



SCHOLAR & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2022-2023 School Year

Dear Families,

We are incredibly excited to welcome you to the CASA family! At CASA, our mission is to ensure our scholars are prepared for success in college, life, and society, and we will work relentlessly to accomplish this goal. This handbook provides critical information our families should know about CASA Academy and the education we provide. Please read through this handbook **completely** and let us know if you have any questions or need clarification on any of the procedures or policies in place. We are thrilled you have chosen CASA Academy as your child's school and look forward to working in partnership with you this school year!

Sincerely,

The CASA Academy Staff

School, Family, and Scholar Accountability

CASA Academy, families, and scholars will work together, holding each other accountable for ensuring scholar success. By reading through and signing this document, parents indicate that they understand the expectations and systems of CASA Academy and will comply with the procedures and policies referenced within this document. Occasionally, it may become necessary to modify, change, update, revoke, replace or even terminate the policies outlined in this handbook, and CASA Academy (“the School”) reserves the right to make changes at any time at its discretion with or without notice.

Section 1: Introduction

Educational Philosophy

CASA Academy’s educational philosophy stems from the following four core beliefs:

1. All students, regardless of background, deserve the opportunity to receive an excellent education that prepares them for the demands of college, life, and society.
2. The primary grades set the foundation for student success in college, life and society; and, school must include daily opportunities for students to think critically and apply their learning in authentic ways.
3. An excellent education includes both academics and character development; together these elements enable students to persevere throughout their educational experiences and lives, thus setting them up for a better life path.
4. Providing students with an excellent education, in turn, strengthens society as a whole.

Mission

CASA Academy provides low income students with the early academic foundation and character skills necessary to graduate from college and succeed in life. At CASA we are not just a school, but a movement to raise the bar for education in Phoenix.

Core Values

CASA Academy places large value in explicitly teaching and modeling our core values because we believe that character development is essential in preparing our scholars for success in college, life, and society. This emphasis on character rests on the notion that it is not enough for scholars to simply be intelligent; they must also know how to use their intelligence for the greater good. Core values will be displayed in interactions throughout the day between scholars, staff, and parents, and are an integral part of our culture as a school.

CASA Academy’s core values are as follows:

Respect. We honor and value the beliefs of others. We treat others with kindness and courtesy at all times.

Responsibility. We are accountable for our actions and work. We are in charge of ourselves.

Perseverance. We work relentlessly to accomplish our goals. We do not make excuses; when things get hard, we keep trying.

Integrity. We operate with honesty. We always do the right thing even if no one is watching.

Empowerment. We take ownership of decisions, successes, and setbacks. We make choices that reflect our own best interests as people and as members of our community.

Enthusiasm. We approach life with passion, energy, and excitement.

General School Information

Address

8047 N 35th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85051

Main office: (602) 892-5022
Fax: (602) 892-5023

All staff will provide their school cell phone numbers and email addresses to parents at the beginning of the year.

Contacting the School During the Day

For all communication with the school, please call the main office and if no one answers, please leave a voicemail with your name, phone number and a detailed explanation of why you are calling. If your call is made and you leave a message before 3 pm, it will be returned before the end of the business day. If your call is made after 3 pm, the call will be returned before the end of the next business day.

In the case of an emergency, please call the main office. If you cannot get through, please call the Director of Students and Operations. In all cases, leave a voicemail with your name, phone number and a detailed message.

Contacting Staff Members

General Questions (attendance, etc.): Please contact the main office at the number provided during regular school business hours.

Teachers (homework, behavior, academic questions, etc.): Please contact teachers on their cell phones or via email during regular school hours. Calls placed/ emails received after 3 pm may not be returned until the next business day.

School Administrators: Please contact school administrators by calling the main office during regular business hours. Calls placed/ emails received after 3 pm may not be returned until the next business day.

Hours of Operations

In the pursuit of excellence, CASA Academy has an extended school day. This gives scholars more time for academic growth and enrichment. It also gives scholars the time and support needed to make great strides in realizing their potential, both academically and personally.

Daily Arrival: Scholars must arrive no later than 7:54 am.

Daily Dismissal: Scholars will depart school promptly at 3:20 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. On Thursdays, scholars dismiss early at 12:45 pm.

The school building will be open to scholars at 7:35 am, Monday through Friday. All scholars must be in their seats by 7:55 am in order to be considered on time. Scholars may not enter the building before 7:35 am.

Scholars will be dismissed from school at 3:20 pm daily. If parents or guardians need to speak to a teacher or conduct any other classroom business, this should occur after dismissal. The school building is open at 7:35 am and closes at 5 pm.

Please note that we do not permit scholars to leave early from campus and that the door will not be answered during the last 30 minutes of the school day.

Attendance & Tardy Policies

School attendance is not only a good habit, state law requires it. Arizona State Law (15-802.E, 15-803) requires every person who has custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen years shall make sure the child attends school for the full time school is in session. In order for our academic program to be successful, it is absolutely essential that scholars be present in school every day. The attendance policy at CASA Academy has been formed in order to ensure that this remains the case.

Parents and guardians are expected to call the school as early as possible but **no later than 8:30 a.m.** if their scholar will not be attending school for any reason. Earlier, written notification is both welcomed and appreciated. Calls should be made as far in advance as possible and can be left on the school's main voicemail. In phone calls, voicemails, and notes, please indicate your scholar's name, your relationship to the scholar, and the reason for and date(s) of the scholar's absence. If a scholar is not at school and the school has not been notified that he or she will be absent, CASA Academy staff will make reasonable efforts to contact the scholar's parent/guardian by telephone, writing, or in person.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

We realize that there are times when scholars will not be in school, but we strongly believe that your scholar's education must be the priority for both you and your scholar. The following types of absences will be considered excused:

- Student illness with a doctor's note or explanation from the parent, explaining the nature of an illness to indicate that your scholar should not be in school. *Please note: All routine doctor and dentist appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours or during school vacations; these will not be considered excused absences.*
- A death in the immediate family.
- Religious holiday.
- Court-mandated appearances with proper documentation.
- Under certain circumstances, CASA Academy will also consider scholars' IEPs, accommodation plans and individualized health care plans in determining whether an absence is "excused."

In order for any of the above absences to be excused, the school must be notified in advance or at the time of any absence by a parent or guardian.

All other absences will be considered unexcused. Scholars will not be excused for family vacations or any other engagement. If a scholar is absent from school due to suspensions, these days will be treated the same as unexcused absences.

Attendance Consequences

In order to help ensure that scholars do not exceed 25 unexcused absences, CASA Academy has certain support interventions in place. They are detailed below:

Five (5) or more unexcused absences: If a scholar has five (5) or more unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be asked to meet with the child's teacher immediately. At this meeting, both the family and the school will discuss the problem and its impact on the scholar's education, and a more intensive attendance plan will be developed.

Ten (10) or more unexcused absences: If a scholar has ten (10) or more unexcused absences in a school year, the parent/guardian will be required to meet with a member of the school leadership team. At this meeting, the attendance policy will be reviewed in detail and the potential of grade level retention will be discussed.

Eighteen (18) or more unexcused absences: If a scholar has accumulated eighteen (18) or more unexcused absences in a school year, the parent/guardian will be asked to meet with a member of the school leadership team and the scholar's teacher. At this meeting, the scholar's academic performance will be closely examined and grade level retention could be recommended, pending further unexcused absences.

More than twenty-five (25) unexcused absences in a year: If a scholar has accumulated twenty-five (25) unexcused absences in a school year, the scholar may be retained. The final retention decision will be made by a member of the school leadership team. The school reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy.

Please be aware of the following specific policies pertaining to excessive absences:

- Excessive total absences (including excused absences and tardies) are a factor in retention at all grade levels. Should a scholar accumulate more than 25 unexcused absences in one year, it will be at the school's discretion to determine if retention is appropriate for the current grade.
- Scholars will be held accountable for work missed due to suspension, vacation, or absences. Work may not be provided in advance of absences. Please be aware that it is not possible to exactly replicate work missed during absences as much of this work is direct instruction from the teacher and may or may not use worksheets.
- Scholars who are absent from school cannot attend or participate in any other school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence, unless advance permission has been granted by the school.
- If a scholar is absent for the first five (5) days of school, or has at least ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences during the school year, her or she will be withdrawn from the school.

Punctuality and Tardiness: CASA Academy values punctuality. It is an important life skill and a sign of respect to others. Just as we expect staff to be punctual for their scholars, families need to ensure that scholars arrive to school on time. This is important because CASA Academy scholars begin their learning from the moment they enter the building. Scholars are provided morning duties and work before and after breakfast. If a scholar is late to school, he or she may miss essential instruction, disrupt the learning of other scholars, and risk falling behind.

Tardiness Consequences

CASA Academy's doors open at 7:35 am. Scholars must arrive to school between 7:35 and 7:54 am. Scholars arriving later than 7:54 am are considered tardy. For every tardy that occurs, the scholar will miss five minutes of recess. Excessive tardiness is a truancy problem; the scholar/family will be at risk of being cited for truancy with the State.

Early Dismissal Policy

Early dismissal permission will be given only in extreme circumstances, such as an emergency. The office will be closed to parents for the last 30 minutes of the day in order to preserve instructional time at the end of the day. Parents should plan to pick their scholar up no earlier than 3:20 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and 12:45 p.m. on Thursdays. Doctor and dentist appointments should be limited to non-school hours to avoid scholars missing class time.

Each scholar who is excused early must be signed out in the office by the scholar's parent/guardian or by another person with specific, written authorization by the parents/guardians. The school office staff is not authorized to release scholars to anyone other than a parent/guardian unless specifically authorized to do so by the parent/guardian in writing. There is a place on the Emergency Contact and Authorization Form in the enrollment packet for the parent(s) to list specific individuals to whom the scholar may be released. Please update any changes on the Emergency Contact and Authorization Form as they occur.

Scholar Drop-Off

Cars: Parents may drop their scholar off between 7:35 am and 7:54 am. In the interest of time, CASA Academy has created an efficient drop-off system for cars in the morning. A map will be presented to parents with further details. A staff member will be at the door to greet scholars. If a parent is dropping off his or her scholar via car, the parent and scholar should remain in their car until a staff member opens the car door. The scholar should be seated on the right-hand side of the vehicle, so that the staff member does not need to walk behind or in front of the car to get the scholar. This is to ensure safety for both scholars and staff members. Once the scholar is safely out of the car, the parent should immediately exit so that the next car can be unloaded. All parents are expected to stay inside of their cars when dropping scholars off; parents who choose to ignore this policy will be asked to get back into the car line to drop off their child.

Walkers: Parents may drop their scholar off between 7:35 am and 7:54 am. All parents are expected to remain with their scholar until they have released their scholar to the staff member at the gate.

Bus: All scholars will exit their bus and enter the school building via the sidewalk.

Scholar Pick-Up

Cars: Scholars should be picked up promptly at 3:20 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and 12:45 pm on Thursdays. In the interest of time, CASA Academy has created an efficient pick-up system for cars in the afternoon. A map will be provided to parents with more details. Parents should remain in their cars until a staff member comes to their door with their scholar, and their scholar is safely in the car. The scholar will get inside on the right-hand side of the vehicle, so that the scholar and staff member do not need to walk behind or in front of the car. This is to ensure safety for both scholars and staff members. Once the scholar is safely inside the car, the parent should immediately exit so that the next car can be loaded. All parents are expected to stay inside of their cars when picking scholars up; parents who choose to ignore this policy will be asked to get back into the car line to pick up their child.

Walkers: Parents may pick up their scholars at 3:20 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and 12:45 pm on Thursdays. All parent/guardians or other individuals who are authorized by the parent/legal guardian to pick up the scholar must come directly to the gate to take their scholar's hand in order to be released from the school. Parents will not be able to wait in the main office for their scholars because the office will be closed during dismissal.

Bus: All scholars will board their bus at 3:20 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and at 12:45 pm on Thursdays.

Late Pick-up: At the end of each day, staff members remain after school to plan for and improve upcoming instruction. For this reason, they are unable to watch any scholars past the dismissal period. Parents who arrive **five** minutes past the dismissal time are considered late and will need to pay for afterschool care that day at a **rate of fifty cents per minute late**. Exceptions to this policy will include emergency situations such as a car accident, hospitalization, etc. with appropriate documentation (police report, hospital note, etc.). Calls to inform the school that you are late will not prevent you from being charged this fifty cents per minute late fee. Parents who have registered their scholar for afterschool care must pick up their scholar by 5:00 pm each day. Parents who arrive after 5:00 pm are considered late and will need to pay a late fee penalty of fifty cents per minute late. Scholars will not be able to participate in school events or field trips until late fees have been paid in full. If parents are over 30 minutes late picking up their scholar(s) without calling/notifying the school, CASA Academy will contact the local police.

Afterschool Care

Afterschool care will be made available to families for approximately \$1.00 per day (this equals \$50.00 per quarter or \$200.00 per year). The program runs from 3:20 pm to 5:00 pm. This is an extremely low price in comparison to daycare centers and other afterschool programs in the area. The program will include homework and reading time. On early release days, the program includes homework and reading time as well as playtime. This program will last for exactly one hour and forty minutes after school ends on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and for approximately four

hours on Thursdays. The cost for the upcoming quarter (including afterschool care and half day care) must be paid in full no later than the last day of preceding quarter.

School Uniforms

<i>Girls Uniform</i>	<i>Boys Uniform</i>
CASA polo shirt (must have CASA logo); must be tucked in at all times	CASA polo shirt (must have CASA logo); must be tucked in at all times
White undershirt (if desired)	White undershirt (if desired)
Navy blue shorts, pants or skirt (cotton only; skirts must be at least knee-length)	Navy blue shorts or pants (cotton only)
Black, brown or navy blue belt (if desired)	Black, brown or navy blue belt (if desired)
Black or white socks (must be solid black or white; no other colors are permitted)	Black or white socks (must be solid black or white; no other colors are permitted)
Black or white close-toed shoes (must be solid black or white; no other colors are permitted)	Black or white close-toed shoes (must be solid black or white; no other colors are permitted)
Large backpack with 2 straps	Large backpack with 2 straps
Hair is pulled up in a bun, ponytail, or braid (leaving hair down is not permitted)	Hair up or in a bun (if applicable)
Shoelaces double tied	Shoelaces double tied
<i>Winter Clothing</i>	
CASA sweater (must have CASA logo)	CASA sweater (must have CASA logo)
Long-sleeved white or light blue undershirt	Long-sleeved white or light blue undershirt
Black, white or navy blue leggings	
Jewelry and boots are not permitted.	

Uniform Violations: Uniforms promote professionalism on our campus and prevent scholars from being distracted during their learning time. For this reason, scholar uniforms will be checked each morning. Scholars with uniform violations will miss recess on the day of the violation.

Accidents: All kindergarten scholars’ parents are responsible for leaving a change of clothes in the CASA Academy main office in case their scholar has an accident. ***This does not need to be a uniform.*** If the scholar does have an accident, it is the parents’ job to bring back the change of clothes once they have been washed. For grades first and second, for those scholars who are prone to accidents, parents may leave a change of clothes for the scholar in the office. If a scholar has an accident at school and a change of clothes is not available for the scholar, the parent will be called immediately and asked to bring a change of clothes for their scholar. CASA will not provide changes of clothes for scholars.

Breakfast and Lunch Procedures

The school participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, which provides free or reduced price meals and free milk to eligible scholars. At the beginning of the school year, each scholar will be given an application for families to complete. Once the scholar’s application for free or reduced price meals has been returned to the school, families will be notified by mail of their eligibility. *For scholars who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals, the price for breakfast is \$2.00 and the price for lunch is \$3.00.*

Breakfast: Scholars who arrive late to school will not receive breakfast. Upon arrival at school, scholars will put away their belongings, turn in their homework, and proceed quietly to their assigned seat. Once they are seated, they may begin to eat their breakfast. Scholars must remain seated during breakfast. Scholars are required to clean and wipe their tables after breakfast.

Lunch: Scholars may either purchase lunch from the school or bring their own lunch from home. Scholars are welcome to bring a lunch from home, but please note that scholars will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave. Junk foods (soda, candy, chips, etc.) are never permitted at school, even in lunches brought from home (please see the *Health Food Policy* below). Scholars must remain seated during lunch. Scholars may talk using “restaurant level” voices when permitted. Scholars are required to clean their tables after lunch.

Health Food Policy: Because we want to ensure that our scholars are healthy, we have a healthy food policy. We always offer healthy items in our lunches (such as vegetables, fruits, protein, etc.). Examples of healthy lunch items that could be brought from home include a sandwich, cheese, fruit bar, granola bar, celery, carrots, strawberries, grapes, apples, and 100% fruit, dried fruit snacks. Examples of unhealthy snacks include potato chips, Lunchables, fast food meals, Takis, soda, Cheetos, cookies, fruit roll-ups, and cupcakes, even if the food is in a 100-calorie pack. Please note that juice boxes are only permitted if they are 100% juice. If a food item is not considered healthy by the school, the food item will be thrown away.

Food Allergies: The school will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate scholars with food allergies. Parents are required to inform the school of all food allergies and their severity. Once parents have informed the school, school staff will meet with the family in order to develop an Individual Health Care Plan. A parent of a scholar with food allergies is responsible for providing classroom lunch for his or her own scholar. Sharing or trading of food is prohibited for all scholars.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Acceptable Use: The Internet is a global network linking computers around the world. Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. CASA Academy offers Internet access to scholars and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of the school. The school expects that scholars and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose.

While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. The school makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of the school’s Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet. Technology resources covered by this policy include commercial, governmental, and private telecommunications-accessible networks (such as the Internet), local networks, databases, and any computer-accessible source of communication or information, whether from or to file servers, hard drives, tapes, compact disks, floppy disks, or other electronic storage or retrieval means.

Unacceptable Use: The following is a list of prohibited behaviors. The list is not exhaustive but illustrates unacceptable uses of the school’s Internet service:

- Disclosing, using or disseminating personal identification information about self or others;
- Accessing, sending or forwarding materials or communications that are defamatory, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, or illegal;
- Using the Internet service for any illegal activities such as gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, participating in criminal gang activity, threatening others, transferring obscene material, or attempting to do any of the above;
- Using the Internet service to receive or send information relating to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry;
- Vandalizing school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means;
- Copying or downloading of copyrighted material without authorization from the copyright holder, unless the copies are used for teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Users shall not copy and forward or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of the CEO;

- Plagiarizing material obtained from the Internet. Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through E-mail or news sources must also be credited as sources;
- Using the Internet service for commercial purposes;
- Downloading or installing any commercial software, shareware, freeware or similar types of material onto network drives or disks without prior permission from the CEO; and
- Overriding the Internet filtering software.

Safety Issues: Use of the Internet has potential dangers. The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications. Scholars should:

- Never reveal any identifying information such as names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs.
- Use the "back" key whenever they encounter a site that they believe is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Immediately tell a teacher if they receive a message that they believe is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Never share their password or use another person's password. Internet passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. If scholars suspect that someone has discovered their password, they should change it immediately and notify a teacher.

Privacy: Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. The school reserves the right to examine all data stored on any medium involved in the user's use of the school's Internet service. Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

Violations: Access to the school's Internet service is a privilege not a right. The school reserves the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (scholars), or dismissal (staff) for violations of this policy. The school will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the school's Internet service. The school also will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

School Staff

Our teachers are committed to providing quality educational opportunities for scholars while promoting a professional learning community. Parents/guardians are permitted to review staff qualifications. Please contact the Director of Students and Operations to arrange an opportunity to review a staff member's qualifications, educational background, and professional experience.

Drug and Tobacco Free Zone

CASA Academy is a Drug and Tobacco Free zone. Arizona law specifically prohibits any type of tobacco on public school campuses. This includes outside on the grounds or in the parking lot. This also includes all forms of tobacco. No parent, scholar, staff member, or other person may smoke or have tobacco products anywhere on the campus at any time.

Skateboards, Bicycles, Roller Skates, Roller Blades, and Roller Shoes

Scholars may not use bicycles, skateboards, roller skates, roller blades, or roller shoes as a means of transportation to or from school. Skateboards, roller skates, roller blades, roller shoes, and shoes with wheels are not allowed anywhere on campus at any time.

Restricted Items

All electronic devices including smart watches, smart glasses (i.e. Ray-Bans), cell phones, electronic dictionaries, CD players, cassette players, Gameboys, iPods, and MP3 players are not allowed to be used at school. **Scholars may not bring a cell phone to school (or on the bus)** and instead, may ask their teacher or the main office receptionist if they need to make a phone call using school telephones. Toys, electronic devices, snacks (unless part of lunch), magazines, hats or gloves worn inside the building, and any other item that violates school policy or disrupts the class or causes a hazard will be confiscated. Only a parent may pick up these items and this must be done in person at the main office.

Admissions Policy

Admission is not limited based upon ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language, or athletic ability. There is no tuition or fee charged for attending CASA Academy.

CASA Academy will admit all eligible pupils who submit a timely enrollment application. The School shall give enrollment preference to pupils returning to the charter school in the second or any subsequent year of its operation and to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the charter school. If, by the application deadline, the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building, all applicants for that program, class, grade level or building will be selected for the available slots through an equitable selection process except that preference shall be given to siblings of a pupil selected through an equitable selection process such as a lottery. After the application deadline, pupils for any remaining slots or for a waiting list will be accepted in chronological application order. A.R.S. 15-184(A).

CASA Academy may refuse to admit any pupil who has been expelled from another educational institution or who is in the process of being expelled from another educational institution. A.R.S. 15-184(F).

Classroom placement of scholars at CASA Academy will be conducted by school administration. It is not guaranteed that a scholar will be placed in a particular class.

Registration and Records

Enrollment: In order to enroll at CASA Academy, parents must fill out an enrollment packet, which includes residency documentation and basic information (such as name and date of birth). Parents and legal guardians have 30 days from the date of enrollment to provide proof of identity and age. Proof of the pupil's identity and age must be provided in accordance with A.R.S. §15-828(A). Parents or legal guardians are required to submit documentary proof of immunization, or evidence of a statutory exemption, prior to attendance A.R.S. §15-872(C).

If a scholar is transferring from another school, in order to complete the registration process, CASA Academy will need the records from the scholar's previous school and will request them within five school days after enrollment. Official transcripts should be sent to CASA Academy directly by the previously attended school or, if hand delivered, the transcripts should arrive sealed with a signature across the back of the envelope. If your scholar was previously home-schooled, a signed description of the curriculum and course content mastered must also be provided.

Parents have the right of access to the records of their scholar. The school reserves the right to have a 24-hour waiting period in order to maintain the smooth flow of school business, and to charge a reasonable fee for the cost of copying records. Non-custodial parents also have the right of access to records, unless the school has received a court document to the contrary. If a scholar withdraws from CASA Academy, the report card provided to the scholar's new school will include grades for fully completed quarters at the point in the year the scholar withdraws.

Health Information

Health screenings are provided annually in order to identify scholars with health problems such as vision or hearing deficits that may now, or in the future, affect their education. Parents/guardians are requested to notify the office if a scholar has a health problem. School personnel make every effort to comply with physicians' recommendations.

Parents and guardians are requested to keep scholars home if the following symptoms are present: nausea and/or vomiting, elevated temperature, red or inflamed eyes or any skin rash unless it has been diagnosed by a physician as non-infectious. State law requires that scholars be excluded from school if they are suspected of having a communicable disease.

Emergency Contact: Parents/guardians must make arrangements to have either a parent, neighbor, or other responsible person available at all times to pick up a scholar who is ill. Because it is occasionally necessary to contact parents/guardians, it is very important that parents/guardians inform the school immediately of any phone number or address changes. School officials may contact Child Protective Services if a scholar is not picked up within two hours of the parent/guardian being contacted.

Emergency Form: Parents are required to complete an emergency medical referral form for each of their scholars every year. This form will tell us how to contact you or another responsible adult if your scholar becomes ill or is injured at school. Parents are expected to notify school officials regarding scholars' health problems including allergies to foods, medicine, insect stings, etc. It is important to notify the office if your address, home phone number, cell phone number, business phone number or emergency phone number changes during the school year.

Flu: School officials will immediately send home scholars who exhibit an abrupt onset of any of the following symptoms: fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, vomiting, or severe sore throat.

Chicken Pox: The scholar must remain home seven to ten days after the first pox appear so that all pox can be completely scabbed over before the scholar returns to school.

Health Screening Programs

Hearing: We follow the guidelines recommended by the Arizona Department of Health Hearing Conservation program. Hearing tests are given to scholars at specified grade levels.

Vision: We follow the guidelines of the Arizona Department of Health Services Vision program. Vision tests are given to pupils at specified grade levels.

Lice: Please see policy below.

Lice Checks

- Once per month, scholars will be checked for lice. A staff member will look at the nape of the neck, behind the ears and at the hairline for any nits or lice.
- If scholar is identified as: a) having lice or b) having two or more nits that are located 1 inch away (or less) from the scalp, the parent will be called and scholar will be sent home.
- Parent must purchase lice shampoo and wash scholar's hair with said shampoo. Parent must provide proof of shampoo use (texted picture of bottle, shampoo bottle, etc.). Please note that shampoo may only be used once every 7 days (otherwise, it can be toxic to the skin).
- Each morning, parent should go through scholar's hair and comb/pick out nits. If scholar's head is clear, parent may send scholar to school.

- Scholar will be checked at the beginning of the first day back at school for nits that are 1 inch or less away from the scalp. If the scholar has less than 2 nits near the scalp, the strands of hair containing nits will be cut and scholar will be sent to class.
- If scholar has more than 2 nits, the scholar will be sent home again.

How to Treat Lice

Treating the infested person requires using an Over-the-Counter (OTC) or prescription medication. Follow these treatment steps:

1. Before applying treatment, it may be helpful to remove clothing that can become wet or stained during treatment.
2. Apply lice medicine, also called pediculicide, according to the instructions contained in the box or printed on the label. If the infested person has very long hair (longer than shoulder length), it may be necessary to use a second bottle. Pay special attention to instructions on the label or in the box regarding how long the medication should be left on the hair and how it should be washed out.
3. Do not use a combination shampoo/conditioner, or conditioner before using lice medicine. Do not re-wash the hair for 1–2 days after the lice medicine is removed.
4. Have the infested person put on clean clothing after treatment.
5. If a few live lice are still found 8–12 hours after treatment, but are moving more slowly than before, do not retreat. The medicine may take longer to kill all the lice. Comb any dead and remaining live lice out of the hair using a fine-toothed nit comb to avoid re-infestation and to avoid confusion in diagnosing.
6. If, after 8–12 hours of treatment, no dead lice are found and lice seem as active as before, the medicine may not be working. Do not retreat until speaking with your health care provider; a different pediculicide may be necessary. If your health care provider recommends a different pediculicide, carefully follow the treatment instructions contained in the box or printed on the label.
7. Nit (head lice egg) combs, often found in lice medicine packages, should be used to comb nits and lice from the hair shaft. Many flea combs made for cats and dogs are also effective.
8. After each treatment, checking the hair and combing with a nit comb to remove nits and lice every day will decrease the chance of self-re-infestation and help avoid confusion in diagnosing. Continue to check for 2–3 weeks to be sure all lice and nits are gone.
9. Retreatment is meant to kill any surviving hatched lice before they produce new eggs. For some drugs, retreatment is recommended routinely about a week after the first treatment (7–9 days, depending on the drug) and for others only if crawling lice are seen during this period.
10. Supplemental Measures: Head lice do not survive long if they fall off a person and cannot feed. You don't need to spend a lot of time or money on housecleaning activities. Follow these steps to help avoid re-infestation by lice that have recently fallen off the hair or crawled onto clothing or furniture.
 - Machine wash and dry clothing, bed linens, and other items that the infested person wore or used during the 2 days before treatment using the hot water (130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle. Clothing and items that are not washable can be dry-cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.
 - Soak combs and brushes in hot water (at least 130°F) for 5–10 minutes.
 - Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the infested person sat or lay. However, the risk of getting infested by a louse that has fallen onto a rug or carpet or furniture is very small. Head lice survive less than 1–2 days if they fall off a person and cannot feed; nits cannot hatch and usually die within a week if they are not kept at the same temperature as that found close to the human scalp. Spending much time and money on housecleaning activities is not necessary to avoid re-infestation by lice or nits that may have fallen off the head or crawled onto furniture or clothing.
 - Do not use fumigant sprays; they can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

Ways to Prevent Lice

- Avoid head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact during play and other activities at home, school, and elsewhere.
- Do not share clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair ribbons, or barrettes.
- Do not share combs, brushes, or towels. Disinfect combs and brushes used by an infested person by soaking them in hot water (at least 130°F) for 5–10 minutes.
- Do not lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with an infested person.
- Do not use fumigant sprays or fogs; they are not necessary to control head lice and can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

Important to Note

- Lice do not fly or jump from person to person.
- Lice are transmitted by direct head-to-head contact.
- Lice do not survive without a human host and do not live on surfaces, carpeting, or animals.
- Transmission from sources such as brushes and combs is rare, but scholars should be reminded not to share personal items.
- Lice are a nuisance, but they do not transmit disease and are not carriers of disease.
- Nits are egg sacks attached to the hair shaft. They may contain viable eggs or be empty casings.
- Nits may remain on the hair shaft months after successful treatment and are not a sign of active lice infestation.
- Remove nits from hair shaft to reduce the risk of self re-infestation and to avoid confusion in diagnosing.
- No outbreaks of lice have resulted when scholars with nits due only to previously hatched egg casings and who have no live lice have been allowed to remain in class.
- Head lice can be treated with FDA approved over-the-counter shampoos and rinses, prescription shampoos, rinses, oral medications, and mechanical removal devices.
- Efficacy of essential oils, olive oil, mayonnaise, vinegar, and other home remedies has not been demonstrated.
- Always use treatment products according to manufacturer's direction.

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): Any scholars with red, swollen or itchy eyes will be sent immediately to the main office by the teacher.

If it is determined that it is likely that a scholar has pink eye, the scholar will be sent home and will be asked to remain home the following day of school. A table below shows what day the scholar may return:

Day scholar sent home	Day scholar may return
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Monday

Upon return, the scholar's eyes will be examined. If the scholar is still showing signs of infection and/or no improvement in eye condition upon day of return, the scholar will be asked to go to the doctor and return with a doctor's note that says he/she has been treated and/or proof of medication use before the scholar may return to school.

About Pink Eye

Pink Eye (conjunctivitis) caused by allergens is not contagious; however, viral and bacterial conjunctivitis can be easily spread from person to person and can cause epidemics. If you have infectious (viral or bacterial) conjunctivitis, you can help limit its spread to other people by following these steps:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water.
- Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes.
- Wash any discharge from around the eyes several times a day.
- Do not use the same eye drop dispenser/bottle for infected and non-infected eyes—even for the same person.
- Wash pillowcases, sheets, washcloths, and towels in hot water and detergent; hands should be washed after handling such items.

Keep eyeglasses clean, being careful not to contaminate items (like towels) that might be shared by other people.

Immunizations: School officials maintain health records on each scholar. An immunization record for school attendance must be completed, current, and on-file before a scholar can attend. Prior to attendance, parents or legal guardians must submit proof of immunization or evidence of a statutory exemption in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-872 and A.R.S. § 15-873.

Parents/guardians are asked to inform school officials at the school of any immunizations received during the year so that the school records can be kept up-to-date.

Arizona law provides certain exemptions from immunization requirements. A.R.S. § 15-873(A).

Although the law allows exemptions, the Maricopa County Health Department may require the school to exclude a scholar from school in the case of an outbreak of any of the diseases covered by the immunization requirements. A.R.S. § 15-873(C). The parents will be notified when the scholar may return to school.

Over-the-Counter Medication Policy: Parents must deliver medicine in-person to the main office and fill out a “medical consent form” before medication will be administered. Medication should not be delivered to CASA in scholar backpacks. Administration of prescription medication is governed by the school’s separate Policy for Administration of Prescription Medications at School. For over-the-counter (OTC) medications, parents must fill out an Emergency Information Card that will remain on file in the front office. This form will also allow parents to indicate permission for the scholar to take specific OTC medication (e.g., acetaminophen or ibuprofen). If a scholar must take any OTC medications while at school the parent must bring the OTC medication to the office and complete an additional permission form with signed instructions for administration. Dosage requested by the parent or guardian shall be no higher or more frequent than the manufacturer’s recommendations. Each instance of administration of a prescription or non-prescription (OTC) drug shall be documented in the school’s database by the administering office staff. The school does not provide any medications; therefore, parents will need to provide any OTC medications their scholar will need. This includes cough drops, ibuprofen, antacids and acetaminophen. Scholars are not permitted to keep OTC medications on their person or in their backpacks on campus (all drugs, including cough drops, are kept locked in the office). The Director of Students and Operations must be notified immediately of scholars suspected of breaching these regulations. Violation of these policies place the scholar and others at great risk of personal harm, and as such, will result in disciplinary action.

Restricted Physical Education Activities: If for any reason you feel your scholar should have restricted physical education activities, please provide school officials with a doctor’s statement giving the reason and the length of the restriction. This information will be forwarded to the classroom teacher and any other staff on a need-to-know basis.

First Aid Provision and Medical Emergencies: Minor accidents, cuts, scrapes, and bruises will generally be treated at the school by selected teachers and administrators. The school is not equipped to handle medical services beyond basic first aid. In the event that a scholar requires emergency medical care, a parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible.

If a parent, guardian, or other emergency contact cannot be reached, the school may need to initiate medical treatment. Thus, it is essential that we have on file each scholar's Medical Emergency Permission for Treatment form, which provides up-to-date contact information for parents and guardians, and which gives the school permission to initiate emergency medical treatment if a parent or guardian cannot be reached.

Administration of Prescription Medication

In the event that a physician and parent or legal guardian determine that a scholar needs medication to be administered while the scholar is at school or during school activities, the following rules shall apply:

1. Parents must deliver medicine in-person to the main office and fill out a "medical consent form" before medication will be administered. Medication should not be delivered to CASA in scholar backpacks. If the physician or parent or legal guardian determines that the scholar has demonstrated sufficient maturity and ability to carry medication on his or her person and self-administer the medication, the physician shall provide written documentation to that effect. In the case of diabetes, the parent or legal guardian shall also provide a diabetes medical management plan, signed by the scholar's physician that authorizes the scholar to carry medication and/or testing equipment on his or her person.
2. If the physician or parent or legal guardian determine that the scholar has not demonstrated sufficient maturity and ability to carry medication and/or testing equipment and self-administer medication, but the parent has a written statement from the scholar's physician that it is medically necessary that medication and/or testing equipment be kept closer to the scholar than the school office, the parent may request, in writing, that the medication be kept in a separate closed bag, (backpack, lunch bag, tote, etc.) that will remain nearby the scholar throughout the day to ensure expedient administration of medicine by trained school staff. In the case of diabetes, the parent or legal guardian shall also provide a diabetes medical management plan, signed by the scholar's physician. School personnel will not administer medication by injection or perform diabetes testing that involves breaking the skin unless the diabetes medical management plan provides specific written notice that the scholar's health would be seriously impaired without the injection or testing during school hours or school activities, and also provides specific written instructions for techniques used to determine the proper dosage of medication in a specific situation. It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to provide adequate staff training for administration of medicine or diabetes testing. In no event will school personnel administer medications in dosages not prescribed by a physician.
3. If the parent or legal guardian cannot provide written notification from a physician that it is medically necessary for a scholar to carry medication and/or testing equipment on his or her person, all medication or testing equipment will be kept in the school office. In the case of diabetes, the parent or legal guardian shall also provide a diabetes medical management plan, signed by the scholar's physician. School personnel will not administer medication by injection or perform diabetes testing that involves breaking the skin unless the diabetes medical management plan provides specific written notice that the scholar's health would be seriously impaired without the injection or testing during school hours or school activities, and also provides specific written instructions for techniques used to determine the proper dosage of medication in a specific situation. It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to provide adequate staff training for administration of medicine or diabetes testing. In no event will school personnel administer medications in dosages not prescribed by a physician.
4. Subject to the requirements of sections 1 and 2, above, scholars who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis may carry and self-administer emergency medications including auto-injectable epinephrine provided the pupil's name is on the prescription label for the medication container or device. The scholar shall notify the teacher or a school administrator as soon as practicable following the use of the medication.
5. Subject to the requirements of sections 1 and 2, above, scholars who have been diagnosed with breathing disorders may carry handheld inhaler devices for self-administration provided the scholar's name is on the prescription label on the medication container or on the handheld inhaler device.

6. Subject to the requirements of section 1, above, scholars who have been diagnosed with insulin-dependent diabetes may be allowed to carry insulin, syringes, needles, insulin pens, insulin pumps, or testing equipment with them. Since it would be impractical for a prescription with the scholar's name to be placed on all diabetes equipment, the physician's documentation must be sufficiently detailed to permit the scholar's self-use of any of the above-described items. Additionally, the parent or legal guardian and the school shall agree on a method to dispose of equipment and medications. If agreement cannot be reached, the scholar shall not be permitted to carry insulin, syringes, needles, insulin pens, insulin pumps, or testing equipment with him or her, but those items will be maintained at the school's office, where the scholar can use them under supervision of school staff. Further, should the scholar not practice proper safety precautions for the handling and disposal of equipment and medications, the scholar's privilege of self-administering medication will be withdrawn.
7. In accordance with SB1026—A.R.S. § 15-344, charter school staff may administer certain prescription medications to minor students without parental authorization in the case of a medical emergency if they have a good faith basis to believe that a student is suffering from anaphylactic shock or respiratory distress. Those medications are:
 - a. Epinephrine auto-injectors;
 - b. Inhalers
 - c. Naloxone hydrochloride, or any other opioid antagonist drugs that are approved by the FDA.

Custody

In most cases, natural parents shall be given reasonable access to their child at school and to their child's official school records. Exceptions to this will be made in cases where there are court orders restricting the rights of a parent to access a child and/or the child's official school records.

It shall be the responsibility of the natural parent who has a court order restricting the rights of the other (non-custodial) parent to a child or the child's official school records to notify school officials of the conditions of the court order and to provide school officials with a current copy of the court order. In cases in which a person other than the natural parent has been granted guardianship, the rights and privileges of the natural parent shall be considered divested, in the absence of court action granting the natural parents specific rights. In cases of guardianship, the legal guardian shall be responsible for notifying school officials of the conditions of the guardianship and for providing school officials with all pertinent written documentation or changes.

With regard to child custody issues involving students enrolled in CASA Academy:

- CASA Academy does not take any position relating to any legal proceedings involving child custody disputes.
- No teacher or other school personnel at CASA Academy is authorized to speak on behalf of CASA Academy in relation to any custody issue or dispute.
- Any opinion expressed by any CASA Academy teacher or other school personnel, in violation of this policy, is not, and should not be construed as, representing the views of CASA Academy.
- CASA Academy will abide by the terms of the most recent custody order provided to the school, to the extent such order relates to school activities.

Reporting Child Abuse

All school employees are required by Arizona state law and school policy to report any suspected child abuse. CASA Academy is required by law to report to Child Protective Services or the police department with jurisdiction any suspected non-accidental injury, sexual molestation, abuse, or neglect.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

CASA Academy does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

(Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA), or on the basis of pregnancy status in accordance with the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978. In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to the school on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, mental or physical disability, age, or ancestry. Finally, no person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges, or access to the courses of study offered by the school on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The School's Title IX Coordinator contact information is as follows:

Title IX Coordinator: Liliana Villseñor
8047 N 35th Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85051
(623) 738-6071
liliana.villseñor@casaacademy.org

Please contact the Title IX Coordinator for a copy of the School's Title IX policy or to submit a complaint.

Harassment

CASA Academy is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, teachers and support personnel, scholars, vendors, or other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. CASA Academy requires all employees and scholars to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, scholars and all members of the school community.

Definition of Harassment

In General: Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

Sexual Harassment: While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education.
- The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a scholar.
- Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extra-curricular activities. The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited: Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, teachers and support personnel, scholars, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the school.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or Governing Board, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is illegal and will not be tolerated at CASA Academy. Scholars have a right to be free from any form of bullying. Scholars, parents, and school employees have a right and a responsibility to report incidents of bullying. Any scholar who engages in such behavior will face behavioral consequences through the school, and could face charges in the legal system.

Cyberbullying (bullying via the internet on any electronic device) that is conducted at school will be treated the same as in-person bullying and all consequences will apply.

Grievance Procedure

Introduction: It is the school's policy to ensure that scholars or parents with a grievance relating to the school, its administration, and/or other employees shall, except as otherwise set forth below, use a procedure which may resolve grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible.

1. *Initial Conversation:* If you or your scholar has a grievance you should discuss it informally with the teacher, administrator or staff member directly involved in the matter. We hope that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage. Foul language and a raised voice will not be tolerated on our campus and parents who choose to act in an aggressive manner will be asked to leave the campus immediately.

2. *Where To File A Complaint:* Any scholar who believes that the school has discriminated against or harassed him/her because of his/her race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, or ancestry in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities may file a complaint in writing with the CEO. If the CEO is the person who is alleged to have caused the discrimination or harassment, the complaint may be filed with the Governing Board Chair. These individuals are listed below and are hereinafter referred to as "Grievance Administrators."

- CEO
- Governing Board Chair

Complaints of Harassment by Peers: In the event the complaint consists of a scholar's allegation that another scholar is harassing him/her based upon the above-referenced classifications, the scholar may, in the alternative, file the complaint with the Grievance Administrators.

Complaints of Discrimination Based Upon Disability: A scholar who alleges discrimination on the basis of disability relative to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of that scholar, who because of a handicap needs or is believed to need special instruction or related services, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Chapter 766, and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act should first contact the CEO. If the complaint remains unresolved after contacting the Grievance Administrators, the procedure set forth in Arizona Administrative Code § R7-2-405 must be followed.

Contents of Complaints and Timelines for Filing. Complaints under this Grievance Procedure must be filed within 30 school days of the alleged discrimination. The complaint must be in writing. Any person of the scholar's choosing may assist the complainant with filing the complaint. The written complaint must include the following information:

The scholar's name and the parent's name who is filing the complaint on behalf of the scholar.

- The name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the scholar's legal representative, if any.
- The name of the person(s) alleged to have caused the discrimination or harassment (respondent).
- A description, in as much detail as possible, of the alleged discrimination or harassment.
- The date(s) of the alleged discrimination or harassment.
- The name of all persons who have knowledge about the alleged discrimination or harassment (witnesses), as can be reasonably determined.
- A description, in as much detail as possible, of how the scholar or parent wants the complaint to be resolved.

Investigation and Resolution of the Complaint: Respondents will be informed of the charges as soon as the Grievance Administrators deem appropriate based upon the nature of the allegations, the investigation required, and the action contemplated. The Grievance Administrators or one of their designees will interview witnesses whom they deem necessary and appropriate to determine the facts relevant to the complaint, and will gather other relevant information. Such interviews and gathering of information will be completed within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the complaint.

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the complaint, the Grievance Administrators will meet with the scholar, parent and/or her/his representative to review the information gathered and, if applicable, to propose a resolution designed to stop the discrimination or harassment and to correct its effect. Within ten (10) school days of the meeting with the scholar, parent, and/or representative, the Grievance Administrators will provide written disposition of the complaint to the scholar, parent and/or representative and to the respondent(s).

Notwithstanding the above, it is understood that in the event a resolution contemplated by the school involves disciplinary action against an employee or a scholar, the complainant will not be informed of such disciplinary action, unless it directly involves the complainant (i.e., a directive to "stay away" from the complainant, as might occur as a result of a complaint of harassment).

All the timelines above will be implemented as specified, unless the nature of the investigation or circumstances prevent such implementation, in which case, the matter will be completed as quickly as practicable. If the timelines specified above are not met, the reason(s) for not meeting them must be clearly documented. In addition, it should be noted that in the event the respondent is subject to a collective bargaining agreement which sets forth a specific timeline for notice and/or investigation of a complaint, such time lines will be followed.

Confidentiality of scholars/respondents and witnesses will be maintained, to the extent possible.

Retaliation against someone because he/she has filed a complaint under this Grievance Procedure is strictly prohibited. Acts of retaliation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion/discharge.

Appeals: If the scholar/parent is not satisfied with the disposition of a complaint, the scholar/parent may appeal the disposition to Governing Board. The Governing Board will issue a written response to the appeal within 30 school days of receiving the appeal. The Board expects that all prior steps have been followed before action is taken at the Board level. All applicable public open meeting laws will be followed for the Board's meeting, including prior notice and the right of the employee to request that any potential employment action be held in an open meeting. The Board's decision is final.

Transportation

CASA Academy provides free bus transportation to its scholars. CASA Academy sets the bus routes based upon where the majority of its scholars live. If a scholar lives outside of the bus route boundaries, it is the parent's responsibility to find an alternative way to take their scholar to school (car, carpool, public transportation, etc.). Bus routes will be located

in a central location and parents are expected to wait with their scholar at the bus stop until the bus arrives. **CASA Academy is not obligated to pick up a scholar directly at his or her house.**

If a family chooses for their scholar to take the bus, the scholar will take the bus every day, no exceptions. Scholars may only ride the bus to which they are assigned; no scholar may switch to a different bus unless it is a permanent change. Requests to release the scholar into parent pick-up, etc. will be refused unless the parent permanently decides to pick up his or her scholar. This policy exists to ensure your scholar's safety.

A parent or legal guardian is expected to meet his/her scholar(s) at the assigned bus stop after school each day. If the parent/legal guardian fails to meet his/her scholar at the assigned stop at the assigned time consistently, CASA Academy reserves the right to suspend the scholar from the bus.

Safety and Behavior Code for Bus Riders

- Be on time at the bus stop and avoid running to catch the bus. The bus cannot wait for those who are not on time. While waiting for the bus, stay clear of the road.
- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before trying to board. Always cross at least ten feet in front of the bus.
- Any damage to the bus caused by a scholar must be paid for before the scholar can ride the bus again.
- Scholars must keep personal items out of the aisle at all times.
- Scholars will be given a choice to sit quietly or complete homework while they ride. Scholars may talk in quiet voices with their seatmates only when permitted by the bus driver or bus chaperone. This is to ensure scholars' safety.
- Scholars must remain seated at all times. At no point may a scholar throw anything, eat, or get out of his/her seat.
- Drivers have the authority to enforce all rules for the safety and welfare of all bus riders.
- Scholars and parents have the responsibility to inform the bus driver about any problems that occur on the bus.
- Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right; therefore, scholars should be aware that privileges may be lost if they are abused.
- Scholars who ride the bus must ride the bus every day, no exceptions.

Phone Use

Scholars are prohibited from using school telephones unless it is an emergency that requires immediate attention. If parents need to leave a message for their scholar, they should call the office, and leave a message before 12:30 p.m. Scholars will not be called from class to the office to speak with a parent except in the case of an emergency. **Scholars are not permitted to bring cell phones to school for any reason.**

Lost and Stolen Property and Damaged Property

We strongly encourage families to ensure that scholars do not bring valuable objects to school. Any items that scholars bring to school that may cause disruption will be confiscated. We make every reasonable effort to return all personal property to a parent; however, the school is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen property or compensating the family for the value of that property.

If a scholar damages property on campus, the parent assumes responsibility (including financial responsibility) for the damage and owes the school a check or cash for the damages no later than 10 days after the incident occurs.

Birthday Parties

Birthday parties are not allowed at CASA Academy due to the intense academic program that we provide. Any birthday food sent onto our campus will not be used in the classroom and will be kept in the main office for the parent to pick up. Parents will have 24 hours to pick up the food; after this time period, the food will be disposed of. We understand that birthdays are an important day for your scholar. We will recognize your child that day by singing "Happy Birthday" to

your scholar during the day. Scholars may bring in birthday party invitations to send home with their classmates; please note that in order to prevent hurt feelings, invitations will only be sent home if there are enough for every scholar in the class.

Section 3: Academics

Scholars at CASA Academy will receive over four hours of literacy (reading and writing) instruction and two hours of math instruction daily. Scholars will also engage in social studies, science, character education, and enrichment (special area) classes. This rigorous program was designed to ensure that your scholar is successful both academically and personally. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction or your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding CASA's academic program.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of your scholar's success in school and is meant to reinforce the skills scholars are learning in the classroom on a daily basis. There are three critical components of completing homework:

1. Reading for 20-30 minutes, depending on grade level
2. Completing the assigned homework page(s) each day
3. Bringing the completed homework packet pages and signed reading log to school **every day**

1. Reading for 20-30 minutes

The number of minutes per day your scholar spends reading dramatically affects your scholar's reading level, grades, ability to understand books, and future success. Therefore, it is essential that your scholar spend time reading at home every day, including weekends and school vacations. Any time "off" from reading will negatively affect your scholar's progress and he/she may come back to school far behind the rest of the class. Scholars are expected to read for 20-30 minutes or more as part of their homework each night, no exceptions. This reading time should be a fun and enjoyable experience for your scholar. Consider trying activities like reading at a local library, reading a favorite magazine or catalogue, or reading and making a recipe together. This will ensure reading stays fun and interesting for both you and your scholar.

For kindergarteners, reading time may include:

- A scholar's parents, siblings, or other trusted adults reading a book out loud to the scholar
- A scholar practicing letter sounds and/or names out loud with an adult
- A scholar sounding out and blending together the sounds of words with an adult
- A scholar reading an appropriate level text (on the scholar's current reading level) to him/herself or out loud to an adult or sibling
- A scholar looking at the pictures and telling what is happening in the story in each picture
- A scholar retelling the story (describing what happened in the story) to an adult or sibling

For first grade and above, reading time may include:

- A scholar reading an appropriate level text (on the scholar's current reading level) to him/herself or out loud to an adult or sibling
- A scholar retelling the story (describing what happened in the story) to an adult or sibling

At the beginning of every month, your scholar will receive a new calendar/reading log. After your scholar completes his/her reading each night, please write the number of minutes read and sign the calendar/reading log in the corresponding box, and place it in your scholar's homework folder to return to school. **Please note that if a scholar does not return his/her reading log/calendar to school signed, regardless of whether the scholar has completed the reading, he/she will be expected to attend Homework Club for the day.**

2. Completing the assigned homework page(s) each day

Scholars will receive homework on a nightly basis. Scholars are responsible for placing their homework pages in their homework folders at the end of the day and returning the homework to school daily. If you have any questions as your scholar is completing the homework, please do not hesitate to contact your scholar's teacher by phone or email. If you are unable to reach your scholar's teacher and your scholar is struggling significantly with a particular night's homework pages, please write a note explaining the problem and attach it to your scholar's homework for the teacher to review the next day. Our goal is to support our scholars so that they can be successful with their homework.

Please note that homework will be checked only for completion will NOT be returned to scholars. Teachers will go over any homework problems scholars struggled with during class.

3. Bringing the completed homework packet pages and signed reading log to school every day

In order to receive credit for homework completion, scholars must bring their completed homework pages and signed reading log/calendar to school every day. A parent verbally stating that the homework and/or reading was completed is insufficient if the items are not turned in to the teacher. **In the event that scholars do not bring the completed items to school for any reason, regardless of whether the scholar has completed the reading and homework, he/she will be expected to attend Homework Club for the day.** This is not meant to be a punishment; rather, Homework Club is a support that will teach scholars the core value of responsibility and ensure scholars' required homework and learning is completed. **There will be no exceptions to this policy for any reason.**

Standardized Testing

As is required by the state, all scholars in grades three and up participate in the state-mandated exams administered each academic year. From time to time, scholars may take other exams as well in order to measure their academic progress and may be asked to provide routine information such as name, date of birth, etc.

Promotion Policy

Students who score above an 80% on reading and math assessments 80% of the time will automatically be promoted to the next grade level. For those students who do not meet this bar, the ultimate decision to promote a student on to the next grade level will be determined by school administration after following the process for retention outlined below.

Process for Retention

Parents will be contacted two times monthly by their child's teacher to inform them of their scholar's progress in school. If a scholar is performing below the mastery level on reading and math assessments by January, a letter will be sent home indicating that the scholar is at risk for retention. This letter will also indicate the three most important ways in which a scholar's achievement can be brought back up to mastery-level. If, by February, the scholar is still performing below mastery, the scholar's teacher and school administration will arrange a meeting with the scholar's parents to discuss the scholar's progress and the possibility of retention if the scholar's mastery does not improve. In this meeting, student data will be reviewed and a step-by-step action plan will be created to ensure a scholar can accelerate to mastery on grade level standards by the end of the current school year. This plan may include a signed attendance or behavioral contract for scholars and parents, specific activities parents can do at home with their scholar to increase achievement levels in reading and math, and increased participation in afterschool tutoring programs. This action plan will be reviewed on a monthly basis until the scholar is performing at the level of mastery. If, by the end of the school year, the scholar is not performing at mastery in reading and math, the scholar may be retained, pending final approval by school administration.

Grade 3: Arizona Move on When Reading

In compliance with the *Arizona Move on When Reading* legislation, a scholar will "not be promoted from the third grade if the pupil obtains a score on the reading portion of the Arizona instrument to measure standards test, or a successor test,

that demonstrates that the pupil's reading falls far below the third grade level.” Exceptions to this rule, in compliance with Arizona law, will be scholars with disabilities who have previously been retained and English Language Learners who have received less than two years of English instruction. For those third graders who are retained, interventions, in compliance with state law, will be provided. The parent or guardian of the scholar, in compliance with state law, and school administration and scholar’s teacher will choose the “most appropriate intervention and remedial strategies” for the scholar.

Report Cards

Report cards indicating scholar grades during each quarter will be sent home on a quarterly basis.

Report cards will indicate your scholar’s grades in reading, writing, and math on a Standards-based grading scale in alignment with ADE Standards as indicated below:

Standards-based Grade	Percentage	Definition
Mastery (M)	80-100%	Scholars earning “mastery” are consistently demonstrating mastery of skills and content standards.
Near Mastery (NM)	60-79%	Scholars earning “near mastery” are demonstrating basic competency but have not yet mastered applicable skills and content standards.
Remediation (R)	0-59%	Scholars earning less than 60% need to demonstrate significant improvement and have not demonstrated basic levels of mastery of skills and content standards.

For science, social studies, enrichment (special area classes), and character, your scholar will receive an effort-based grade as indicated below:

Effort-based Grade	Definition
S (Satisfactory)	Scholars earning “satisfactory” are consistently putting in strong effort in the class and meeting all class requirements.
N (Needs Improvement)	Scholars earning a “needs improvement” are struggling to put in strong effort in the class and improvement is necessary.

FERPA - Annual Notification to Parents and Eligible Students Regarding Student Records

This Notification is required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and provides you with important information regarding your rights as they relate to student educational records. It is directed to parents (including a natural parent, a guardian or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian) and eligible students (students aged 18 or older) or attending an institution of postsecondary education).

Parent Rights: The Right to Inspect and Review the Student’s Educational Records. If you wish to inspect/review the student’s educational records, please contact the office to make an appointment to do so. You will be provided access to records within a reasonable period of time, but in no case more than 45 days after your request is received.

34 Code of Federal Regulations § 300.613. School personnel will respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. The school will provide you with a copy of the records or make other arrangements for inspection and review of the requested records if its failure to do so would effectively prevent you from exercising your rights to inspect and review the records.

The Right to Consent to Disclosures of Personally Identifiable Information Contained in the Student’s Educational Records, Except to the Extent the Law Authorizes Disclosure Without Your Consent. The school will limit the disclosure of information contained in a student’s education records except: (1) By your prior, written consent; (2) As directory information; or (3) Under certain limited circumstances permitted by FERPA, the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 (USA PATRIOT Act), and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Some instances in which disclosure is permitted without your consent are set forth below.

Directory Information: Your consent is not required for the school to release the following student information designated as “Directory information.” If you wish to refuse to permit the school to release Directory information, you must submit your written refusal to the CEO within two weeks of the date of this notice.

Name	Date and Place of Birth	Class Designation
Address	Grade level or major field of study	Previous School or District Attended
Telephone	Participation in officially recognized activities and sports	Weight and height for athletic teams
Parent Name	Student Photograph	Dates of Attendance
Email	Degrees and awards received	

Disclosure to School Officials: CASA Academy may disclose personally identifiable information from a student’s education record without your consent to school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. School officials include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Administrators, supervisors, teachers, and paraprofessionals
- Counselors, therapists, and other non-teaching personnel
- Authorized volunteers or interns
- Temporary substitutes for administrative, supervisory, or teaching personnel
- Members of the Governing Board, when acting in their official capacity
- Contracted consultants or other professionals (i.e., attorneys, auditors, evaluators)

A “legitimate educational interest” is the person’s need to know in order to fulfill the school official’s professional responsibility and/or to provide a service or benefit to the student or the student’s family.

The Right to Seek Amendment of the Student’s Education Records that the Parent or Eligible Student Believes to Be Inaccurate, Misleading, or Otherwise in Violation of the Student’s Privacy Rights. If you believe the scholar’s records contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights, you may ask the school to amend the record. You are also entitled to a hearing to present evidence that the record should be changed if the school decides not to alter it according to your request. A form for this purpose and additional information is available in the office.

The Right to File a Complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Concerning Alleged Failures by (the school) to Comply with the Requirements of FERPA. You are entitled to file a Complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if

you believe CASA Academy has violated FERPA. Complaints may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

CASA Academy complies with FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g and § 1232h; 34 C.F.R. Part 99); the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.; 34 C.F.R. Part 300); and A.R.S. §§ 15-141, 15-142.

Parents and eligible scholars have a right to file a complaint concerning alleged failures by a school district to comply with the requirements of the student records laws and regulations with the Arizona Department of Education. Complaints relative to federal statutes and regulations governing scholar records may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education.

Parent Meetings

CASA Academy staff are available as needed to meet with parents and legal guardians to discuss scholars' education, progress in school, behavior, and/or any other questions or concerns. CASA Academy staff will only meet with adults who are the parents or legal guardians of scholars. Requests to meet with CASA staff to discuss a scholar from any person who is not a parent or legal guardian of said scholar will be denied.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

IDEA is a federal law that protects the rights of students with disabilities. In addition to standard school records, for students with disabilities, education records could include evaluation and testing materials, medical and health information, Individualized Education Programs and related notices and consents, progress reports, materials related to disciplinary actions, and mediation agreements. Such information is gathered from a number of sources, including the student's parents and staff of the school of attendance. Also, with parental permission, information may be gathered from additional pertinent sources, such as doctors and other health care providers. This information is collected to ensure the student is identified, evaluated, and provided a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with state and federal special education laws. Each agency participating under Part B of IDEA must ensure that at all stages of gathering, storing, retaining, and disclosing education records to third parties that it complies with the federal confidentiality laws. In addition, the destruction of any education records of a scholar with a disability must be in accordance with IDEA regulatory requirements.

For additional information or to file a complaint, you may: Call the federal government at (202) 260-3887 (voice) or 1-800-877-8339 (TDD) or the Arizona Department of Education (ADE/ESS) at (602) 542-4013. Or you may contact: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5901 or the Arizona Department of Education Exceptional Student Services 1535 W. Jefferson, BIN 24, Phoenix, AZ 85007. This notice is available in English and Spanish on the ADE website at www.ade.az.gov/ess/resources under forms. For assistance in obtaining this notice in other languages, contact the ADE/ESS at the above phone number/address.

**The following sections related to Special Education are adapted from Phoenix Collegiate Academy's Student Support Services Manual.*

Special Education Services at CASA Academy

At CASA, we seek to provide the best academic support possible for your scholar while also ensuring compliance with all state and federal laws. The following section outlines the special education services provided at CASA Academy as well as the process for evaluating student needs for these services. If you have academic concerns or questions about your child, please reach out to your child's teacher or school administration directly.

History and Overview of Special Education

In 1975, the federal government passed legislation that remains the basis for Special Education programs in the United States. This legislation contained four provisions that continue to provide important parameters for programs that serve students with disabilities:

1. Schools must follow due process when referring a student for special education services to ensure that the students' parents have an important role. Essentially, this requirement means that the timing, confidentiality, and special services requirement under the law are taken very seriously.
2. Teachers and schools must involve students' families in the decision process.
3. Students are to be educated in the "least restrictive environment (LRE)." That is, a student has a right to be taught in whatever setting can provide for his or her needs that is close to a general education setting.
4. Each student receiving special education services must have an Individual Education Plan, also known as an IEP.

Several broader education laws (e.g., IDEA, NCLB) have passed since the 1975 reform laws were enacted, and have impacted ways in which services are delivered. The 1997 version of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), for example, established an emphasis on the participation of students with special needs in the general education curriculum. The inclusion movement, which places students with special needs in general classrooms with support, has gained significant momentum in recent years and serves as a basis for CASA Academy's programs.

While the history of special education is driven by federal legislation, from a student's (and many teachers') perspective, the special education system is actually all about individualized instruction to meet a student's individual needs. In simplest terms, a student who qualifies for special education receives an individualized education plan (an IEP) that is developed by a team of adults including the student's parent or guardian. The team is ultimately accountable for the student's mastery of the goals set in the IEP, and the students' teachers are responsible for modifying and/or accommodating instruction for the student pursuant to the IEP.

Special Education at CASA Academy

Special Education at CASA Academy is based on an inclusion model. That is, all general education and special education scholars take the same academic classes. Within these classes, all scholars are held to the same academic expectations, although instruction may be tailored to meet the needs of each scholar. Scholars with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are given additional in-class support, out-of-class support, and/or accommodations and modifications to better enable them to meet these expectations. Educators collaborate in and out of class to ensure that instruction is differentiated in order to provide access for every scholar. This model is considered by many educators and researchers to be the ultimate manifestation of a commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom that he or she would otherwise attend.

Scholars receiving special education services at CASA Academy are supported in the following ways:

Classroom Support from a Special Education Teacher

At the beginning of the school year, the school will identify all scholars who need to be supported in the general education classroom by a special education teacher. Scholars will be identified based on their present levels of performance and their IEP goals. The special education teacher will use a variety of strategies and practices in the classroom to ensure all scholars can access the class curriculum. These strategies include:

- Co-teaching with general education teachers
- Assisting scholars with organization
- Providing accommodations and modifications
- Providing extended introduction of new material to scholars
- Providing compensatory strategies to scholars
- Assisting scholars with individual work
- Checking for scholar understanding

- Providing remediation and review to scholars

Instructional Support from Special Education Teachers

If needed, scholars receiving special education services will receive out-of-class support from a special education teacher.

Related Services

CASA Academy will work with contracted service providers to meet needs listed on scholar's IEPs for academics, speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy as necessary.

AZ Find

Child find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04) that requires PEAs (Public Education Agencies) to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, located within their geographical boundaries who are in need of early intervention or special education services.

Child find applies to children who are:

- Suspected of having a disability even though they are advancing from grade to grade
- Highly mobile, such as migrant and homeless
- Wards of the state
- Private school students
- Homeschool students

Note: Charter schools identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their population served who are in need of special education and related services.

You may call the school office at (602) 892-5022 if you require further information or assistance. Additionally, you can receive additional information on Child Find through AZ Find at (928) 637-1871 or (800) 352-4558, or via email at azfind@azed.gov.

45 Day Screeners

The Forty-Five (45) Day Screener is part of the Child Find process. CASA Academy will complete the 45 Day Screener within 45 calendar days after entry of each preschool or kindergarten student and any student enrolling without appropriate records of screening, evaluation, and progress in school. Screening procedures shall include vision and hearing status and consideration of the following areas: cognitive or academic, communication, motor, social or behavioral, and adaptive development. Screening does not include detailed individualized comprehensive evaluation procedures. The school maintains the results in the student's permanent records in a location designated by the administrator. In the case of a student not enrolled, the school will maintain the results in a location designated by the administrator. If the identification (screening) process indicates a possible disability, the screener will submit the name of the student to the Scholar Success Team for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services. If a student is struggling academically, emotionally, or behaviorally, he or she can be referred to an intervention process. Referrals to the intervention process are based on assessment data and are made after a student has received additional in-class support based on a three-tiered model. Referrals are made when a student has been provided with all three-tiers of intervention: whole-class interventions (1), small group interventions (2), and one-on-one interventions (3) without success.

Referral for Additional Interventions, Special Education Services, or English-Language Support

The intervention process:

1. Teachers/staff members will identify struggling scholars as early as possible.
2. Teachers/staff members will provide additional support appropriate to the child's needs.
3. Based on the outcomes of additional supports, teachers/staff members may refer the scholar for special education services.

At the beginning of the year, scholars will be assessed in reading, writing, and math. Based on these tests, students who are performing below grade level will be identified. As the year progresses and students are assessed again, teachers and administration will note scholars who are struggling to make growth. For these scholars, a Scholar Success Team meeting may take place in order to develop an additional intervention plan and collect additional information about the scholar.

Scholar Success Team (SST) Process

In this meeting, teachers identify areas of concern, share data, test scores, anecdotal evidence, etc. about the scholar, and determine additional interventions with which to support the scholar. Parents are also invited to attend this meeting, though their presence is not required. Interventions decided upon during the SST meeting will be implemented for at least four weeks, after which the team will meet again to discuss the effects of the interventions and establish next steps. At the follow-up meeting, if the scholar has shown progress, interventions will continue and the scholar will continue to be monitored. If a scholar has not shown progress, he or she will move onto the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) process.

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team Process

There are two stages of the MET process: MET I and MET II.

At the MET I stage, the team (special education teacher, general education teacher, psychologist, parents, person to interpret implications, etc.) meets to discuss all of the information collected and the results of the interventions attempted with the scholar. Based on this information, the team determines what tests would provide the most information about the child's levels of performance in all areas and solicits informed consent from the parent to test the scholar. If the parent gives consent to evaluate the scholar, the team has 60 calendar days to complete the evaluation and reconvene. At the conclusion of the MET I meeting, the team should schedule the MET II meeting in order to ensure compliance.

At the MET II stage, the MET team meets to go over the results of the evaluation and determine next steps. The team seeks to answer two questions: (1) Based on data and results from testing, is a student eligible for special education? (2) If the student is eligible, is there a need for special education services? If the team determines that the answer to both questions is yes, parents sign an Initial Placement Statement. The team then develops an Individualized Education Plan and the student becomes eligible for special education services. If the team determines that the student is not eligible or does not need special education services, all members are better equipped with data to further support that scholar in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

An IEP is a legal document designed to provide students with disabilities access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). An IEP considers access to the general curriculum, accommodations and modifications, goals for scholar learning that will make the biggest impact on the scholar, present levels of student achievement, how the disability affects the scholar's learning, and ultimately, how to ensure that a scholar is placed in the least restrictive learning environment possible. Members of the IEP team include but are not limited to general education teachers, special education teachers, administrators, and parents. An IEP lasts for one calendar year, upon which it must be reviewed and rewritten.

Re-Evaluation

Students with IEPs must be re-evaluated at least once every three years. At this time, the MET team convenes and the student goes through the MET process starting with MET I.

Section 504 Plans

A 504 Plan is a plan designed to accommodate the unique needs of a person with a disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Children who have disabilities, but whose disabilities do not interfere with their ability to progress in general education, are not eligible for special education services but may be entitled to a 504 Accommodation Plan. School districts must ensure that students with disabilities have meaningful opportunities to participate in all aspects of school on an equal basis with students without disabilities.

Depending upon the student's individual needs, a school district may be required to provide the following: specialized instruction, modifications to the curriculum, accommodations in non-academic and extracurricular activities, assistance with health-related needs, or other related services and accommodations.

Students who might be eligible for a 504 Plan include:

- Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Students with communicable diseases (i.e., Hepatitis)
- Students with temporary disabilities arising from accidents who may need short term hospitalization or homebound recovery
- Students who had surgery and short-term hospitalization or homebound recovery
- Students with migraine headaches, with a lengthy history of missing school
- Students with allergies or asthma
- Students with diabetes, cancer, or heart disease
- Students who are drug addicted or alcoholic (as long as they are not currently using illegal drugs)
- Students with environmental illnesses
- Students with orthopedic, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis
- Students with visual, speech, and hearing impairments

Section 4: Supporting CASA Academy

Family Involvement

CASA Academy is an academically challenging, disciplined, and joyful elementary school in which all members of the school community – board members, leaders, teachers, staff members, families and scholars – understand and are driven by our mission. We believe in the importance of working together to make a positive impact in the academic growth, character growth, and development of every scholar. Although the responsibility of making decisions of school policy belongs to the Governing Board and CEO, families are involved on an individual level and through organized parent groups. We recognize that an effective partnership between school and home sets each scholar up for success by garnering family support of our school and reinforcement in the home for the school's activities and expectations.

Teacher Contact with Families

Families will be contacted by their scholar's teacher twice per month. This contact will take place either in-person, by email, by text, on the phone, or via note. If a teacher leaves a voicemail or email for a parent, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the teacher within 24 hours. Please note that teachers and the school will not communicate about a scholar with anyone who is not the child's parent or legal guardian. This means that all communication must go through the parent or legal guardian.

Please ensure that you inform the main office as well as your scholar's teacher immediately if your phone number changes.

Due to the amount of duties required of teachers, it will not be possible for teachers to answer phone calls during instructional time. If you need to speak directly with a teacher, please call the teacher's cell phone and leave a voicemail for the teacher you wish to speak with. Include your name, phone number and a detailed message. If your call is made and you leave a message with the appropriate information before 3 pm, it will be returned before the end of business day. If your call is made after 3 pm, the call will be returned before the end of the next business day.

Visitor Policy: Our school has an open door policy that allows family members to observe class any time **after** October 1st. During the beginning of school, it is critical for scholars to transition into their new setting, and the presence of family members in the classroom can slow this process. When observing in the classroom, families are asked not to disrupt the education of their scholar or of other scholars or to attempt to conduct individual conversations with the teacher during instructional time. Family members who are disruptive to the educational process will be asked to leave. Visitors need to sign in at the office before visiting a classroom and wear a visitor badge while in the school. All visits to classrooms must be arranged with the scholar's teacher at least 48 hours in advance.

Meet the Teacher Night: Families at CASA Academy are asked to bring their scholar(s) to the school before the start of school to meet with their scholar's teacher. Meet the Teacher Night will give scholars and their parents a chance to meet their teacher before the first day of school and will also allow teachers to learn a little bit about the scholar's educational history and personality. It is critical that all parents and scholars attend this initial teacher event.

School Supplies

Scholars are asked to bring a backpack for personal use to school on a daily basis. In addition to this, we are extremely appreciative of any supplies you can donate to our school as they greatly support the quality of education we can provide to your scholar. The following supplies are a great help to CASA Academy:

- Large hand sanitizer (pump, any brand)
- Large container of disinfecting surface wipes (any brand)
- Children's pair of scissors (any brand)
- Boxes of yellow #2 pencils
- Package of eraser caps
- Glue sticks (any brand)
- Boxes of 24 packs of crayons
- Boxes of facial tissues (any brand)
- Boxes of 8-count markers
- Boxes of storage bags, with zipper (quart or sandwich size)
- Reams of white computer paper
- Packs of **black** Dry Erase Markers
- Rolls of Scotch tape (or another brand of clear tape)

Tax Credit Donations

Arizona taxpayers have the unique opportunity to help public schools through the use of tax credit donations to be used for extra-curricular activities. Individuals may donate up to \$200 each calendar year, while couples who file taxes jointly may donate up to \$400. Please consider this as you plan for the school year!

Section 5: Code of Conduct

Safe and Orderly Environment

CASA Academy is unequivocally committed to providing a safe and orderly environment in which scholars can maximize their academic achievement. Scholars whose behavior does not meet the school community's clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others.

Without a firm and consistent discipline policy, none of what we envision for the school can happen; therefore, we cannot over-emphasize the importance of providing a firm and consistent discipline policy. Scholars and families have a right to attend a safe and orderly school.

Behavior

All classroom and school wide expectations and procedures will be explicitly taught and practiced during the first several weeks of school. Scholars will be expected to uphold these expectations and follow all procedures in place while on campus.

Behavior Stick and Core Values

CASA Academy uses a behavior stick to represent and monitor scholar behavior. The behavior stick consists of the following colors:

Pink	Demonstrates exceptionally positive behavior that goes above and beyond the behavior of other classmates
Blue	Demonstrates exceptionally positive behavior
Green	Demonstrates positive, on-task behavior
Yellow	Demonstrates a need to re-think behavior
Orange	Demonstrates that a scholar has made multiple negative choices
Red	Demonstrates that a scholar has made multiple and/or exceptionally poor choices

The behavior stick is meant to be in continuous motion throughout the school day, helping scholars to improve their behavior as necessary. The behavior stick is linked explicitly to CASA's core values (respect, responsibility, perseverance, integrity, empowerment, and enthusiasm) and encourages scholars to demonstrate these values in their lives.

Scholars are encouraged to end the day on green, blue, or pink. Staff use constant behavior narration to help scholars achieve these colors, linking positive choices to CASA's core values whenever possible.

Scholars should not be left on a negative color (yellow, orange, red) for longer than 1-2 minutes; if the scholar fixes the behavior, he/she should be moved up a color and if the scholar does not fix the behavior, he/she should be moved down a color, linking the choice to CASA's core values.

Any scholar who is on red at recess time will lose 5 minutes of recess for the day and must sit on the wall in STAR because he/she has not demonstrated CASA's core values and needs time to reflect on his/her choices.

If a scholar is on red at the end of the day, the scholar will not participate in High Five Friday for the given week.

Communication with Parents Regarding Behavior

At the end of each day, teachers will notify parents of scholars who ended the day on red, letting the parent know that the scholar will be missing out on High Five Friday.

High Five Friday

High Five Friday (HFF) will be held at the end of each Friday. At HFF, we will do the following:

- Review CASA core values
 - Shout out scholars for displaying CASA core values
 - Celebrate positive scholar choices with a dance party
- Scholars who did not earn HFF will sit against the wall in STAR (This is meant to reward scholars for positive behaviors and discourage them from continuing negative behaviors in future weeks.)

Fancy Lunch

Scholars who end the day on blue or pink EVERY day during the week, will get to have “fancy lunch” at a special table in the cafeteria on Fridays. It is a challenge to end the day on blue or pink, and scholars have to work hard for it, consistently demonstrating CASA’s core values.

Bathroom Behavior

In order to ensure that they are present in class to the greatest extent possible, scholars should make every effort to use the bathroom before school, during bathroom breaks, and after school. When it is necessary for scholars to use the bathroom during class time, scholars should follow the school wide procedure for receiving bathroom permission.

Bathrooms are shared space, and scholars should treat their bathroom space with pride. Scholars should pick up after themselves, flush the toilets, and ensure that no paper products are left on the floor. Scholars should not bring anything with them to the bathroom, including writing instruments. Scholars who do not behave appropriately in the bathrooms may not be permitted to use the bathroom alone.

At all times a scholar is expected to obtain permission from the teacher to use the restrooms. Scholars are not to write on the walls or damage the facility in any way. A scholar who is feeling ill should report to the teacher and not remain in the restroom.

In order to attend CASA Academy, all CASA scholars must be toilet trained prior to enrolling at the school. Exceptions to this rule apply only to scholars who require bathroom assistance within their IEP or due to a medical condition (documentation must be provided from a physician).

Suspension

In the case of a suspension, the scholar will be removed from class and will be sent to the main office or another designated school location, following which, the scholar’s parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by the school. In all cases where the scholar has committed a crime or violation of local, state or federal law, law enforcement authorities will be notified. There will be no corporal punishment of scholars at CASA Academy, though staff may use reasonable, necessary force to restrain a violent, disruptive, or disobedient scholar.

Under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, scholars are guaranteed due process and fair treatment at school. Therefore, prior to CASA Academy taking disciplinary action against a scholar, the School will provide the scholar with appropriate due process.

Suspension Under or Equal to 10 Days (Short-Term)

If a scholar commits one of the infractions listed below, the scholar may receive an out-of-school suspension. School administration may suspend any scholar for up to 10 school days. Before the scholar is returned to class, the scholar, his or her parent or guardian, and school administration will meet in order to address the scholar's behavior and plan for improvement. Furthermore, scholars will not be allowed to return to class after a suspension without a parent signature on the suspension letter. If the school is unable to contact the parent/legal guardian, the suspended scholar will be held in school until the end of the day. Infractions that merit immediate suspension include but are not limited to:

- Gross disrespect of a fellow scholar, staff member, or school property
- Tantrums
- Using or possessing over-the-counter medication inappropriately
- Using or possessing tobacco products
- Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so
- Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation
- Skipping school or class
- Using abusive, vulgar, or profane language or treatment
- Making verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise
- Fighting, pushing, shoving, or unwanted physical contact
- Setting off false alarms or calling in groundless threats
- Gambling
- Departing, without permission, from class, building, or school-sponsored activities
- Forgery of any sort, including parental signatures
- Cheating or plagiarism, or copying of anyone else's work
- Violent or threatening behavior
- Bullying or harassing conduct
- Repeated and fundamental disregard of school policies and procedures

Suspension Over 10 Days (Long-Term)

Using the same list of infractions listed under short-term suspension, the scholar may receive an out-of-school suspension. School administration may suspend any scholar for over 10 school days. Before the scholar is returned to class, the scholar, his or her parent or guardian, and school administration will meet in order to address the scholar's behavior and plan for improvement. Furthermore, scholars will not be allowed to return to class after a suspension without a parent signature on the suspension letter. If the school is unable to contact the parent/legal guardian, the suspended scholar will be held in school until the end of the day. The parent/legal guardian shall be held liable for all damages caused by a scholar.

Expulsion

In the case of an expulsion, the scholar will be removed from class and will be sent to the main office or another designated school location, following which the scholar's parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by the school. In all cases where the scholar has committed a crime or violation of local, state or federal law, law enforcement authorities will be notified. Expulsion is defined in as the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending a school.

School administration may recommend expulsion of a scholar for serious cause, including, but not limited to:

- Continued open defiance of authority, habitual profanity, vulgarity, or excessive absenteeism
- A pupil who cuts, defaces or otherwise injures school property;
- Being on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin;

- Assaulting another scholar, school employee, school consultant, or school volunteer on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games
- Repeated or excessive out-of-school suspensions;
- Repeated and fundamental disregard of school policies and procedures;
- Possession, use, sale, or transfer of drugs and alcohol;
- Destruction or attempted destruction of school property including arson

In addition to any of the preceding infractions, any breaches of federal law or Arizona law may be handled in cooperation with the Phoenix Police Department and may result in expulsion.

Process

Prior to an expulsion, the following due process procedures will apply:

- The parent/legal guardian will be notified of the intent to expel the scholar
- Date, time and place of a hearing will be sent to the parent/legal guardian
- The scholar and parent will be given written notice of the right at the hearing to:
 - Be represented by his/her parents, legal or other representation (at the scholar's/parent's own expense)
 - Present evidence
 - Confront and cross-examine witnesses
- The school will record (by tape or other appropriate means) the hearing and a copy of such will be made available to the scholar upon request.
- This hearing must include the scholar, a member of school administration, the parent/legal guardian, and the hearing official.
- The hearing official will be a member of school administration who does not directly oversee behavior on CASA's campus.
- A scholar and/or parent, upon request, will have the right to review the scholar's records.
- The decision by the hearing official will be in writing and the controlling facts upon which the decision is made will be stated in sufficient detail to inform the parties of the reasons for the decision. The decision of the hearing official is final.

Scholars have the right to reapply for admission after one year of expulsion. School administration have the right to deny admission of a scholar who has been expelled from another school or is in the process of being expelled from another school, and to deny, upon review of a request, readmission of a scholar previously expelled from the School.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

CASA Academy will meet all requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as defined in Part B of IDEA, and State laws regarding disciplining of scholars with disabilities.

As explained above, under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, scholars are guaranteed due process and fair treatment at school. Therefore, prior to the School taking disciplinary action against a scholar, the School will provide the scholar with appropriate due process. When the disciplinary action consists of ten days of suspension or a lesser penalty, this process will consist of informing the scholar of the charges against him/her and giving the scholar an opportunity to respond. More formal procedures must be followed when the discipline proposed is greater than ten days of suspension.

Scholars may have additional rights pursuant to laws governing the provision of educational services to students with disabilities.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and related regulations provide eligible scholars with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of scholar discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below.

Short-Term Suspensions: School personnel may refer a scholar to an alternative placement or suspension for up to 10 total school days without services. For subsequent exclusions during the school year which do not constitute a change in placement: The school must provide Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) services to the extent necessary for progress in the general curriculum and IEP goals as determined by school personnel in consultation with at least one teacher. If appropriate, the school must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral plan.

Change of Placement: A change of placement is defined as removal for more than ten consecutive school days or for a series of shorter removals (exceeding 10 days in total) with consideration of the length and total time removed, as well as the proximity and similarity of behavior. On the date of a decision to make a removal constituting a change of placement, parents/guardians must be notified of the decision and the procedural safeguards.

Within ten school days of a decision resulting in a change of placement, the team must conduct a manifestation determination. The meeting must include representatives of the school, parents/guardians and any other relevant members. The team must consider all relevant information in the scholar's file, teacher observations, and relevant information from the parents/guardians. The team must determine whether the conduct was: (1) caused by the disability; or (2) had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability; or (3) was a direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP. If any of these criteria are met, then the conduct is a manifestation of the scholar's disability.

If the team determines that the conduct was a manifestation of the disability, the scholar must be returned to his/her placement. The parties, however, may change the IEP and placement through the team process. Also, the team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan or, if a behavioral plan already exists, review the plan and make any necessary modifications.

If the team determines that the conduct was not a manifestation of the disability, the school discipline can be put into effect. The scholar is entitled, however, to receive educational services to enable progression in the general curriculum and IEP goals. The team must determine which services are necessary and the setting where they will be provided.

Appeal Rights: When a parent/guardian disagrees with the team's decision on "manifestation determination," or an alternative placement, the parents/guardians have the right to request an expedited hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. Placement pending the appeal is in the alternative setting as determined by the team for the duration of the discipline or completion of the appeal.

Exceptions for Specified Conduct: Under certain special circumstances as defined by federal law, school personnel may place the scholar in an interim alternative setting for 45 school days, without regard to the manifestation determination. These special circumstances include incidents where the scholar possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs, carries or possesses a weapon, or inflicts serious bodily injury while on school premises or at a school function. The federal definition for serious bodily injury means bodily injury that involves:

- A substantial risk of death;
- Extreme physical pain
- Protracted and obvious disfigurement
- Protracted loss or impairment of a bodily member, organ or mental facility.

Otherwise, if the scholar's continuation in the current placement is substantially likely to cause injury to himself/herself or others the school may request an expedited hearing for an order to place a scholar in an alternative setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. The school also has the right to seek a court injunction.

Students with Disabilities under Section 504 who are not eligible for services under the IDEA, but who have disabilities within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are entitled to certain procedural protections associated with Section 504.

Complaint Process: Both the school and the Board work in conjunction with one another to hear and resolve any complaints by parents. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the complainant to address the

problem directly with the staff member(s). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution by the appropriate faculty or staff member, the complaint should be delivered in writing to the CEO. The CEO will also receive a written report from the appropriate faculty or staff member. After reviewing the written statements by the staff member and the complainant and undertaking any additional investigation deemed necessary by the situation, the CEO will present a decision to the complainant. The Board will not hear complaints that have not followed this procedure.

If the complaint has still not been resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent should contact the Governing Board Chair about placing the issue on the agenda for the next Governing Board meeting. Notifying the Board Chair (or CEO, or any other board member) of the issue, however, is not a guarantee that the issue will actually be placed on the Board's agenda. Also, the parent should bear in mind that the more information that a board member receives about the issue outside of the properly noticed open meeting of the Board, the more likely that particular board member will have to recuse himself or herself from discussion and voting on the issue.

Field Trips

The school's curriculum may sometimes call for outside learning experiences. During these activities, it is important for all scholars to be responsible for their behavior since the site of the activity is a temporary extension of the school grounds. A permission slip that allows scholars to attend each school field trip will be sent home prior to the trip and must be signed by a parent or guardian. Scholars who fail to return the signed slip – or who are not permitted to attend the particular trip as a result of a loss of privileges – will not be eligible to participate and will be required to remain either in another classroom or in the office during the field trip. If parents or other volunteers assist with field trips, scholars must give these parents or other volunteers the same respect they would give to teachers. Appropriate behavior must be maintained when attending school-sponsored events and riding on school-provided transportation. Inappropriate behavior may result in community violations, suspension, or loss of field trip privileges.

Forgery

Shared information and constant communication among teachers, scholars, and parents are crucial to the success of the school. Progress regarding academic and behavioral performance will be conveyed through a variety of means, including report cards. Scholars who forge their parent or guardian's signature, or forge parental or guardian approval on any official or unofficial school communication, including community violations, may face an out-of-school suspension.

Building Safety and Security

There are a number of basic procedures the school has in order to ensure the safety and security of its scholars and staff. Cooperation on everyone's part will go a long way in guaranteeing that the business of the school – teaching and learning – can take place.

Closed Campus: Under no circumstances are scholars to leave the school campus without permission. A scholar with permission to leave may only leave under the escort and supervision of an authorized adult. Scholars need to be aware that the school has several neighbors, and they should be respectful and courteous of their needs. Once scholars have entered the school in the morning, they may not leave the building until dismissal unless they are escorted by a school staff member or other authorized adult.

Visitors & Volunteers

Visitors: CASA Academy will spend its first two months establishing procedures and creating a positive school climate for its scholars. For this reason, visitors will not be allowed on campus until October 1st. After October 1st, CASA Academy is happy to have visitors. Anyone, including family members who wish to visit the school, must first call the office to set up an appointment. Our office staff will make every attempt to arrange a school visit within 48 hours of the request. If you wish to visit your child's classroom, you must call your child's teacher to arrange a visit at least 48 hours in advance. Please see CASA's Director of Students and Operations if you would like to schedule a visit.

Volunteers: CASA Academy will spend its first two months establishing procedures and creating a positive school climate for its scholars. For this reason, volunteers will not be allowed on campus until October 1st. After October 1st, CASA Academy is happy to have volunteers. Anyone, including family members who wish to visit the school, must first call the office to set up an appointment. Our office staff will make every attempt to arrange a school visit within 48 hours of the request. If you wish to volunteer in your child's classroom, you must call your child's teacher to arrange a visit at least 48 hours in advance. Please see CASA's Director of Students and Operations if you would like to schedule a visit.

Volunteers often inadvertently have access to sensitive information. Any information about scholars or their grades, discipline, or any personally identifiable information about School employees, including address, salary, Social Security number, or telephone number, etc. is to remain confidential. If a volunteer has a concern involving something that is witnessed or overheard it should be discussed with the Director of Students and Operations immediately. If a volunteer disregards this policy, the privilege of volunteering may be revoked. All volunteers must be in the presence of a CASA staff member while volunteering.

Any visitors, including parents and guardians, who do not report to the office or who are found on campus without authorization will be asked to leave immediately. Visitors should wear visitor badges at all times to indicate that they have checked-in at the main office.

Fingerprint Clearance Cards

All CASA instructional staff are required by law to hold a valid and current Fingerprint Clearance Card. Although volunteers are not required to have a fingerprint clearance card, while volunteering, they must always remain in the presence of a staff member.

On field trips, only the biological parent of a scholar or volunteers who hold a Fingerprint Clearance Card may supervise students without a CASA staff member being present.

Student Searches

In order to maintain the security of all scholars, CASA Academy reserves the right to conduct searches of its scholars and their property at any time. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the scholars is respected to the greatest extent possible, and that scholars and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding, and results of, the search. School seat sacks and desks, which are assigned to scholars for their use, remain the property of the school and scholars have no expectation of privacy in these areas. All school premises are subject to canine searches and to random searches by school officials at any time.

Emergency Drills

Fire Drill: During the first month of school and on a monthly basis throughout the school year, scholars and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency. It is important for scholars to follow instructions quickly and quietly during an emergency drill. Scholars and teachers will follow CASA's fire drill procedures.

Lock Down Procedures: A school administrator or staff member who sees that there is an immediate need for an emergency lock down will initiate the lock down procedure. Specific procedures regarding lock downs are kept confidential for the safety of CASA scholars and staff.

Volunteers/guests must also follow the above procedures for fire drills and lock downs.