result. Students suspected of violating this policy may be subject to investigation and disciplinary action, up to and including revocation of use privileges, suspension or expulsion from school.

School Accountability Report Cards (SARC)

Public schools throughout California are required to provide information about themselves to the community in the form of an annual SARC. These report cards provide a variety of data to allow the public to evaluate and compare schools in seven major areas:

- *Demographic information*
- *School safety and learning climate*

- *Academic data*
- *Class size*
- *Teacher and staff information*
- *Curriculum and instruction*
- *Fiscal and expenditure data*

America's Finest Charter School will post the SARC on the school website.

Volunteers

AFCS encourages parents/guardians and other members of the community to share their time, knowledge, and abilities with our students. Community volunteers in our schools enrich the educational program and strengthen our schools' relationships with homes, businesses, public agencies, and private institutions. The presence of volunteers in the classroom and on school grounds also enhances supervision of students and contributes to school safety.

To protect the safety of students and adults, all volunteers must submit evidence of a current negative tuberculosis test. Volunteers working with students who are not under the direct supervision of a certificated teacher must submit to fingerprinting, and criminal records checks. All volunteers shall follow school policies, procedures and school rules.

A volunteer's work may include short-term projects to the extent that they enhance the classroom or school, meet a specific need, comply with established school rules and all laws and regulations.

Birthday Guidelines



We know that your child's birthday is an important day!

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school please follow these guidelines. If you do not celebrate birthdays because of your religious beliefs please let the teacher know and an alternative activity will be planned for your child. This list needs to be followed for school parties.

- *Birthdays can be celebrated during the last 15 minutes of the day.*
- *Please notify your child's teacher one week in advance.*

- *You may bring granola or fruit bars, fruit popsicles, any fruits or cheese and crackers. Drinks need to be 100% fruit juice or water. Please do not make or bake foods, they need to be store bought. Pizza and subway sandwiches are acceptable.*
- *Party favors are fine except for bags of candy.*

Bullying Prevention

America's Finest Charter School believes that all students have a right to a safe and a healthy school environment that promotes mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

What is school bullying?

Bullying is exposing a person to abusive actions repeatedly over time. Being aware of children's teasing and acknowledging injured feelings are always important. Bullying becomes a concern when hurtful or aggressive behavior toward an individual or group appears to be unprovoked, intentional, and (usually) repeated.

Bullying is a form of violence. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying may be physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), verbal (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or emotional (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, extorting, or intimidating). Bullying can occur face-to-face or in the online world.

Bullying is also one or more acts by a pupil or group of pupils directed against another pupil that constitutes sexual harassment, hate violence, or severe or pervasive intentional harassment, threats, or intimidation that is disruptive, causes disorder, and invades the rights of others by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment, and includes acts that are committed personally or by means of an electronic act, as defined.

An "electronic act" is defined as transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device, including but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager.

At AFCS we will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of a student. A student shall not bully, intimidate, or harass another student through words or actions. Such behavior may include: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

AFCS expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or behavior specialist. Staff who witness such acts will take immediate steps to intervene and promptly investigate each complaint. This policy is effective on school grounds, while traveling

to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during lunch period, whether on or off campus, and during a school-sponsored activity. This policy is also effective wherever cyber-bullying occurs and impacts the daily routines of the school.

To ensure that bullying does not occur on our campus, AFCS will provide staff development training in bullying prevention and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to build our school's capacity to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.

If a student, or the parent/guardian of the student feels that the appropriate resolution or investigation of the incident has not been reached, the student or the parent of the student should contact the principal or behavior specialist. The school prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

Teachers discuss this policy with students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Conflict Resolution

Policy for Conflict Resolution

America's Finest Charter School believes students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. Part of a healthy environment is the freedom to openly disagree. With this freedom comes the responsibility to discuss and resolve disagreements with respect for the rights and opinions of others.

To prevent conflict, AFCS will incorporate conflict resolution education and problem solving techniques into the curriculum. This is an important step in promoting respect and acceptance, developing new ways of communicating, understanding, and accepting differing values and cultures within the school community and helps ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.

America's Finest Charter School will provide training to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills students need to choose alternatives to self-destructive, violent behavior and dissolve interpersonal and intergroup conflict. Each school will adopt a Student Code of Conduct to be followed by every student. This policy is in effect while on school grounds, when traveling to and from school or school-sponsored activity, during lunch, and whether on or off campus.

What the law states:

California Education Code Section 200

It is the policy of the State of California to afford all persons in public schools, regardless of their disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state.

Penal Code Section 422.55.

"Hate crime" means a criminal act committed, in whole or in part, because of one or more of the following actual or perceived characteristics of the victim:

- Disability.
- Gender.
- Nationality.
- Race or ethnicity.
- Religion.
- Sexual orientation.
- Association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

I have read and agree to the terms and conditions of America's Finest Charter School's Bullying Prevention Policy and understand the extent of punishment involved if participating in bullying or intimidation among students of AFCS.

Student's Signature(s)

Grade

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Parent Name: (Please print)

_____ *Date*

Parent signature: _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT OF AMERICA'S FINEST CHARTER SCHOOL HOME HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the AFCS Home Handbook. I understand that I am to read and become familiar with the contents. If I have questions, I understand that I should talk to the Director, Mr. Tim Bagby.

Parent Name (Please Print)

Date

Student's Name(s)

Grade(s)

Parent Signature: _____