

Abernathy Collegiate Charter School

Parent and Student Handbook 2013-2014



This document is intended to help you navigate your path through ACCS. Please use it as a resource, and always be sure to check the school website (www.abernathycharterschool.com) and consult with your teachers and/or administrators if something is unclear.

ACCS MISSION AND VISION

Abernathy Collegiate School is a public charter school whose mission and vision is to provide exemplary, standards based college preparatory education for public middle and high school students. Our vision is to offer any student the same quality of education offered by the most academically distinguished schools in California. Our graduates will be prepared to enter and thrive at the world's finest colleges and universities.

The founders of ACCS believe in a curriculum that inspires critical thinking with a world view consistent with United States founding principles. In current curricula used around the state, there is an absence of teaching students how to use the information they learn for problem-solving and critical thinking. The ACCS curriculum will teach students how to think and reason critically, as well as provide a substantive base of knowledge, resulting in a well-rounded, culturally literate individual.

Students at Abernathy Collegiate Charter School will strive for excellence in academics, character, and extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of teachers not to expect anything less than excellence. For instance, students who turn in an essay with easy to find grammar and typographical errors will be required to redo the assignment. From writing a well-written five-paragraph essay to sportsmanship on the soccer field, students will strive to do everything with excellence. By consistently striving for excellence, students are preparing themselves to enter a community in college where excellence will always be demanded. Paying attention to the details and constantly striving to do something better will separate ACCS graduates from many other students across the country.

We believe that the single most important factor for students' success is the quality of their teachers. Research shows that teachers who rank in the top 25% of effectiveness make gains that are four times more than those of teachers who rank in the bottom 25% of effectiveness. Our ambitious goals can only be attained if we recruit, select, and hire a faculty that will work tirelessly and strategically to ensure that students read and write with fluency and comprehension, compute with accuracy, and apply those skills to the world around them.

Social promotion, commonly defined as advancing forward a student who is failing for largely social reasons (to the student or to the parent) to repeat a year, is widely recognized to be a public policy failure; it does not serve the student, the other pupils, or society as a whole. Abernathy Collegiate Charter School will maintain academic accountability for all, and students who fail required classes will repeat them. Every reasonable effort will be made to identify and assist struggling students before they have to repeat a course. This includes use of study hall and extended learning tutorial programs.

Students, parents, and staff at Abernathy Collegiate Charter School will make a choice to be part of the school community. No student will be forced or assigned to attend the Charter School. Students who choose to enroll at ACCS will commit to meeting the high academic and behavioral expectations of an ACCS student. Parents who choose to enroll their students at ACCS will commit to supporting their child through their school experience. Staff members who choose to work at ACCS will commit to doing whatever it takes to ensure 100% of students enter and succeed in the nation's finest four-year colleges and universities. By making the choice and commitment to be part of the school community, students, parents, and staff at Abernathy Collegiate Charter School will play an integral role in the Charter School's success.

student shall remain in the education placement determined by ACCS pending the results of the evaluation.

ACCS shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

VI. PARENT AND STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Research indicates that when parents are involved in the education of their child, the child's success in school dramatically increases. ACCS seeks to create a school environment that invites family participation and involvement and that works as a community united in a common purpose. In order to create a strong school community where every child can reach his or her fullest potential, each family must be involved at the school.

VOLUNTEERS AND PARENT ACTION COMMITTEES

Once a child is admitted to the school, his or her family is encouraged to sign up with one of the school's parent action committees. It is by working on these committees that most parents will complete their recommended parent participation hours. Possible committees include Fundraising Committee, Academic Mentoring Committee, Landscape and Garden Committee, Building Maintenance Committee, Community Service Committee, Technology Committee, Art and Music Committee, Business Partnerships Committee, Teacher Support Committee, recreation/sports committee, and Parent Relations Committee. The principal of the school will oversee the work of these committees. Where appropriate, especially in the higher grades, students will be invited to participate on these action committees in an effort to involve students in the on-going operations of the school.

FAMILY VOLUNTEER HOURS

One Board member serves as co-chair of the Parent Volunteer Association (PVA) and reports to the Board the input, feedback, or concerns of parents and the PVA as is relevant to board discussions or action. The PVA, of which each parent is a member, supports the Charter School by organizing fundraising and social/cultural events for students, encouraging parent volunteer service to the Charter School, and serving as a liaison between parents and the staff of Abernathy Collegiate Charter School. Each family is asked to make a commitment to provide 30 service hours annually to support the activities of the Charter School and the educational experience of the students. Failure to participate in volunteer hours may result in loss of priority enrollment rights for the following year.

Parents will also be involved by actively working with their children on homework and school projects, and will be invited regularly to campus for events like orientation, Back to School Night, parent-teacher conferences, and special events.

Volunteers who will volunteer *outside* of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

STUDENT VOLUNTEER HOURS

An ACCS student is a student that has exhibited a sense of civic responsibility by participating in volunteerism/community service. All students must meet the community service requirement; 10 hours per year in grades 7-8, and 20 hours per year in grades 9-12.

PARENT AGREEMENT

There are many ways that you may be involved and participate at ACCS.

Provide Home Academic Support by:

- Ensuring your child comes to school ready to learn.
- Assisting and monitoring homework assignments.
- Reading with my student every night and/or providing a quiet place to work.
- Following through with school recommended actions.
- Reviewing this agreement with my child.

Provide School Support by:

- Sending my child to school on time, in his or her required “common dress”, and with a nutritious lunch.
- Supporting and adhering to the School Academic, Discipline and Behavior Policies.

Participate by:

- Attending mandatory Parent Meetings each year.
- Developing and fulfilling commitments in the ACCS Family Partnership Plan.
- Attending school exhibitions of student work.
- Attending mandatory all-school meetings.
- Actively collaborating and communicating with teachers to meet my child’s learning needs.
- Believing and reinforcing the ACCS mission
- Making positive contributions to the school community.
- Being an active member of the school community by working to continuously improve ACCS for all students.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PLAN

The Family Partnership Plan is the statement for how you will contribute to the whole school community in your own individual and unique ways. Families have the option for how they would like to be involved and the specifics of that involvement. Ways for families to be involved and complete the thirty hours of service include but are not limited to the following:

- Volunteering in your child’s classroom.
- Providing food at community meetings.
- Participating on the Parent Advisory Committee.
- Campus supervision
- Helping with the cleaning and maintenance of the school building
- Guest Lecturer
- Translating materials
- Attending parent workshops
- Work on special interest committees
- Fundraising
- Field Trip supervision
- Community Partnerships
- Community Service Program
- Internships
- Attending student performances
- Awards Assemblies
- Other

This list is not exhaustive and we encourage you to think of other ways we have not mentioned for how you would like to be involved.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering at the school is an excellent way to be involved in the education of your child in a way that also benefits the operations of the school. Volunteers can do a range of work from helping in the office, to preparing homework packets, tutoring small groups making phone calls, etc. In order to keep all children safe and in the best interest of the school, the school may require volunteers to be fingerprinted.