



# STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2024-2025



Independent Study &  
Homeschool Program



Office Telephone Numbers: (209) 634-0917 Fax: (209) 669-9282  
Website: <https://www.dusd.k12.ca.us/dca>



## **DENAIR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Each school district in the State of California is governed by a local Board of Education, which is elected by the voters who live in that District. The Board of Education, within the framework of the California Education Code, establishes the policies for that district and appoints a superintendent to carry out these policies. Denair Unified School District operates four schools; Denair High School, Denair Middle School, Denair Elementary Charter Academy and Denair Charter Academy.

### **DENAIR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS**

Crystal Sousa - Board President  
Kathi Dunham-Filson - Board Member  
Ray Prock Jr. - Board Member  
Carmen Wilson - Board Member  
Billy Myers- Board Member

### **DENAIR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

Terry Metzger - Superintendent  
Daisy Swearingen - Chief Business Officer  
Amanda Silva - Director of Special Education  
Breanne Aguiar - Director of Secondary Education  
Laura Cardenas - Director of Elementary Education  
Gabriela Sarmiento - Denair Middle School Principal  
Kim Fuentez - Food Service Manager

### **DENAIR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Denair Unified School District, in cooperation and communication with the home and community recognizes our children as our future and will provide a quality education in a safe environment that renders students competent in basic learning, technical, and social skills and will foster work habits, intrinsic values, and character in students that reflect life-long love for learning.

### **DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY STAFF**

Jamie Pecot, Principal  
Laura Maldonado, Principal's Secretary  
Sally Baker, Academic Counselor  
Kara Binkley, Counselor  
Celina Smith, Attendance Secretary  
Jasmine Baltazar, Registrar  
Maing Panerio, Campus Supervisor  
Amber Carmo, Paraeducator  
Patte Hegg, Librarian

### **Teachers**

Brittany Bernardi  
Betsy Clark  
Don Curtiss  
Amber Elstad  
Josie Fiest  
Monica Gonzalez

Matt Groom  
Amy Hamill  
RJ Henderson  
Nimrod Khamo  
Judy Kessler  
Bonnie Lundquist

Vickie McFarlane  
Linda Neely  
Melissa Perez  
Colette Rocha  
Jerry Savelson  
Lucy Silveira

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## **DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY PHILOSOPHY**

Denair Charter Academy endeavors to provide a quality learning experience in an Independent Study/Homeschool format for youth for whom the traditional education system has been least effective. Denair Charter Academy is based on the belief that each student can succeed and deserves an education that is rigorous and well defined. An educated person in this century will be a lifelong learner who is competent and self-motivated, possessing the skills necessary to meaningfully contribute to society at large. The long-term goal of the Denair Charter Academy (DCA) is to provide an educational environment that fosters success and independence for all of our students. Also, to allow students to make significant advancement in skill and knowledge levels in core subject areas, develop life, educational and career goals and progress toward and ultimately receive a high school diploma.

## **DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY VISION STATEMENT**

*Cultivating empowered learners through individualized education.*

## **DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT**

Denair Charter Academy is based on the belief that each student can succeed and deserves an education that is rigorous and well-defined. Denair Charter Academy provides personalized instruction through individual learning plans so students can receive meaningful, individual attention. The Academy's approach to teaching and learning is to seek and match each student's educational experiences to his or her identified abilities, interests, motivation, learning styles and demonstrated achievement.

## **DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY GOALS**

The goal of Denair Charter Academy is to provide expanded choices for students and parents in the types of personalized educational opportunities that are available to them within the public-school system, guaranteeing a quality educational foundation. The Academy believes that each student can succeed and deserves an education that is rigorous and well defined. At the same time, DCA recognizes that each individual is unique and therefore, is entitled to an education that is meaningful and sensitive to his or her varied and often changing needs.

**DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY**  
**SLO's**  
**(SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING OUTCOMES)**  
Students of Denair Charter Academy will:

**Academic Achievers**

- Demonstrate academic excellence by achieving and exceeding Common Core Standards
- Use acquired knowledge and skills to be able to prioritize goals, access information, and use time effectively
- Use academic language to read, write, discuss and problem solve

**Complex Thinkers**

- Know how to learn, think, reason and make decisions
- Students will be able to apply problem-solving processes to real-life situations
- Students will gather, organize and analyze data to think critically and creatively

**Effective Citizens and Communicators**

- Answer questions and be able to justify responses
- Actively listen to and try to understand others
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of computers and other technological equipment
- Students will be responsible citizens with an awareness and understanding of the differences in people
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in their work

**Self-Directed Learners**

- Take responsibility for their own education and hold themselves accountable for learning
- Set and follow through on short and long-term goals and access the resources necessary to achieve set goals
- Identify academic strengths and career interests to reach their individual potential and highest achievements.

## DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Denair Charter Academy is an independent learning program for students who do not wish to attend a traditional class setting. The school is designed to encourage students to continue their education and to return, if it is in their best interest, to a traditional comprehensive high school campus. Denair Charter Academy students must abide by all rules and regulations adopted by the Denair Unified School District Board of Trustees for all students enrolled.

Students and parents must have a clear understanding of this alternative education and how it operates. Pupils must be made aware of the conditions under which they will be able to accomplish tasks and the range of expectations about achieving their goals. Students and parents must understand the conditions of learning and the kind of performance that will be expected of the students as a participant at Denair Charter Academy.

It is absolutely essential to have the full cooperation of the parents and the student enrolled at Denair Charter Academy. **The student is expected to keep all appointments on time, bring books and assignments to the appointments, complete the assignments on his/her own time between appointments, and not be on any other school campus during school hours.** During school hours students are expected to be under the supervision of a parent or legally employed.

**STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MEETING ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES.** It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the student devotes the time necessary to complete all assignments, prepare sufficiently to pass the courses, and has **transportation to and from** the weekly appointments and class days. Parents will be required to conference with the instructor when the student misses two meetings.

**Parents must be involved!** Parents are required to attend orientation with the student before the student can be enrolled at Denair Charter Academy. When able to do so, parents are invited to be with the student when he/she comes in for an appointment with the instructor. The parents should review the assignments and evaluations, which are completed after each appointment. In addition, parents should never hesitate to telephone the Denair Charter Academy office at 634-0917.

We encourage both the student and parents to review this guidebook, master agreement, Chromebook agreement and usage forms and all enrollment paperwork to become fully informed about their responsibilities.



## DESCRIPTION OF INDEPENDENT STUDY

DCA is a voluntary alternative instructional strategy by which all enrolled students may reach District curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements outside of the regular classroom setting. This educational option is available to students in 6th-12th grade. Authorization for independent study is found in the *California Education Code (EC), Article 5.5, Sections 51745* and *California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 5, Sections 11700- 11703*.

This educational path allows for greater flexibility than what the traditional classroom can provide by designing an individual education plan that is responsive to the academic, personal, and social needs of individual students.

As a recognized alternative to regular classroom study, the independent study option is expected to be substantially equal in quality and quantity to classroom instruction. Independent study is an alternative instructional strategy, not an alternative curriculum (EC Section 51745(a)(3)).

Independent Study is an educational option for students who could benefit from:

- Personal involvement in educational decisions;
- Flexibility to accommodate personal circumstances;
- College preparatory curriculum in an alternative setting;
- Expanded access to community or university college courses;
- Individualized instruction.

DCA is open for application to all students who would benefit attending. Innovative learning opportunities, academic acceleration and partnerships with post-secondary institutions enable DCA students to display initiative and to take responsibility for their own education. However, DCA's educational strategies are not necessarily appropriate for all students.

Experience has indicated that to be successful, students should be:

- Motivated to successfully achieve performance-based learning standards;
- Able to work individually and collaboratively;
- Willing to seek out support when needed.
- Self advocate to teacher when directions or assignments are unclear

## HOW DO I LEARN AT DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY?

A student at Denair Charter Academy does not attend daily classes. Students are required to complete all of their schoolwork at home. The program provides personalized instruction through Individual Learning Plans (ILP) so the student can receive meaningful individual assignments. The student meets with an instructor on a one-to-one basis, or in a small group, at prearranged times. The instructor assigns the student schoolwork that is to be completed by the student on his/her own time. The instructor at each meeting evaluates the completed work. The student is expected to complete 6 hours of schoolwork each school day. This will average 30 hours per week or 120 hours per month. If a student wishes to make up missed classes or enters late in the semester, they will have to spend more than the minimum minutes required in order to stay on track and meet graduation requirements.

## **Independent Study Activities**

Independent study students can participate in a wide variety of educational activities including but not limited to the following:

1. In-depth research in a specific area of interest;
2. Special assignments including projects, extending the content of a regular school subject;
3. Participatory and life-skills experiences associated with employment preparation;
4. Academic experiences directly associated with community-based situations in which the student applies and demonstrates his/her academic skills and knowledge;
5. Short term independent study during travel;
6. Community service programs that support and strengthen the student's achievement.

## **College Courses**

All DCA students, with parental approval, may apply to take courses at postgraduate institutions, including California Community Colleges (Education Code 48800).

## **Travel Experience**

A signed work record may provide for continuing education by means of independent study, while the student is traveling for a short term. This kind of agreement recognizes the educational values that can be associated with travel. The work record must be planned, written, and signed before the start of the travel and may not be applied retroactively as make-up work. The maximum apportionment credit that can be earned is limited to the number of school calendar days during the period covered by the agreement.

## **Legal Mandates Regarding Independent Study**

Participation in DCA must be voluntary: It is a choice made by a student, parent/ guardian, or caregiver, and teachers. No pupil shall be required to participate in independent study (EC Section 51747(c)(7)). All students must have the option of a classroom setting for a full program at the time independent study is made available. This option must be continuously available should the student decide to transfer from independent study.

No individual with exceptional needs, as defined in EC Section 56026, may participate in independent study unless his or her individualized educational program (IEP) specifically provides for that participation (EC Section 51745(c)).

No temporarily disabled pupil may receive individual instruction pursuant to EC

Section 48206.3 through independent study (EC Section 51745(d)). However, if the temporarily disabled pupil's parents and the district(s) agree, the pupil may receive instruction through independent study instead of the "home and hospital" instruction provided pursuant to EC Section 48206.3.

Independent study is not an alternative curriculum, so all courses and materials are aligned to state content standards. (EC Section 51745 (a)(3)). Supplemental materials may be used to respond to individual student interests and learning styles. Materials that are sectarian in nature are not used pursuant to the California Constitution, Article IX, Section 8.

## **Equal Educational Opportunity**

DCA students have equal rights, responsibilities and privileges as the students in classroom programs. Students who enroll in courses at DCA must adhere to all academic, attendance and behavioral policies of DCA. Please carefully review the DCA Handbook to be familiar with all policies and procedures.

By law, the independent study option is to be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction and shall not be provided as an alternative curriculum. (EC Section 51745(a)(3)) No course included among the courses required for high school graduation shall be offered exclusively through independent study. (EC Section 51745 (5)(e))

In addition, the ratio of Average Daily Attendance for independent study pupils to school district full-time equivalent certificated employees responsible for independent study may not exceed the equivalent ratio of pupils to full-time certificated employees for all other educational programs operated by the school district. (EC Section 51745.6(a))

## **ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT**

### **Who is Eligible to Enroll?**

Denair Charter Academy is intended for students who are seeking an alternative to traditional classroom based instruction models.. Interested students can only be enrolled with the consent of the parent and Denair Charter Academy.

### **Master Agreements (MA)**

- The Master Agreement (MA) provides a summary of the agreement between Denair Charter Academy and the student, along with their parent(s) or guardian(s), in regard to participation in independent study.
- A DCA Master Agreement must be written for each participating student and is good for the duration of one academic school year.
- Each agreement shall be signed and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA).
- Master Agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course, attendance or behavior contracts and assignment and work records.

### **Enrollment Procedures for New Students**

- Schedule an orientation in the DCA office and discuss program requirements/additional information to ensure DCA is the best educational placement.
- Attend scheduled orientation with DCA Academic Counselor to review transcripts, policies and procedures and sign Master Agreement.
- Submit a fully completed Master Agreement, DCA enrollment packet, Chromebook Agreement forms and all required paperwork within the stated deadline.
- Read the DCA Handbook thoroughly with your parent/guardian, sign the handbook form verifying you have read the DCA Student Handbook and return to DCA Office.
- Complete any assessment testing, which may be required for placement.

## **Re-enrollment Procedures for Returning Students**

Complete and return the Master Agreement and all other required paperwork by stated deadlines. Failure to adhere to these stated deadlines may result in the student losing DCA placement. Space in on-campus classes may be limited, and priority in specific classes will be given to students with the most urgent need to meet graduation requirements.

### **Exit Procedure**

Exiting students, leaving voluntarily or leaving as the result of a dismissal, must:

- Notify the DCA Administrator in writing that he/she intends to leave the program.
- Return materials to the DCA office at the time of exit. Any damaged or outstanding materials will be billed accordingly.
- **Students who exit DCA before the expiration of their Master Agreement may not re-enroll for the remainder of the current semester.**
- **California Law permits the school to hold parents liable for damages up to \$10,000 on any equipment, materials and/or school property.** (EC Section 60411, 48904(a)) No student records will be released until all materials and/or damages have been cleared.

## **CREDIT CALCULATIONS**

### **Attendance Credit**

Attendance is based on time value of work completed as determined by the student's Supervising Teacher/Advisor and is determined separately from academic credit. The only item that counts for independent study attendance credit is evaluated work, or work products that were completed and submitted by the due dates established in the Master Agreement. In Independent Study, the student's performance, measured by the terms in the Master Agreement, is converted by the Supervising Teacher/Advisor into school days. The computed school days are reported as if the student were physically in attendance. When the student submits or demonstrates the evidence of work accomplished in the achievement of set objectives, the teacher credits the student with attendance.

As required by law, no credit for attendance may be reported for ADA purposes until the work is submitted and assessed by the Supervising Teacher/Advisor. A student's presence at a scheduled independent study appointment does not count for "seat-time attendance" as the student's presence does in a classroom. When a student is learning or otherwise actively engaged in anything related to his or her attainment of the objectives of the signed Master Agreement-such as taking a test, discussing or correcting an assignment, viewing pertinent videotapes, listening to audiotapes, or working on a computer-the work may be counted for attendance purposes on the basis of the accomplishment, not of the student's physical presence. (EC Section 51747(a), (c)(6))

**A student who misses two appointments in succession, two appointments in an attendance month, or has four (4) absences during one semester may be disenrolled from Denair Charter Academy and subject to referral to an alternate educational setting. Parent/student/teacher conferences are required when any portion of the agreement is violated. Parents or students 18 years of age or older are responsible for communicating with the teacher if they will not be able to attend their scheduled class day/s, or to arrange for an alternative day or time to meet. Students attending our Homeschool Program, please reference the Homeschool Attendance Agreement Form for DCA's homeschool attendance policy.**

If an emergency or illness does occur, it is the responsibility of the parent to telephone their child's teacher so an alternate appointment may be arranged. Students are allowed 1 excused absence per semester.

## **Academic Credit**

Students are required to enroll in at least five courses per semester to ensure minimum academic minutes are met.

Students must attempt a minimum of 25 units per semester and may attempt up to 35 on their ILP, unless additional units are approved by the DCA Administrator. DCA students may earn up to 10 summer school credits through our credit recovery program in June.

## **Transcripts**

DCA maintains transcripts for all students participating in Grades 6-12. The transcripts shall not contain any special marking indicating the student participates in independent study. Also, transcripts shall not contain the names of specific curriculum providers unless they represent an accredited, transcript-granting institution. The district is responsible for ensuring all courses meet state and district standards for high school students. Any course already approved for A-G credit or Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum credit by the University of California or California State University systems will automatically receive DCA credit.

## **DCA REQUIREMENTS**

### **Weekly Assignments**

To foster each participating student's success in independent study, the Denair Charter Academy Administration established the maximum length of time which may elapse between the date an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work as one month for students in grades 9-12 and two weeks for grades 6-8. When circumstances justify a longer time, the DCA Administrator and/or Supervising Teacher may extend the maximum length of an assignment to a period not to exceed four weeks, pursuant to a written request with justification.

Supervising Teachers carefully set the duration of DCA assignments, within the limits specified above, and establish an appropriate schedule for student-teacher conferences to help identify students falling behind in their work.

Except in unusual circumstances, it is expected that the Supervising Teacher will meet with each participating student at least once a week to discuss the student's progress. (EC Section 51747).

**Students will be required to stay on campus to complete their assigned work if work is not completed at the student's regularly scheduled appointment time.**

When any participating student fails to complete independent study assignments, as specified on the work record, in a period of 15 school days without valid reasons, an evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in independent study.

## **Work Samples**

The Supervising Teacher will collect work samples at weekly student meetings and maintain the samples in a portfolio. Portfolios are available for review by approved DCA school personnel, auditors, parents, students and DCA staff to review student work completion. Work sample portfolios must be maintained by the DCA for three academic years. Samples should reflect general student achievement, but not burden the student by restricting the ability to review content learned.

## **Work Records**

The assignment and work record must include a due date. Attendance may be collected as long as work is submitted within the designated learning period. If a student is not able to attend by that date because of illness or extenuating circumstances, a responsible person (e.g., a parent) could take the student's completed work to the teacher. The work record shall provide for individual assignments, with comments on resources provided to facilitate the completion of each assignment as well as evaluation comments by the Supervising Teacher. Each form shall be consistent with the terms of the written agreement and be signed by the pupil and teacher at the time of the assignment and after evaluation of the completed work. The Supervising Teacher shall determine and assign grades or other approved measures of a student's achievement, when appropriate.

## **STUDENT COMPLIANCE**

### **Missing Assignments or Meetings**

DCA students who are late, miss scheduled conferences or do not submit assigned work on time shall not be reported as tardy or truant. However, the DCA Administrator or Designee and Supervising Teacher shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of his/her written agreement. The following supportive strategies will be used if a student misses meetings or assignments with no explanation:

A notification will be sent to the student and/or parent/guardian requesting that:

The parent/guardian and/or student provide an explanation for the missed meeting and/or assignments;  
The parent/guardian and/or student meet with the Supervising Teacher to turn in missing work;

If the student continues to miss meetings and/or assignments, the DCA Administrator or Designee, will contact the family to discuss the barriers which are impacting the student's ability to complete their independent work and provide support and/or resources to address missed meetings and assignments. If no contact is made, a home visit may be scheduled.

If the student continues to miss meetings and/or assignments, a meeting will be held between the parent/guardian, student, supervising teacher and DCA Designee, to discuss the barriers which are impacting the student's ability to complete his/her independent work and develop an action plan to address missed meetings and assignments. If no contact is made, a home visit may be scheduled.

If the student continues to miss meetings and/or assignments, a meeting will be held between the parent/guardian and student with the Supervising Teacher and DCA Administrator or Designee to develop a plan to increase the amount of time the student works under direct supervision.

When any participating student fails to complete three consecutive weeks of assignments in a period of 15 school days, or misses two appointments with his/her Supervising Teacher without valid reasons, an

evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in DCA. The Principal, in collaboration with the Supervising Teacher, shall conduct the evaluation which may result in termination of the Master Agreement and result in the student's assignment in the student's home district. A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted after the student has missed the number of assignments specified in Board policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim student record which shall be maintained for three years from the date of the evaluation (Education Code 51747).

### **Appeals Process for Non-placement or Dismissal**

When the DCA Administrator determines a student does not qualify to participate in DCA or terminates a student's participation in DCA, then an appeals process will be available. The parent(s)/guardian or the student, if 18 or over, may:

1. Request a meeting with the DCA Administrator to discuss the reasons why the student should be allowed to participate and to submit additional records, if available. The Administrator shall provide a written explanation of any decisions to the parent(s)/guardian and the student within two weeks after the meeting.
2. If still not satisfied, request a meeting with the DUSD Superintendent to discuss the reasons why the student should be allowed to participate. The DUSD Superintendent shall provide a written explanation of any decisions to the parent(s)/guardian and the student within two weeks after the meeting.
3. If still not satisfied, appeal the decision of the Superintendent in a written request to the Denair Unified School District Board of Trustees.
4. The decision of the Board of Trustees, submitted to the parent(s)/guardian and the student in writing within 30 days, is final.

### **Suspended or Expelled Students**

Suspended or expelled students may only participate in DCA if full-time regular program participation has been offered. In the case of a suspended or expelled student who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to EC Section 48915 or 48917, a statement that instruction may be provided through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction (EC Section 5144.1)



## ASSESSMENTS

By utilizing a variety of assessment tools, teachers and parents gain a more complete picture of a student's ability level and academic growth. DCA's assessment system incorporates daily work, authentic assessments, comprehensive tests, and portfolios. Students demonstrate the knowledge, concepts and skills that they should acquire during high school by performing course-related tasks.

### Daily Work

Daily work assignments are designed to demonstrate mastery of the Content Standards for California Public Schools and include all assignments for courses listed on the DCA course outlines.

### Comprehensive Testing

Comprehensive testing demonstrates mastery of material and assists teachers and parents in identifying areas which need further instruction. Comprehensive tests may consist of essay, short answer, multiple-choice and/or other types of questions.

### Authentic Assessments

An authentic assessment is a product created by a student, which displays a knowledge of the subject and demonstrates the skills required by the course of study. Authentic Assessments may include written or oral presentations, models, websites, performances, demonstrations and presentation of portfolios. An objective or subjective test is not considered an authentic assessment. Authentic Assessments may be required of students.

### Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of a student's work and other items that provides a tangible picture of his/her achievement and academic growth. Teachers assemble work samples in a wide variety of formats, create a natural medium for discussions of the student's long-term goals and objectives and foster on-going reflection and evaluation of performance levels.

### Finals

Semester finals may be required of a course and are cumulative in nature - they assess knowledge of material covered over the course of the semester. Students may be required to take finals as an essential component of the course, and families need to schedule vacations and other commitments so as not to conflict with finals.

### Standardized Testing

The California Standardized Testing and Reporting program is part of the assessment program at DCA and is required of all schools under state law. Data from sources such as student grades, teacher recommendations, parent input, and iReady diagnostic exams will be used to identify underachieving students who **require enrollment in intervention programs for the purpose of maintaining school expectations and meeting grade level Content Standards for California Public Schools.**

DCA students will be required to participate in all applicable mandated state assessments, including but not limited to: **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP); Physical Fitness Testing and/or ELPAC.**



**For additional information and resources visit <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>**

**CALIFORNIA ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS (CAASPP) ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- Smarter Balanced Summative Test and performance task in English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades 3-8, 11 (computer-based).
- 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will also be required to take the California Science Test.
- Students in grades K, 1, 2, 9, 10 and 12 do not take the CAASPP exams.

**Physical Fitness Testing (PFT)**

- **Grades 5, 7, 9 take the physical fitness test in California**

For additional information and resources visit <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/pf/>

**Additional Tests that may be administered include:**

**English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)**

For additional information and resources visit <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ep/>

**ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

**CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT: (Advanced and college level classes)**

Students who need advanced classes, or college level courses not available at Denair Charter Academy may request concurrent enrollment at other schools; including attending a junior college.

**SUMMER SCHOOL**

Students deficient in credits may attend summer school at Denair Charter Academy. Contact the DCA office for additional information.

**Library**

The Library is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Students are allowed to check out books and other materials for a period of **three** weeks. The Library is also where student tutoring is offered. Tutoring is available on an ongoing basis, by teacher referral, student referral or parent referral. If you feel you could benefit from tutoring, talk to your teacher.

**Additional Support**

The Learning Center is located in Room 1 and is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Learning Center provides an opportunity for additional 1:1 or small group instruction. Students may also access chromebooks and charging stations to complete work assigned by his/her teacher. Please talk with your teacher regarding tutoring services.

### **School Nurse**

The school nurse is available on campus at pre-arranged times to maintain health records. Periodic vision and hearing screenings are other services provided by the nurse. Referrals can be made through the Denair Charter Academy office.

### **Special Education**

Special Education services are available for students in the district. Any concerns about a student's special needs or a possible referral should be directed to the teacher and/or coordinator.

### **Work Permits**

Work permits are required by the employer for students under the age of 18 to work. Students who are failing in school, truant, not attending their weekly classes, or not completing minimum schoolwork will have their permits revoked. Students must have no failing grades at the quarter mark prior to receiving a work permit.

### **Chromebooks**

While continued use of textbooks is an important component to our program, Denair Charter Academy also promotes 21st Century educational opportunities for all students through the use of technology. The full implementation of Chromebooks ensures that all students have access to a curriculum rich in technology that addresses all learning styles while on site, as well as within the home setting. Incorporating technology within our program also provides students with the opportunity to access online resources and materials, provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of how to utilize the G-Suit (Google) server to access online learning tools such as Google Classroom, as well as the ability to complete courses offered through virtual academies such as Cyber High and Edmentum. In addition, use of Chromebooks promotes student engagement that promotes the development of higher-order thinking strategies by providing teachers with the flexibility and freedom to utilize new learning methodologies at any time and anywhere.

The following is important information regarding student Chromebooks:

- ***A Chromebook device, charging unit and protective cover will be personally assigned to each student.***
- ***Each student will have the opportunity to purchase a Protection Plan for the low cost of \$20.00.***
- ***Chromebook Forms must be completed by the parent/guardian and student at the time of enrollment and re-enrollment in our Homeschool and Independent Study programs.***

## **DCA EXPECTATIONS**

### **Student Expectations**

DCA students are required to meet the following standards to maintain satisfactory academic and behavioral standing:

Maintain a passing grade, D, in all courses to receive a passing grade. DCA gives no credit or passing grade for anything that does not meet a standard on all class assignments, homework, authentic assessments and final grades.

Participate in the CAASPP, or other assessment programs as designated by DCA or DUSD and state and federal requirements. Complete 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade Physical Fitness Testing established by the California Department of Education. Adhere to all academic, attendance, and behavior policies of DCA and the DUSD.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

**It is the obligation of the parent to ensure the student attends each school week and completes schoolwork at acceptable levels.**

If a student is not attending or completing schoolwork to teacher satisfaction, a required meeting between the teacher/student/parent will be required. This meeting will be during the student's regular scheduled meeting day and time. Parents must request a change of this meeting time with the teacher if they are unable to attend. Students enrolled in our homeschool program must attend on their scheduled class days. Class days cannot be rescheduled.

**A student who continues to not attend or not complete schoolwork at acceptable levels will be required to meet with the parent/teacher and DCA administrator or designee to determine if Denair Charter Academy is an appropriate educational setting for the student.**

## **Staff Expectations**

DCA staff recognize that they serve a diverse population of students who have varying learning styles and abilities. The education of students will be most productive when instructors:

- Create and maintain safe and effective environments for student learning;
- Understand and organize subject matter for student learning;
- Communicate with and inform parents/guardians of student progress regularly;
- Plan instruction and design learning experiences for all students;
- Engage and support all students in learning;
- Systematically evaluate student achievement/performance with a variety of assessment tools
- Continue to develop as professional educators
- Correctly maintain all appropriate paperwork and meet all deadlines
- Provide tutorial assistance/instruction, when appropriate
- Show respect for all students, parents and staff

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY:** The staff at Denair Charter Academy is here to help you get the finest education possible. When problems occur, every reasonable effort will be made to rectify them to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned. Moreover, persons who behave irresponsibly must expect to be held accountable for their behavior. Persons who repeatedly or seriously violate the Education Code will be brought before the Administration Panel for an expulsion hearing.

**DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE:** Most discipline infractions will result in a verbal warning from a staff member. In some cases, the student may be instructed to report to the office to discuss the referral with administration. Discipline problems will be handled in a timely manner. Certain actions may result in immediate disenrollment from school.

**KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULES:** As a student at Denair Charter Academy you are expected to know and obey the rules and regulations of the school. Including: discipline philosophies, procedures, and consequences. As young adults you're responsible for knowing what is expected of you. Following the school wide student learner outcomes on page 6 and posted in every classroom and on page 3 is an outline of

what characteristics all students should display when attending Denair Charter Academy. A careful review of this handbook should clarify any misunderstanding and answer questions you may have.

**MAINTAINING A SAFE CAMPUS:** Students waiting for parent pick-up, should sit in the designated area, on the school benches located at the front of the office or parking lot.

**COURTEOUS TREATMENT OF OTHER:** Just as you are entitled to expect dignity, courtesy, and respect from others, you have a responsibility to treat other persons on this campus and in the community with courtesy and respect. This would include refraining from rowdy behavior, making rude or derogatory remarks, or otherwise interfering with the rights of others.

**ABUSE OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL:** Abuse of school personnel or their property will not be tolerated. This includes actions, which occur on or off campus, whether during school hours or non-school hours. Any deliberate act intended to cause injury, insult, or property loss will result in disciplinary action at school and possible criminal prosecution. Adequate complaint and appeal procedures are available if you feel that you have a legitimate grievance against any employee of the district.

**ABUSE OF STUDENTS:** State law forbids any act that is likely to injure, degrade, or disgrace any student. This law, which also prohibits hazing, is punishable by a fine and incarceration. Students who violate this rule are also subject to suspension and/or a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for expulsion.

**CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and may result in a reduced or failing grade on the test, paper, assignment, or project. For the first offense, disciplinary action will be administered through the teacher. Flagrant or repeated incidents will be referred to the administration for appropriate action. Parents will be notified of all incidents involving cheating.

**CLOSED CAMPUS:** Students must remain on the campus until their appointment time/class day is completed and are released by the teacher. Any student leaving the campus, during the hours they are expected to be at school, will be referred to administration for possible disciplinary action. DCA does not have an open campus where a student may leave and return at any point. Once a student leaves for the day, the student must check back into the office for re-entry on campus. All outside visitors must check-in inside the office.

**Students are not permitted on any other school campus during the school day unless** the student is there for official school business and has received prior written permission from an administrator or designee. In addition, a student may walk on the perimeter of another site, depending on their place of residence, for the sole purpose of attending their scheduled class day/s or appointment/s at DCA, as long as their school identification is visible to staff members. Always be cooperative and show respect when asked by staff for proper identification and a permit to be on campus. They are there to provide a safe campus. Repeated incidents of being on another campus without permission, or school identification may result in suspension and possibly being disenrolled from Denair Charter Academy.

**DEFIANCE:** Defiance is the refusal to obey lawful authority. Students at Denair Charter Academy who defy any member of the school staff will be suspended. The teachers and other members of the staff are required by district policy and state law to provide proper supervision over our students. It is essential, therefore, that our students submit to the lawful authority of school officials.

**DRESS REGULATIONS:** Students at Denair Charter Academy are expected to dress in a manner that reflects good taste, modesty, and cleanliness. Any form of appearance that is disruptive and detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school will not be permitted. Students who wear clothing that is distracting and is determined to have a disruptive effect on normal school activities and the learning environment will be sent home and asked to dress appropriately.

Denair Charter Academy is an educational facility and students should not wear clothing that is not considered appropriate for a traditional school.

Parents and adult students are asked to ensure their children follow the dress code outlined below:

- Students must dress appropriately for educational activities in which they will participate, so as not to **endanger their health, safety or welfare**.
- Students must be **cleanly dressed** so as to not promote unhealthy or unsanitary conditions.
- Pajamas are not allowed.
- Any garment or accessory with **inappropriate sayings, emblems or pictures** that portray sexually suggestive, derogatory, violent or insulting pictures or writing or references to **drugs or gangs, advertisement for alcohol or tobacco**, or the companies that produce these items, is not allowed.
- Clothing depicting weapons is not permitted.
- Students shall not display any material, which is libelous or slanderous.
- Students shall not display any material, which incites **students to create a clear and present danger** of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises or the violation of school policies and rules. **NO more than 1 RED OR BLUE article of clothing** will be allowed. Any transitory gang colors/indicators including repetitive wear of the same color is not permitted.
- Students are to wear appropriate tops that cover the waistline of shorts, skirts or pants; the abdomen or back may not be exposed. No strapless or tops with less than a ½ inch strap are allowed.
- Pants must be worn at the waist and belts must be in loops. Pants must be able to stay at the waistline. No “sagging.”
- Shorts must be an appropriate and modest length.
- Chains of any form, such as wallet safeguards and chokers, are not allowed. Any items worn as accessories, including safety pins and items with spikes, that pose a safety hazard, may not be worn.
- Shoes must be worn at all times; slippers are not permitted.
- Hats and caps may not be worn inside school buildings.

Refusal to follow a reasonable request of this nature may result in a suspension for defiance and/or dismissal from the DCA program. ***Remember, school is your workplace; come dressed appropriately for the job!***

#### **DRUGS/ ALCOHOL:**

The possession, use, sales or being under the influence of unlawful drugs or alcohol is forbidden while at school or any school activity. Students who violate this rule may be taken into custody by police, suspended, and recommended for expulsion.

#### **TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS:**

“In the best interests of students, employees and the general public, the Governing Board prohibits the use of tobacco products at all times on District property and in Denair vehicles.” This prohibition applies to all employees, students, visitors and other persons at any school or school-sponsored activity or athletic event. It applies to any meeting on any property owned, leased or rented by or from the District.

#### **OFFENSES INVOLVING BULLYING, CYBER BULLYING AND SOCIAL MEDIA:**

We do not tolerate any type of bullying on our school campus. If you are a victim of bullying, report it immediately to a school staff member. Examples of bullying include physical contact such as hitting or pushing, verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling, and social isolation or manipulation.

All instances of school-related cyber bullying and/or use of social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Vine, etc.), that results in a substantial disruption to the educational process, (Note: Violations may occur on or off school grounds and through the usage of personal digital devices, which include but are not limited to, cell phones, digital cameras, personal computers, netbooks, iPods and iPads,) Disciplinary action under these rules will be determined by consideration of all the facts and circumstances of a particular situation and appropriate consequences will be taken by administration.

**PARKING AND TRAFFIC REGULATIONS:** The California Vehicle Code is enforced in the parking area of Denair Charter Academy. The County Sheriff and Highway Patrol will cite students who endanger the lives or property of themselves or others by speeding or driving recklessly. Car stereos must be turned off when entering the parking lot and left off until the student has left the school grounds.

Student drivers must be licensed and are expected to drive carefully and to observe all traffic laws. Student drivers parking in a Denair Unified parking lot must obtain a parking permit in the DCA office. Student loitering in or about vehicles parked in the parking lot is not permitted. Make sure all materials and assignments are in your possession before leaving your vehicle.

## **Questions and Answers Regarding Denair Charter Academy I.S./Homeschool Program**

### **HOW OFTEN ARE THE STUDENT/TEACHER APPOINTMENTS?**

The pupil will meet weekly with the teacher. **It is the responsibility of the parents(s) to ensure the student attends these appointments.** Students may be required to attend more often, or for longer periods of time, as the situation warrants. Taking tests, computer assignments, tutoring, and correcting school work will require the student to come to DCA at other times during the school week. **Parents will be notified if a student fails to attend the regularly scheduled weekly meeting.**

Students attending DCA's Homeschool Program grades 2-8 are required to attend school for a full class day from 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. one time per week. Students enrolled in our homeschool program must attend school on their scheduled class days. **Class days cannot be rescheduled.**

**Parents are responsible for submitting completed work for the current week missed and picking up new lesson plans with student assignments PRIOR to the class day. Failure to exchange lesson plans will result in a parent/teacher conference and puts your child at risk of falling behind or receiving low/failing grades.**

### **HOW DO I GET TO MY APPOINTMENTS?**

**It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to the appointment.** Parents should consider alternate means of transportation such as: Dial-A-Ride, bicycling, riding with friends/relatives, ride sharing, or walking. If there is likely to be a transportation problem, the parent should meet with the administrator prior to enrolling the student at Denair Charter Academy to identify if the student qualifies for an alternate means of transportation based on individual circumstances.

### **HOW WILL I BE ABLE TO DO THE WORK ON MY OWN?**

As provided by the teacher, students are given specific Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to achieve educational goals. **Students are to do their own schoolwork.** Students read the assigned work, answer all the questions as assigned by the teacher, and study sufficiently to pass assessments. When the student comes in for his/her weekly meeting, the teacher will review any unanswered questions. If a student becomes confused between appointments, he/she can call or email the teacher at school for assistance and clarification.

**The teacher can provide instruction and encouragement, but the student must be self-disciplined and motivated to do the work on her/his own time, not during the assigned meeting time.**

**Students may have to come to school at additional arranged times to complete a test, grade completed schoolwork, tutoring and/or work on school computers.**



### **WHAT IF I LOSE MY CHROMEBOOK OR TEXTBOOKS?**

If you damage or lose any textbooks, Chromebook, Chromebooks charging unit or Chromebook protective case, you will be expected to pay the full replacement price. The books and materials are your responsibility and should be protected at all times. All loaned materials and textbooks are to be returned to Denair Charter Academy.

### **HOW WILL I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO BEFORE THE NEXT APPOINTMENT?**

A part of the learning experience is planning and time management. The teacher and the student will work out a schedule for the student to accomplish the semester's work. During appointments the teacher will review the students' progress. The student will have to develop a good time management plan and stick to it. Students should ask their teacher for help as needed. If a student is not sure about how to complete an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher prior to the next scheduled appointment.

### **HOW DO PARENTS KNOW HOW WELL THEIR STUDENT IS DOING?**

Parents should review all student work and assignments. A weekly Review of Progress is available upon request from the teacher. Whenever possible, the parent should come to the appointment with the student.

For **Homeschool**, parents **MUST** sign their child IN or OUT each week. No Exceptions. Attendance sheets will be located in the student's classroom each week. Parents are also required to attend monthly meetings with the child's Homeschool teacher/Advisor.

**Deficiency notices and report cards will be mailed home throughout the school year.**

### **WHAT IS AN ASSIGNMENT SHEET?**

Information on the **Weekly Assignment Sheet** indicates how much work and what the student is expected to accomplish during that assignment period.

The hours students are assigned are equivalent to the amount of schoolwork the student would have been assigned and should have completed in a traditional classroom. A semester has approximately 90 days from start to finish. If a student were to attend class each day, the student would attend each class for 90 hours per semester. Students at Denair Charter Academy do not attend regular classes; instead they earn hours and grades by completing the equivalent amount of schoolwork at home and passing assessment measures.

### **HOW MUCH WORK WILL BE GIVEN TO THE STUDENT?**

Generally, each class has the minimum equivalent homework assignment of 6 hours per week. A student is to be enrolled in the equivalent of a 6-period school day. A student is expected to spend as much time completing schoolwork at home as if attending a traditional school. Making up a missed class or starting after the semester begins will result in additional schoolwork.

**Reminder #1: Late assignments may not receive full credit, but must be turned in to provide evidence of completed work and attendance.**

**Reminder #2: When a student misses two consecutive appointments, completing less than the minimum hours of work per month, the teacher in a parent/student conference shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the students' best interest to remain at Denair Charter Academy.**

Parent conferences are required when the student does not complete minimum work for two weeks, one school month, or as deemed by the teacher. Conferences can be scheduled at any time.

### **HOW MANY CLASSES WILL A STUDENT TAKE?**

A student must take at least 5 classes per semester from Denair Charter academy. If the student is on track to graduate, the student will be enrolled in 6 classes per semester. If the student is behind in credits or needs additional courses, the student may be enrolled in up to 7 courses in one semester at Denair Charter Academy. Students attempt the equivalent hourly schedule of a full-time student at a traditional comprehensive school. Additional online classes may be taken if recommended by the teacher and the parent. Classes attempted by the student are listed in the Denair Charter Academy Outlines and approved by the school board.. The number of classes attempted may be less if a student enters Denair Charter Academy late in the semester (depending on transfer grades), but the student will still be attempting close to 30 hours of schoolwork per week.

### **HOW MANY CREDITS CAN I EARN?**

In most cases a maximum of 5 semester credits can be earned in each subject attempted during a semester for up to 35 credits. Credits are granted upon the successful completion (as determined by the teacher) of all contracted course work for a class in addition to earning a passing grade.

Students earn credits by successfully completing course work and earning a “Passing Grade” or “Pass/No Credit” (A, B, C, D, P, NC) each semester. Each course earns 5 credits each semester. To be on track for graduation students should earn 60 credits each year.

Please contact the DCA office if you have any additional questions or concerns at 209-634-0917.

We look forward to a great 2024-2025 school year!

