

2021-2022



TREE ACADEMY

*for the Creative Arts, New
Technology and Social Justice*

STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

At TREE, we celebrate, support and are dedicated to creating a diverse campus where all human beings are equally welcome. We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer and school. We are fundamentally committed to social justice in employment and educational opportunity regardless of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status, disability, or gender identity.

Director's Welcome

Dear TREE Families,

Welcome to a brand-new school year at TREE Academy.

Please make full use of this comprehensive Handbook. It contains information about our programs and procedures. We created this resource for every aspect of your student's Middle and High School years at TREE.

We urge you to familiarize yourself with its content and refer to it first should you have any questions about TREE Academy.

Thanks to you all.

In Peace and Progress,

Darryl

Darryl Sollerh
Co-Founder
Director of School

This handbook is provided for your information only. As TREE Academy continues to grow, its policies, procedures, and regulations will need to be evaluated and changed from time to time to meet its growing and changing needs. TREE Academy has the absolute right to interpret and change the language, policies, procedures, and guidelines of this Handbook as well as all other TREE Academy guidelines and policies. If any discrepancy exists between guidelines as communicated in this document or in other formal or informal communications, then the school will determine which policy will govern. TREE Academy offers open enrollment based on application and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship, marital status, disability, or gender identity.

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School Philosophy

TREE Academy believes all children deserve access to education that places traditional academic pursuits in a contemporary context, engaging students' hearts and minds in the exploration of our ever-evolving world and in developing the skills to address the many challenges we face as a society. As engaged members of the diverse communities that make up Los Angeles, we inspire our students to become creative thinkers, committed citizens, and compassionate human beings. TREE Academy seeks to spark enduring curiosity, to promote personal, social, emotional, and cultural awareness. We also seek to instill respect for the life and ecology of the earth, and to nurture an ever-expanding awareness of humanity.

TREE Academy's educational philosophy is centered around developing the following qualities in its student learners:

1. An ability to think critically, to analyze clearly, and to reflect deeply. We explore new and unfamiliar ideas, and we apply content knowledge and conceptual understanding across disciplines.
2. A creative, collaborative, and flexible mindset. We foster independence and the strength to challenge ideas and the status quo, and further seek to inculcate an ability to imagine new possibilities, outcomes, and futures, as well as an aesthetic appreciation for the world around us.
3. A willingness to engage and listen respectfully to different perspectives, as well as an ability to resolve conflict through civil discourse that supports and encourages respect and compassion for others.
4. An appreciation for the diversity of the human experience, coupled with the capacity to understand, investigate, and work toward the resolution of personal biases/prejudices that are symptoms of the systemic marginalization and oppression of others with respect to race, class, sexuality, gender, and other cultural differences.
5. Engaged participation in, and responsible stewardship of, one's community and the larger environment in which we live.

Team TREE – TREE Academy Parent Association

Families are a valued resource in our community as well as our partners in inspiring students to discover the best in themselves. Should you like to get involved in helping to build our school, please contact our Parent Association (Team TREE). Through various programs and special events, Team TREE supports the mission of the school, working in concert to foster a warm, welcoming, and inclusive community at TREE.

Volunteering at TREE is a terrific way to meet other families, to contribute to the school in a significant way, and to model community involvement for our students. The Parent Association supports a multitude of events and programs, including all school picnics, Teacher Appreciation events and field trip.

Annual Fund

Each year, annual giving provides essential operating support for our School. It allows TREE Academy to offer the innovative programs and diverse community that make TREE Academy the unique and special place that you chose for your child. Every child benefits from the programs provided by annual giving and so we ask that every member of the community contribute to our annual fund. **Annual Giving’s primary goal is 100% participation from all families no matter the amount.** All families, regardless of any financial assistance they may receive, will be asked to donate to the Annual Fund as it demonstrates to larger founding foundations the level of support we have from our community when we seek additional funding to grow our school.

Questions, Concerns, Suggestions

Should you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, please first contact our Team TREE Parent Association representatives.

TREE Day to Day

School Schedule

Monday - Friday	PERIOD	DURATION
8:10a - 8:25a	Student Arrival	
8:30a - 8:45a	Morning Meeting	20 mins.
8:50a - 9:40a	Block 1	45 mins
9:45a - 10:30a	Block 2	45 mins
10:30a - 10:40a	Snack	10 mins
10:45a - 11:30a	Block 3	45 mins
11:35a - 12:20p	Block 4	45 mins
12:20p - 12:55p	Lunch	35 mins
1:00p - 1:45p	Block 5	45 mins
1:50p - 2:35p	Block 6	45 mins

Staying on Campus

Students are expected and required to stay on campus from 8:30 am to 3:25 pm unless there is a specific, pre-arranged need for a student to leave campus (such as a doctor's appointment). We do not allow students to leave and return to campus on the same day.

Pick-Up

Should you ever need to make alternate arrangements for the pick-up of your child, the office will need to know in advance by written email to our Administrative Assistant, Dominick Zesati (dominick.zesati@treeacademy.org). In your written email, please include who will be picking your child up (if it is a ride-share service, please provide the full name of the driver and company for which they work), along with what kind of car they will be driving, and the color of the car. In this way, we hope to keep students safe at TREE.

Lunch and Snack

Students may bring lunches from home. For health and safety reasons, there is no sharing or trading of lunches. Lunches should not include any candy or soft/energy drinks. Please also make sure that your child has a designated snack—many will eat their whole lunch at snack time and thus have no lunch in time for lunch. Please make sure to make sure your student has enough food to sustain them for the school day. Every so often, we will have a celebration and supply food; we will inform you in advance of any such event.

Please join us in striving for “zero waste” by sending lunches and drinks in reusable containers with reusable utensils.

We suggest a stainless-steel double-walled container for water with their name clearly identifying it as their property.

Energy Drinks

Students are not allowed to consume energy drinks while at school. Energy drinks are high in caffeine, sugar, and calories. As most of us are already consuming too much sugar, consuming energy drinks can increase your free sugar intake to above the recommended maximum. Consuming energy drinks may trigger symptoms that include restlessness, tremors, palpitations, and nervousness. Energy drinks can also cause irregular heart rhythms and other life-threatening heart-rhythm changes.

All School Friday Morning Celebration

Every Friday when our campus is open, our entire school gets together from 8:30am - 8:50am for an all-school community gathering. We will often have featured speakers. Students will also share what is happening in their classes, listen to announcements, perform, sing, watch slideshows, and much more! Families are welcomed and encouraged to join the celebration.

Birthdays

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, you can provide something to be shared with the other students by bringing it to our Admin Office. In preparing any foods for TREE teachers and students, we request that you bring low-sugar birthday treats, such as fruit kabobs, popsicles, small sandwiches, or frozen yogurt. Off-campus birthday party invitations should be mailed unless the entire class is invited. If only a few children are invited to a party, please remind children not to discuss the party at school to avoid hurt feelings. Also, please use your best judgment in these cases and do not exclude just a few children from the party.

Lost and Found

We stow lost and found items in Mandela. Please label/magic mark/sharpie all backpacks, jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, and lunch containers with your child's name so that they can be identified. We will donate all unclaimed items before Winter break, Spring break and Summer break.

Medication

Please reference the TREE Academy Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication Administration Policy form which all families received as part of your admissions packet. In short, the school cannot dispense any prescription or over-the-counter medicines including ibuprofen and acetaminophen unless families have:

1. Completed and submitted a prescription and non-prescription authorization form
2. Supplied the medication to the school as instructed on the form.

Please review the policy carefully and decide if your child requires medications readily available in the office.

Conferences & Communication with School/Teachers

TREE Academy encourages communication from families with our faculty. Should you wish to confer with one of our teachers regarding your child, please make an appointment by contacting the teacher directly by email. Our faculty will email you with their contact info at the beginning of the year, or semester.

Communication regarding scholastic progress in a specific class should be directed to the teacher of that course, or our Dean of Students, Alejandra Roman at alejandra.roman@treeacademy.org.

To encourage increasing independence and self-advocacy, students are encouraged to attend any scheduled family conferences. For other, non-academic concerns regarding the welfare or day-to-day experiences of your child, please contact our Human Development team at HumanDevelopment@TreeAcademy.org

Families, please be sensitive to the tempo and fullness of the school days and weeks. Should you wish to schedule an appointment with any of our faculty or staff, please email them directly. Please

understand that teachers are busy and will respond at their very earliest convenience. Should your conference with a teacher, School Counselor and/or Human Development Team not meet your needs, you may consult our Dean of Students, Alejandra Roman at alejandra.roman@treeacademy.org

Newsletter

TREE families will receive a weekly TREE newsletter by email; a fun, quick read that includes highlights and photographs, as well as information about upcoming events and important dates. Please enjoy reading the TREE newsletter and stay in the know about what's going on at school!

Attendance

Consistent attendance is essential. Students missing more than 20 days of instruction (and its attendant schoolwork) will likely not receive credit for the academic year. All students are required to be present for their assigned classes, to attend all school meetings, and to participate in all curricular activities, including field trips and community service projects. Any student who misses a required trip or activity must make it up or arrange an acceptable alternative assignment with their class teacher.

Students and their families need to arrange for any appointments before or after school hours as any absence or tardy arrival to school will be counted as a 1 quarter day absence (in other words, 4 early departures and/or tardies will add up to a one-day absence).

Students who leave campus during school hours must have their families or designated pick-up persons sign them out in the office and sign them in again when they return. Parental written permission is required for any absence from school in advance, but please understand family permission is not the same as school permission. Only the school has the authority to excuse a student.

Timeliness & Tardiness

Students should arrive at school between 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Students who arrive after 8:50 a.m. need to check in with the office.

Late arrivals to school and classes shall be noted and added cumulatively to a student's overall attendance record. Students are allotted a passing period of several minutes between classes. A late arrival is disruptive to others, cuts down on the time everyone has for learning, and diminishes the intellectual and engaged culture at school. When a student is late for school, they need to sign in at the front office before moving on to attend class.

It is the family's responsibility to get students to school on time. Again, please note that 4 tardies will be treated as the equivalent of a 1-day absence.

Absences/Illness

Please prevent the spread of illness by keeping ill children home. If a student becomes ill during school hours, the teacher or office administration will determine whether to call you to pick up your child in a timely manner. If we suspect any injury to a student's head, or if we feel compelled by the student's condition to call an ambulance, or in any cases of a medical emergency, we will call for an ambulance. The fiscal responsibility for that ambulance, as well as any attendant care, will be the families, and not TREE Academy, its staff, faculty or personnel.

Should your child experience a fever of 100.3 or higher, please do not bring them back to school until they have been fever-free for a minimum of 24 hours. If your child has a rash, eye symptoms, runny nose with yellow or greenish mucus, persistent coughing, earache, vomiting or diarrhea, head lice, or a skin infection, please have them examined by a healthcare professional. When a child is sick, the family should inform the school that the child will not be attending school and the reason. If your child has a communicable illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, mumps or influenza A or B, please let the school know. Extended absences for reasons other than illness should be discussed with individual teachers/the office prior to the intended absence.

- A. To keep our records accurate, and to ensure student safety, families should telephone or email the school before 8:30 a.m. the morning of the absence. If an absence is not reported, the school will contact the home. Any absences not reported by families are considered unexcused. Messages may be left during non-business hours by calling the School. Students returning to school after more than one day's absence must also bring a note from a family member explaining the absence. Students absent more than three days for medical reasons must furnish a note from a medical doctor as to the reason for their absence as per State regulations. Students who are absent from school should get homework assignments from their teachers via email and/or the Google Classroom.
- B. If a student becomes ill during school hours and needs to go home, families will be called. **Students may not otherwise leave campus without permission.** Please come into the office to sign your child out; **do not ask your child to wait outside for you as they will not be permitted to do so.**
- C. Categories of Absences:
 - i. Excused Absences: Sickness, family deaths, emergency medical or dental appointments, or similar serious matters. Families must provide a doctor's note or equivalent.
 - ii. Extended or Unexcused Absences: Any extended absences must be approved by the Director of School. Any unapproved absences are unexcused. Absences that are a result of a violation of another school rule (Days of Reflection), routine medical or dental appointments, or any absence not approved by the school are generally considered unexcused. In the event of any planned absence, families must contact the office as well as teachers via email prior to the absence. As stated above, parent

permission is not the same as school permission. Only the school has the authority to excuse a student's absence.

- iii. Cut: An intentional absence about which neither the family nor the school has any prior knowledge will be considered a cut. An intentional cut is a serious matter and will be treated as an absence. Cutting a class also will result in an automatic one-day of reflection.

***** Four (4) tardies or partial day absences will equal one (1) absent day *****

***** Twenty (20) absences will equal NO CREDIT for the academic school year *****

Faculty will assist students who missed work during excused absences but are not required to assist students with work missed during unexcused absences.

Withdrawals from TREE

Should a family elect to withdraw a student(s) from TREE Academy, the family is responsible for any tuition balance yet due to TREE Academy. TREE cannot forward or share any student records or transcripts with any other educational or professional entity unless and until all remaining tuition or fees due to TREE have been paid. Should, however, a withdrawal be made for medical reasons, the family must furnish TREE with a qualified note from any medical professionals caring for the student, detailing the reason why the withdrawal is necessary. Under such circumstances, and only if the withdrawal is made in the first semester of a given year, TREE may, at its discretion, credit or refund any payments the family may have made that exceed the costs of the first semester, which is typically half the full tuition.

Should a student be asked to withdraw from TREE Academy, the family will receive a prorated refund, based on the following formula: For any month(s), or a portion of any month, a student attends TREE, the family will be charged for the month(s) attended, plus one additional month. An example would be if a student was asked to withdraw on November 7th, the family would be refunded any payments they may have made covering January and beyond. In such a case, December would be the additional month for which the family would be responsible.

Overreaching Guidelines

General Conduct

TREE Academy is dedicated to a quality education for every one of its students. We therefore maintain and expect a climate of respect regarding all aspects of student and school life. Any disrespectful behavior, whether covered by specific school regulations, will be subject to potential disciplinary action, beginning with, but not limited to, our Promise Councils process which may result in assigned Days of Reflection away from TREE, or not being able to continue as a student at TREE. Students are expected to maintain a respectful approach at all school functions, on or off campus. We expect the same from our families as well. Additionally, all of us at TREE sign the TREE Promise. It

is our commitment to each other to treat each other as we ourselves would want to be treated. The tenets of the Promise are the basis for our expectations for general conduct at TREE Academy.

My Student Promise

In attending TREE Academy, I understand that with this opportunity comes responsibility.

1. I promise to treat everyone at TREE with the utmost **respect, kindness, courtesy, and compassion**. This means that I will not respond to anyone at TREE with a critical or negative attitude, whether it be through my words, actions, or body language.
2. Instead, I promise to do my best to always express myself in ways that are mindful of others and are not critical or hurtful.
3. When I make a mistake, I promise to take responsibility for it, sincerely apologize for it, and then take the steps necessary to both correct it and to not repeat it.
4. I promise to help my teachers by giving them my full, open-hearted, open-minded attention and cooperation.
5. I will be honest, truthful, and not misleading in my words and actions at TREE.
6. I promise to do all my work to the best of my ability, and to join productively in my classes.
7. I promise not to disrupt others from learning at any time, whether I am in or out of class.
8. I promise to clean up after myself, and work with others to leave all TREE rooms and outside spaces cleaner and in better condition than I found them.
9. I promise to arrive at school, and to each class, on time and ready to learn.
10. I promise to observe the rules of the Learning Lab – as it is a place for studying and learning. Should I need to communicate, I will only do so in the quietest tones and least disruptive manner possible.
11. To keep everyone, including myself, safe and secure, I will not take any photos, films or audio recordings or text messages of anyone at TREE, and I further promise to not upload or otherwise share any images or recordings of anyone at TREE on any site, online application, or internet-based service.

Most essentially, I promise to treat others as I would want to be treated.

Respect for Self & Others

All TREE Academy students, staff and community members are expected to not use offensive language, ignore faculty/staff directions, make threats (including verbal, written, pictures/drawings, gestures, and any other form of communication), employ slander, participate in sexual harassment or misconduct, lie, vandalize, assault (verbal or physical), steal or fight. Likewise, if a student displays a pattern of intimidation and aggression, whether it involves bullying, teasing, exclusion, or other mean-spirited behaviors, they will be dismissed from TREE Academy. While we understand there may be many drivers to such behaviors, in the interests of our community, we reserve the right to remove any student or family from TREE Academy should they exhibit any of these behaviors.

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, Smoking, Vaping And Energy Drinks

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, smoking, vaping, and energy drinks are prohibited in school, on campus, or at off-campus school functions. Possession and/or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco (nicotine) at school is grounds for immediate dismissal and/or police involvement.

Vandalism

Vandalism of the school building, grounds, or learning materials therein are considered to be infringements on the rights of the TREE Academy community. No one is to injure, destroy or deface school property. All community members are expected to treat the building and grounds with care and respect. Any student who vandalizes the building(s), grounds, or materials therein will face disciplinary consequences. Families will be responsible for paying for any damages done to the building or school property by their child.

Weapons

Guns, knives, explosives/firecrackers, or weapons of any type are not permitted in school, on campus, or anywhere on the premises. Cigarette lighters are likewise strictly prohibited. Students in possession of weapons or any prohibited items will be subject to immediate dismissal. Any student brandishing a weapon and/or threatening another student with a weapon has no place at TREE Academy and will be dismissed. We will also inform the police of the student's behavior.

Academic Dishonesty

The students of TREE Academy agree to maintain and assist one another in maintaining and promoting academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and may lead to dismissal. Please refer to Appendix 3.

Sales of Goods or Services on

No student or family can sell or barter items on school campus without prior approval from TREE administration. Any sale or bartering on campus will be approved only on the basis of all profits going to a charitable organization or a school-sanctioned function or activity. No student can exchange money using their TREE email, which is reserved exclusively for academic work and school communication.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy

Cell phones are not permitted on campus, and if brought to school, must be checked in with the office or with the teachers in charge of supervision before class. Phones, iPods, and other similar electronic devices may be used only when specifically authorized by a TREE faculty member in the classroom. At no time should headphones or any personal electronics be used when transitioning between classes or when a student excuses themselves from a classroom. Use of cell phones/electronic devices at inappropriate times will result in the device being confiscated. TREE Academy staff and faculty who confiscate cell phones/personal electronics during class may not have the ability to deliver them to the front office until a later time. Therefore, staff cannot be responsible for the safekeeping of any confiscated items.

Appropriate Dress at TREE Academy for Faculty and Students

Faculty, Staff, and students are encouraged to express themselves freely in their dress and appearance, as are students (with exceptions such as no hateful/violent or drug-related clothing, and others which will be detailed below), while keeping norms of professionalism in mind. TREE Academy requests that you do not wear blue jeans or flip-flops while at TREE.

- Must wear clothing including both a shirt with pants or skirt, or the equivalent and shoes.
- Shirts and dresses must have fabric in the front and on the sides.
- Clothing must cover undergarments, waistbands and bra straps excluded.
- Fabric covering all private parts must not be see through.
- Hats and other headwear must allow the face to be visible and not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff. Hoodies must allow the student face and ears to be visible to staff.
- Clothing must be suitable for all scheduled classroom activities including physical education, science labs, wood shop, and other activities where unique hazards exist.
- Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.

Non-Appropriate Dress at TREE Academy for Faculty and Students

- Clothing may not depict, advertise, or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
- Clothing may not depict pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected groups.
- Clothing, including gang identifiers, must not threaten the health or safety of any other student or staff.
- If the faculty/staff or student's attire threatens the health or safety of any other person, then discipline for dress violations should be consistent with discipline policies for similar violations.

Sexual Harassment and Assault

Sexual harassment is a violation of State law. Such harassment includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate personal remarks, questions, jokes or innuendos, and/or the sharing of other's information or images via text or online. Students who have any concerns should speak to the School Counselor or the Human Development Team. All faculty and staff at TREE Academy have completed the Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training certificate as well as had a complete background check furnished by the Department of Justice via the Live Scan search.

Office Telephone Use/Electronic Devices, Games and Toys

The telephones in the office area are for staff and parent use only unless students receive explicit permission from a faculty or staff member. We do not allow students to carry or use their cell phones during school hours. Families will be contacted by a staff member via phone in the event of illness or emergency. Students should use email to communicate all non-emergency details or information with their families during the school day.

Electronic devices and games are not permitted at school. TREE Academy does not assume responsibility for the item(s) should they be misplaced or broken. The same policy also applies to non-electronic toys and games. Students may bring educationally appropriate toys and books to the classroom with their teacher's prior approval.

Behavioral Questions

TREE Academy uses a restorative approach to most behavioral issues that arise during the school day. Students are taught to respect the rights of others, school property, others' property, and the emotional wellbeing of others. Behavioral matters are often managed by the classroom teacher, and as needed, our Human Development team facilitates conflict resolution and further discussion with all parties involved.

The Promise Council

These are the general steps of the Promise Council process; however, should circumstances warrant in our judgement a change in procedures, we may adjust our approach or processes.

At TREE Academy, Promise Councils are our way of addressing students who are not turning in their work, or whose behavior has become a cause for concern. The Promise Councils will employ restorative practices and will be comprised of a member of the Human Development team, the teacher involved, and a teacher of the student's choosing, our School Counselor, and/or the Dean of Students may also be in attendance. In the case of academic concerns, the Promise Council will first seek to understand why a student hasn't completed the work on time, then consider supportive ways to assist the student with doing their work. They are designed to support the student in addressing the issue(s) at hand.

The Promise Council will then create an agreement with the student as to how and when the work will be completed and turned into the teacher(s). A summary of the meeting will be provided by the Human Development Team to the family. Any new agreements forged as a result of the Promise

Council will be shared with the family, the student, all concerned faculty, the Human Development Team, and the Dean of Students to confirm the new agreement or plan.

The agreement will involve a follow-up meeting a week or two later to see if the issues raised by the Promise Council have been adequately addressed by the student. In the rare event a student declines to meet his or her agreements forged in a Promise Council, the Council members will convey that to not only the Dean of Students, but the Director of School, and may result in further disciplinary action(s), including, but not limited to, Days of Reflection or expulsion.

It is our view that any student who declines to make a good faith effort to engage work with the Promise Council, and to act on the agreements made through that process, is, by their actions, indicating that they no longer wish to be at TREE. While our approach will work for most students, we also understand that no approach can, or will, work for every student. Should we discover during a Promise Council process that a student is not making a good faith effort, we will work with the family to find a more suitable environment for the student other than at TREE.

Incomplete and Unsatisfactory Work

Teachers will email any student who did not complete assigned work for that week. The email will identify the missing or incomplete assignments, and will be copied to the student's family, and the Dean of Students. Should there be any special circumstances to consider as to why the student is late or behind in their work, the student and/or family can contact and confer with the teacher, making sure to include the Dean of Students on any emails, noting any new understandings or plans made during those discussions regarding the student's work and when it will be completed.

Should, however, a student amasses several missing or incomplete work assignments, a similar email will go out to the student, their family, and the Dean of Students, and a Promise Council will be formed. Please bear in mind that all work assigned at TREE is for the student's benefit and development, as well as to prepare them for the likely workloads to come, whether at college or in their careers.

Behavioral – Based Promise Council

A student referred to the Human Development Team more than one time for any behavioral reason, including disrupting a class, will initiate a Promise Council.

The Promise Council will work with the student to understand the cause(s) of the behavior(s), and then seek to forge a restorative path forward with the student, including whatever additional steps the Council thinks most helpful to the student and anyone else affected.

Depending on the severity of the behavior(s), and/or the outcomes of the Promise Council process, the Council will share its decisions and/or make recommendations to the administration. Although most students will likely enter a Promise Council with understandable concerns, they may discover that the Council members are all dedicated to finding a restorative path forward with the student. While certain behaviors may lead to a determination that the student can no longer continue at TREE, wherever possible, the emphasis of our Promise Councils will not be on rule-breaking, but

rather on supporting a learning opportunity through which a student can grow. The Promise Council will address any relational harm done, making amends, and renewing our TREE Promise to one another. School administration will rely extensively on the decisions reached and/or the recommendations made by our Promise Councils.

To give you a sense of how we are approaching the Promise Councils, here is an excerpt from our Promise Council guidelines, created and developed with our faculty and staff:

Roles of the Promise Council at TREE are to address both homework issues as well as behavioral issues. Their goal is to:

- Address the needs of those harmed (relational issues)
- Empower everyone involved to learn, grow and change
- Focus on harm done rather than solely on rule-breaking
- Invite and encourage accountability, or those behind on their work
- Seek to heal, and/or forge new agreements to move forward productively and responsibly
- Foster community building through the development of authentic relationships because we see relationships as central to building community
- Seek to recognize the root causes of behaviors in forging restorative agreements
- Use inclusive, collaborative processes to address and restore circumstances and/or make amends

Skills and Values we seek to develop through the Promise Council:

- Compassion
- Creativity
- Empathy
- Flexibility
- Honesty
- Listening
- Self-awareness
- Open-mindedness
- Patience
- Respect
- Responsibility/Accountability

Restorative Guidelines

Teaching Cooperative Behavior

Depending on a given circumstance, we may vary our approach.

1. Communication and Check-in:

- Staff or students alert the Human Development team about an event that affects or harms the community. This includes, but is not limited to, lack of effort, failure to take responsibility, and consistent delinquent academic work.

- Human Development meets with all involved to understand behavior and reach an agreement.
- If immediate intervention is needed, students are given “Time for Time” - the first ten minutes of lunch with the Human Development team discussing the impact of behavior on others and themselves.
- The Human Development team follows-up with each person involved.

2. Promise Council

- If the Human Development team is alerted about recurring behavior, a Promise Council is called with the student, the Human Development team, and a staff member of the student's choice.
- In a Promise Council, TREE Promise is reviewed, harm done is summarized, student/teacher needs are discussed, and goal-oriented/time-based agreements are created to repair harm.
- The Human Development team sends a summary email to all stakeholders (family, teacher involved, teacher of student’s choice, Dean of Students) so that the community is in alignment.
- The Human Development team monitors progress of agreements.

3. Family Meeting

- If insufficient progress is shown within the allotted time period, a family meeting is called with the student, family, Human Development team and Dean of Students.
- Prior to the meeting, the Dean of Students collects feedback from the student's teaching team.
- In family meetings, harm done, and steps taken to heal are summarized, school needs are communicated, and a direct-action plan is agreed upon to ensure resolution.
- The Dean of Students determines if three days of reflection are needed on a case-by-case basis.
- Dean of Students and the Human Development team monitor progress of direct-action plan

4. Director of School Meeting

- If insufficient progress is shown after the assigned Days of Reflection, based on the recommendations of the Human Development team and Dean of Students, Director of School meeting is called with the family, Human Development team and Dean of Students.
- In the Director of School meeting, discussion is centered around the question, *“Is TREE the right environment for the student, and is the community able to meet the student’s needs?”*

- The Director of School, the Human Development team and the Dean of Students consider any new information presented in appeal and determine student's standing in the community.
- When all parties agree to give the student another opportunity to be a part of the community, non-negotiable expectations are created within an allotted time frame.
- If expectations are not met, then it is at the discretion of the Director of School to disinvite the student at any point and determine if the semester can be completed at TREE.
- If a path forward at TREE is not found, TREE will support a smooth transition for the student to the best of its capacity.

As the African proverb reminds us, it takes a village to raise a child. With your support, we will continue to offer our best understanding and efforts to support and guide students to grow and develop their innate gifts in light of the TREE Promise.

Should a student be experiencing a particularly stressful day for any reason, we may call their family to come and pick them up from school as a supportive step.

Some behaviors may compel us to take immediate action that may include a variety of procedures including requiring days of reflection, or dismissal from TREE.

Should a student be asked to leave TREE in September, TREE will refund the full amount of the tuition paid by the parent, not including the Chromebook fee. Should a student be asked to leave TREE in any subsequent months through May, the family will not be refunded any portion of tuition but will be responsible for the entire amount.

Consequences of Rule Breaking

TREE Academy honors its consequences. The school may choose to use the following consequences for breaking any of the school rules may include school/community service, academic assignments, family conferences, loss of privileges (school trips, sports, dances, etc.), Days of Reflection, or dismissal from TREE Academy. Long-term or repeated behavioral problems may result in the student no longer being able to continue at TREE.

Days of Reflection

A student may be asked to take up to 5 days away from school and tasked to write an extended reflection on why they have been assigned Days of Reflection. Their good faith efforts will signal their desire to return to TREE and abide by their TREE Promise. Should a student decline to fulfill the Days of Reflection tasks assigned them, or not show a good faith effort to complete the task(s), they will not be readmitted to school.

Dismissal

We will never take this step without serious and thoughtful consideration. There are, however, several behaviors that may lead to a student not being able to continue at TREE. These include but

are not limited to drug/alcohol use of any kind on campus; violence or threats of violence on or off campus; a pattern of cruelty or ridicule towards others; instances of academic dishonesty, including making misleading statements, or statements that are less than the whole truth.

Please be aware that there is no requirement that the school proceed from milder to heavier consequences. A student and family may not receive a warning before Days of Reflection are assigned, or other consequences imposed. Final decisions regarding consequences are within the sole discretion of the school administration.

Academic Counseling/Probation

We make every effort to keep families informed of their child's progress in school. If a student is having difficulty academically, we may request a family conference. In the case of chronic incomplete and/or unsatisfactory work, the student may be put on academic probation, requiring weekly monitoring by both teachers and families. Individual contracts are sometimes made with students to aid them in managing their challenges, and referrals to outside tutors may be recommended and/or required. Probationary status is reviewed periodically, at the end of each semester.

Any student who fails to earn credit in any class (for reasons of not doing the work at a minimum level for credit, or too many absences) must show satisfactory progress before advancing to the next level. A student whose failure results from a medically documented condition may be exempt from this requirement, although those decisions are also subject to minimum academic hours and course requirements for credit.

Extracurricular Activities

If students do not maintain satisfactory progress in their courses, or are behind in their assignments, they will become ineligible to participate in various extracurricular activities, including participating in team sports activities and competitions. Our goal is to assist each student in their efforts to be successful at everything they do at school.

Interpersonal Conflicts/Misunderstandings

Because interpersonal difficulties and misunderstandings are an inevitable part of life, we look to the families involved to proactively contact each other—independently of TREE—to work together to address the situation in as positive and mutually supportive way as possible.

Our approach at TREE will be to facilitate and/or mediate student dialogues when conflicts arise on campus, but we are not a substitute for the initiative and good will of our families.

Should your student experience difficulties of a kind that makes you feel uncomfortable approaching another family, you may contact our Human Development team. Depending on the situation, they may be able to offer you some general guidance or recommendations or point you to a community resource that may be of assistance. The Human Development team cannot, however, provide any private family counseling.

In all cases, it is ultimately the responsibility of the families involved to forge the best possible way forward on behalf of our students' best interests and growth.

TREE Academy Education

TREE Academy is committed to an array of educational “best practices,” teaching methodologies, pedagogy, innovative approaches to learning, as well as tried and true approaches. We focus on students gaining conceptual understanding and knowledge rather than simply repeating wrote information or memorizing facts. That said, there is always a need to commit to memory facts about any subject if one is to become knowledgeable and conversant in it, and so we do require an appropriate amount of subject information to be memorized.

As an overall approach to education, we encourage students to share their thinking and opinions, to question information and form their own ideas. We guide students towards arriving at their own understanding by evaluating information for themselves. We use several approaches for instruction, which include but are not limited to the following:

Instructional Approaches

Inquiry Based Learning:

Instruction motivated by questions that have engaged the interest and active curiosity of the students. Teachers function as facilitators to learning rather than sources of knowledge. Students work together to investigate, solve problems, and develop understanding. (Used in science, social studies, math, and humanities.)

Workshop Format:

A structured and predictable setting for learning in which teachers are viewed as mentors and models. In a workshop, students learn and practice new strategies, develop understandings, and explore questions using prior and personal experience as scaffolds to creatively integrate new knowledge. Teachers confer and question as they work with whole groups, small groups, and individuals.

Socratic Seminar:

A discussion among students in which they are given the opportunity to make value judgments or moral decisions. The teacher acts as a facilitator who continues to pose open-ended questions, without imposing answers. This process encourages students to think critically, analyze multiple meanings in text, and express ideas with clarity and confidence. (Used in humanities, current events, social studies, etc.)

Information Processing Strategies:

The grouping together of facts or concepts in an organized way. Teachers use a variety of methods to help students with memorization (spelling, word study, math facts) such as graphic organizers, mind maps, story webs, and other visual representations.

Learning Modes:

At TREE, we attend to learning mode differences, and endeavor to determine and reframe our approach to individually address student learning modes, be they visual learners, Tactile/Kinetic Learners, Aural Learners or Textual Learners.

School Curriculum

Language Arts, English

Reading:

Students develop increasing comprehension skills relating to inference, sequencing, prediction, and character motivation as they explore various genres. Literature is often integrated or coordinated with their social studies and history to help students understand thematic similarities and trends.

Oral Language:

Speaking skills are taught informally in-class sharing and discussions. Formal instruction is taught via the use of oral book reports, class project presentations, and speeches.

Writing/Grammar:

Students write memoirs and essays. Writing and grammar is emphasized across the curriculum. Their creative skills are also honed by exposure to, and practice at, authoring their own short stories, poetry, letters, and journals.

Social Studies

Students study self, family, community, city, country, and the world. Social Studies lend itself to integration with other curricular areas such as music, art, and language. Students are taught to question and inquire about concepts that tie into the TREE Academy social justice values, such as fairness, equality, generosity, compassion, human rights, and sustainability. In addition, many field trips throughout the year are designed to enhance the students' experiences.

Science

Our Science program is a hands-on, integrated, inquiry-based science curriculum. Students will study sciences pertaining to life, earth, physical and systems design. They will also have ready access to our FIO Makers Lab, and Hamilton Discovery Lab to pursue any interest, research, or inquiry, including robotics and programming that involves the sciences.

Mathematics

We have an activity-based math program that requires students to think creatively about problem-solving while becoming fluent with mathematical skills. This is a unique program in that students not only demonstrate strategies, but also articulate their strategies.

Spanish

Our Spanish curriculum is based on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Tutoring will involve conversational and grammar skill development. As classes progress, students incorporate sentences and verb conjugations into their speaking skills.

Art

Art instruction is taught utilizing methods of experience, observation, and evaluation by students. The curriculum is based on artistic perception, creative expression, historical/cultural context, and aesthetic valuing, including exposure to the work of old and contemporary. Students will work in a variety of mediums and mixed mediums to express their creative ideas.

Music

Students can study songwriting, recording arts, singing and string instrument studies, as well as participate in various music groups and musical styles.

Physical Education

With an array of on campus games, Team Sports, as well as dance and yoga programs, we will develop stamina, coordination, and body awareness. The activities will stress gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and general fitness. Leadership, sportsmanship, cooperation, empathy, and positive self-image are encouraged.

Life Skills

Life Skills emphasizes social and emotional learning. It is a cornerstone course at TREE, providing our students dedicated time to listen, discuss, share, reflect, and express their beliefs and thoughts. They can ask questions of themselves and others and learn by sharing their stories and listening to the stories of others. Students can contemplate their identity and self-image, their values, who they are in relationship to friends, family, and the larger community.

Life Skills classes include discussions, games, and Council Techniques. Council is an ancient form of communication where participants sit in a circle with a talking piece. The skills of Council include listening and speaking from the heart. This formal yet flexible structure provides a safe, supportive setting in which everyone can be heard. Ritual is a key element.

Reinforcing TREE's philosophy, Life Skills classes weave in issues related to social justice, environmental stewardship, and diversity by introducing current and historic events/themes as opportunities for personal action. Students are encouraged to be reflective and grow the skills of mindful awareness of self and others. Themes are grade specific and often include topics such as life-choices, values, family, friendship, emotions, personal well-being, and the ethical and spiritual aspects of life. At heart, Life Skills provides students an opportunity to grow in self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

Students are expected to come to class prepared to participate and be open to innovative ideas and methods with which they may not be familiar. Students discover things about themselves and their classmates as they imagine, wonder, inquire and relax. We are committed to helping our students on their journey from childhood through adolescence with increased independence and responsibility, supporting their growth.

Meditation

Meditation (The Inner Peace Curriculum) explores how we can bring more equilibrium, calmness, and mental focus to our everyday lives through the art and techniques of meditation based on age-old principles. This is a required class for every student at TREE. Every student is required to take meditation for at least one semester each year at TREE. Second semester students who have already completed a first semester course may add it as an elective should they wish to do so.

Senior Seminar

We do not offer tutorials for Seniors in the Senior Seminar. Note: to encourage and support our Seniors in developing their ability to "take ownership" of their own education, we do not offer scheduled 2:1s; Seniors may nevertheless request additional time, should they need it, with our faculty subject to faculty availability. They do, however, continue to have access to Learning Lab support.

Community Service

Every student at TREE is required to perform hours of community service. Middle Schoolers, 6th-8th graders, are required to perform 20 hours of community service, and High Schooler, 9th-12th graders, are required to perform 30 hours a year. TREE will offer various opportunities as well as on-campus tasks and chores to help students fulfill this requirement. However, students are encouraged to perform community service away from TREE and are only asked that it be verified by the foundation or organization for which our students gave community service hours.

Community Service at TREE is a required activity and every student must fulfill their minimum required hours to be credited for the completion of that academic year.

Graduation Minimum Requirements

- History/Social Science ("A") – Two years, including one year of World History, Cultural and Human Geography and one year of U.S. History, or one-half year of U.S. History and one-half year of American Government or Civics. All Seniors will be provided classes in Political Science, and Economics.
- English ("B") – Four years of college preparatory English that integrates reading of classic and modern literature, regular writing and practice listening and speaking.
- Mathematics ("C") – Three years of college-preparatory math, including or integrating the topics covered in elementary and advanced Algebra and two- and three-dimensional Geometry.
- Laboratory Science ("D") – Two years of laboratory science providing fundamental knowledge in at least two of the three disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. We strongly urge our students to take an additional, non-lab year of science as well.

- Foreign Language (“E”) – Two years of the same language other than English or equivalent to the second level of high school instruction.
- Visual and performing arts (“F”) – One year chosen from Dance, Music, Theater, or the Visual Arts. We strongly urge students to take at least three years of the arts.
- College-preparatory elective (“G”) – One year chosen from the “A-F” courses beyond those used to satisfy the requirements above, or courses that have been approved solely in the elective area.

Repeated Courses

Should a transfer of student’s transcripts to TREE indicate that a course they have taken at another school does not cover the prescribed course content and/or level expected for their grade and subject (based on Common Core Standards and UC A-G requirements), we will require that student to take a course at TREE that meets our standards. Our curriculum is based on the Common Core and all UC A-G requirements. Our diploma is based on students completing appropriate coursework to meet those standards, not the California Department of Education Standards, which are less demanding.

Homework

Homework is an important part of students’ education at TREE. Uniquely, our students will be assigned 4 - 6 blocks in our Learning Labs, enabling them to complete the majority of their independent work at school, during school hours. We expect that 60%-70% of a student’s weekly assignments can and should be completed at TREE. Should a student use this time wisely, they may well be able to complete an even higher percentage of work at TREE. Any remaining work must be completed at home and submitted on time.

Students must complete at least 70% of all assigned class work in a manner acceptable to their teacher to receive credit for any class at TREE. Should a student not complete the class assigned work within a given semester, they will receive an **‘Incomplete’** for that class. They may likely be required to complete a summer semester course at an accredited summer school program to advance to the next level grade at TREE.

TREE Academy cannot give credit for classes left as incomplete on a school record. We, therefore, urge all students and families to complete coursework within the same semester.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are our way of checking in with families and students four times a year. There is a mid-semester check-in report for Fall and Spring semesters that will be succinct summations of a student’s progress mid-term, followed by an end-of-semester report in the fall, and year-end report in June. We always encourage families with questions and concerns to contact our teachers directly.

Please also be sure to copy Alejandra Roman (alejandra.roman@treeacademy.org), our Dean of Students, on any communications with faculty.

Grading

Grades 6–8

We do not use standard letter (A, B, C) or number (100-70%) grading on evaluation forms at the Middle School level. It is the position of the school that students in these early grades benefit more from a focus on developing their skills and understanding, rather than on a competition for grades. It is still expected that students will complete coursework fully, or at least 70% of the course work to receive credit for the class. We emphasize a student’s overall effort in class. Evaluations are marked with one of the following notations:

90	to	100	gets	Exemplary
80	to	89	gets	Proficient
70	to	79	gets	Developing
0	to	69	gets	No Credit

Credit (C): Should a student's work, in their teacher’s evaluation, demonstrate a 70% overall “satisfactory” level, that student will receive credit for that class in that semester. Since there are two teaching semesters a year at TREE (Fall and Spring), a “satisfactory” level of completion is required for both semesters to constitute a full year's class credit in that class.

No Credit (NC): A “No Credit” rating for a student's overall work (meaning greater than 30% “incomplete”) will result in the student potentially not receiving credit for that semester and thus not receive full credit for the class that year.

“Incomplete” or missing work will be marked and recorded as in-need of completion or a re-do. The student and family will be alerted when a student’s work or assignments has not met the required expectations. The Dean of Students and our Human Development team will also be alerted in a shared email.

We fully expect students to complete or re-do any such work DURING AND WITHIN the same semester. Any student who elects not to do their work within the same semester may likely not be invited back to TREE.

Incomplete: To complete a course and receive credit, at least 70% of the course work must be completed. Partial semester credit will not be given, meaning that students who fail to complete

the minimum amount of work will receive an incomplete, and likely be required to take an accredited summer school course that meets the academic requirements of the Incomplete class at TREE.

In sum, an Incomplete assignment that is not restored to a Complete assignment within the same semester will receive a No Credit for the course.

Because families often ask, our "Credit" work corresponds to the equivalent of a "C" or above on a conventional grading scale. A "No Credit" grade is equivalent to a "D" or below. We do not use grades in Middle School for evaluation but are including this reference as a guidepost for families as to how our academic standards may relate to more conventional grading approaches.

TREE Academy believes that Middle School is too early to begin the labeling, self-labeling (I'm smart/I'm not smart), and academic stratifications that so often come with the conventional grading system. While students and families often attempt to translate their grades into another letter or number scale, we urge you to resist this temptation and instead focus on students' learning.

Grades 9–12

High School courses will be graded as A through F -- not because we believe this is a better system -- but because most colleges and universities still rely on and use this method of academic evaluation to assess student performance.

Grading scale

90	to	100	gets	A
80	to	89	gets	B
70	to	79	gets	C
60	to	69	gets	D
0	to	59	gets	F

"A" – An "A" is earned by students whose performance has exhibited academic excellence. It signifies a level of performance that exceeds normal expectations.

"B" – A "B" is earned by students whose progress and achievement exceed the standards of performance of the course.

"C" – A "C" is awarded to students who meet but do not exceed the standards of performance of the course.

"D" – In certain circumstances, a student may earn a "D" to indicate their poor or below average work. Although a passing grade for the purpose of a high school diploma in the State of California, it indicates inadequate achievement. The University of California State University systems, and

many other four-year schools, do not recognize a “D” as a passing grade in courses required for freshman entrance. That is why we will, in most cases, require a student working at that level will be given an Incomplete, and required to take an accredited summer course program to raise that grade to at least a “C”.

“F” – A “F” indicates that a student has failed to meet minimum standards of performance of the course, and therefore will receive no credit toward graduation for that course. Required courses in which a student earns a grade of “F” must be retaken via an accredited program, or possibly repeated at TREE, but only with administrative approval from TREE.

Plus / Minus Grading: Used in cases when a student has achieved slightly above or below the reported letter grade. Plus, and minus grades will be recorded on transcripts and reflected in the overall Grade Point Average (GPA).

High School GPA

GPA is calculated by using the following scale:

GRADE	POINTS	HONORS POINTS
A+	4	4.5
A	4	4.5
A-	3.7	4.2
B+	3.3	3.8
B	3	3.5
B-	2.7	0
C+	2.3	0
C	2	0
C-	1.7	0
D+	1.3	0
D	1	0
D-	0.7	0
F	0	0

Calculating GPA is more an art than a science. Different colleges and universities have their own guidelines. All colleges and universities will recalculate GPAs according to their own guidelines. It is important to note that colleges will see all your student’s final course grades, including courses that have been retaken for a higher grade. We do not believe that this form of evaluation is particularly meaningful. However, colleges, universities, and other high schools still abide by this practice, and

we believe students should know the currency by which many others will evaluate them in the future.

For a student to receive credit for their work within a semester, they must turn in their work by the last day of classes. Work not turned in by the last day of classes will not be counted towards a student's evaluation or grade. Should a student not receive credit, or fail a class, they can either retake the course at TREE in a subsequent semester or take up to two (2) accredited classes to replace the failed or uncredited class(es) during a given semester.

Honors

We will be offering a student-driven Honors track for High School students. We are making Honors available for those students who are seeking an incentive and a challenge, and who feel it will enhance their college application.

How it works:

At the beginning of the Fall or Spring semesters at TREE, a student will let their teacher know that they would like to enroll in Honors for that course. They will need approval from our Dean of Students, Alejandra Roman, as well as their class teacher to enroll.

As with their Electives classes, each student will have the first two weeks of the semester to see if they would like to continue or opt out. Should they elect to stay in Honors, they and their parents will sign an agreement with the Dean of Students and the class teacher involved, committing them to Honors for the balance of the semester.

In doing so, any grade they receive in Honors will be increased by one half grade per semester. In other words, the grades will be weighted, giving each letter grade more value towards a student's overall Grade Point Average, or GPA. Thus an "A" would be worth 4.5 points, instead of 4 units per semester. This increased value "weights" the grade, helping to raise the student's overall GPA.

Honors students can expect to receive anywhere from 1.5 to 2 times the workload for any given class assignment. For example, a non-Honors assigned 4-page essay would be a 6 to 8 page for an Honors essay.

For students with specific challenges, we will craft Honors tasks on a case-by-case basis. We would seek to build on a student's strengths, enabling a student to meet the increased workload of Honors in a way that does not significantly disadvantage them.

For students who successfully fulfill the demands of Honors, their transcripts will reflect Honors. Honors at TREE is different from other schools: Honors is student-driven and based only on

student effort and successful completion of an increased workload -- not on some presumed notion of academic superiority.

Unlike most schools, we will not "scale" our grading for Honors. An "A" grade will NOT be regarded as an Honor's "B". We will grade without reference to Honors or non-Honors (with the caveat that the increased workload will likely make the grading seem more demanding -- a 4-page essay, for example, does not require the same level of effort as a 6-to-8-page essay).

Late Work Policy

It is expected that all assignments and assessments will be completed in the timeframe given by the teachers. If work is turned in late, it may be assigned a lower assessment/grade. No teacher will create a policy that simply refuses to accept any late work. Faculty will help students make up work missed during excused absences and will allow a reasonable time for such work to be completed. Any pattern of illness or absence on test or major assignment due dates will be referred to the Dean of Students. A teacher may negotiate with an individual student to come up with a plan that is reasonable, equitable and helpful, to facilitate the education of the student.

Chronic delinquency in completing work may damage the overall intellectual climate of the school and diminish a student's opportunity to learn. Our goal is to help each student get back on track. Students who are behind in their work may not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities (sports practice, drama rehearsal, etc.) until a student is up to date with their assignments and demonstrates consistency with their work. If a student repeatedly falls delinquent in their work, we will reassess as to whether TREE is the right environment for them. Should this occur, it may result in the student being required to leave TREE. This policy is not intended to be punitive. Our interest is in providing every opportunity for a young person to gain the habits and skills expressed in our philosophy, but no school is right for everyone, and students' needs, interests, and motivations change. Education should not be a tug-of-war, but a symphony. Nothing in this policy should be understood as preventing a teacher from modifying assignments for particular students. Of course, extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family are always an exception.

Standardized Testing

We ask that 9th, 10th, and 11th graders take the PSAT. In 11th and 12th grade (and, in some cases, 10th grade) students will be taking the SAT/ACT examination. Registering for the SAT or ACTs is entirely the responsibility of the family and student, not the school.

Classroom Visitors

TREE is proud of our vibrant community and deeply values family participation. Yet, because we are a small school by design, we do not permit classroom visitors as it may disrupt student focus.

Volunteers

Should you be interested in volunteering at TREE, please contact our Parent Association (Team TREE). Our community thrives when we work together.

Student Visitors Policy

Under certain circumstances, TREE Academy allows student visitors. The request must come from a parent and is largely connected with the admissions process. Visitors are not permitted simply because a friend at another local school has a day off. Please be aware of these guidelines:

1. Only one visitor per day per student.
2. The visit must be approved at least three days in advance by the Administration.
3. All the host student's teachers must agree to have a visitor in class.
4. The visitor must stay with their host while on campus.
5. The host is responsible to ensure that their visitor behaves according to all school rules.
6. The host and their visitor must sign in with the office on the day of the requested visit.
7. Only pre-arranged, full-day visits are appropriate. Our goal is student safety and education. **No visitors, including families, will be permitted for snack, lunch, or free period visits unless prior approval is given by our Administration.**
8. No visits are permitted on campus without advance permission, or by express approval of the Director of School.

Human Development Team

The Human Development Team encourages students and families to speak with them informally and/or to schedule appointments as needed. Students and families should feel free to bring any interpersonal or social emotional concerns to the Human Development Team at any time.

Emergency Response

TREE Academy has a school-wide emergency response plan to address procedures during a fire, earthquake or other potential disasters or dangers. Families should be aware of the following information:

- Upon school closure, families will be informed via email.

See Appendix 1 for further information regarding our Emergency Response Plan.

Accreditation

TREE has been provisionally approved for accreditation by WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) for accreditation.

School Logistics

Accessing Our School Calendar

To access our TREE Calendar online (via our website), go to www.treeacademy.org. In the upper right-hand corner on the Homepage, you will see a pull-down menu under the word “MORE”.

Click on the Family Calendar and use the passcode “treeacademy4u” to access. Please make a habit of visiting our Calendar weekly as we will use this platform to announce any special events, field trips or changes in our school schedule.

Where to Find School Schedules & Curriculum

We work at TREE within the Google environment. Teachers will post curriculum in Google Classroom accessible to you and your students via a unique passcode we will provide to your family. You and your student(s) can use this code and account to see what assignments are being given as well as the overall course curriculum.

School Email Accounts

Each student at TREE will have their own treeacademy.org email account using their first name and their last name (First. Last @ TreeAcademy.org). Please be advised that TREE email addresses are the property of TREE Academy and should never be used for personal or confidential or otherwise sensitive information. They are to be used exclusively for school and school related matters and are subject to inspection and monitoring. They are provided as a courtesy privilege and will be revoked if used in any manner not in accord with appropriate school use.

Chromebooks Policy & Acceptable Use

Chromebooks are checked out on a class-by-class basis, and, in all but a few cases, are not to be taken out of the classroom in which they are stowed or taken home. Students are expected to make use of a personal or family computer to complete any outstanding assignments from home. (See Appendix 6). Should any student not have access to a computer, please advise our Dean of Students, Alejandra Roman, and we will create a work-around.

Learning Labs

Learning Labs are a unique opportunity for students to complete most of their class assignments (“Homework”) at school, during school hours. To make that possible, the Learning Labs require not only a quiet atmosphere with an understanding that they are places for students to do their work, not to play, surf the web or chat.

Lockers and Locks

Students are not to write on their locks and lockers, put stickers on them, place unsecured/unsealed drinks, liquids, or anything that could leak or rot in them. Students must only use their assigned lock at TREE. These locks are to be returned to TREE at the end of the year.

Covid-19 Precautions and Responses

Before making any decisions about whether we can reopen our campus, or need to close our campus, we will consult with one of the nation's leading epidemiologists and emerging diseases specialists. Our hope and intention will be to open our campus as soon as it is safe to do so. We will use a Hybrid model (described below) when we are able to open our campus until Covid is no longer a threat (meaning when a vaccine is widely and readily available -- and which time we will require all faculty, staff, and students to receive).

We will use a Hybrid model when we return to campus, dividing our student body into thirds. There will be a Blue Group, a Yellow Group, and an Orange Group. We are creating a color-coded sequencing calendar indicating on which days, for instance, the Blue Group comes to campus, as opposed to the days on which the Yellow or Orange groups come. One group will be on campus while the other 2 attend class from home as they are currently doing. This will reduce our on-campus population density by two thirds on any given day while ensuring that every student who would like to come to campus will be able to at least 2 times a week.

Because no 2 students at TREE share the same class schedule, even when we divide our population into thirds, there may be occasions when more than 5 students arrive for the same class – since we generally enroll 10 in a class. In such cases, those ‘additional’ students would either sit in another room, or outside in either the Holloway Garden or by the basketball court, and link into use class via their Chromebooks (just as they are now doing from home). We would make sure to offer a place inside the classroom for any student who spent the previous class outside the classroom.

On a daily basis, here are the kind of additional precautions we will take

Here is an overview of the kind of steps we will take when we do reopen our campus.

1. Anyone arriving at TREE will need to be wearing an appropriate and fitted face covering.
2. Anyone arriving at TREE will be required to wash their hands with soap and water outside, before entering our campus (to that end, we have purchased three additional handwashing stations to eliminate any crowding).
3. Anyone arriving at TREE will have their temperature checked.

These initial steps will be required of anyone wishing to enter our campus, and we will limit campus access to essential visits only.

Once inside, faculty, students, staff, and visitors will find:

1. Masks will be mandatory at all times.
2. Faculty and Staff will endeavor to keep students as socially distanced as possible (we will do our best, but it would be realistic to assume that we will not be able to keep them consistently apart).
3. Students will only be permitted to sit on the same side of a desk or outside table, and not across from each other.
4. There will be hand sanitizing stations outside every room. Every entrant will be required to sanitize their hands before entering any room.
5. Each room will be equipped with a High Efficiency HEPA air cleaner/filter.
6. Every class will wipe down its classroom space/desks/chairs after each class with disinfectant towelettes.
7. We will have a daily, all-campus disinfectant wipe downs of all common surfaces.

Over the summer, I walked through every space on our campus with an Industrial Hygienist. He indicated a number of steps we should take. We have already made the physical adjustments to our rooms as advised, but he also indicated that we should limit our class size to 5 students a room, plus 1 teacher. He also indicated we should permit only 1 student at a time to use a bathroom.

Our Hybrid model would mean that any student would attend on-campus classes at least twice a week and would attend classes online the other 3 days of the week, as they are doing now.

As I shared previously, we have installed Hi Def Cameras with Mics in all our classrooms and will stream all our classes online going forward. During our Hybrid back-to-school approach, should any student, faculty member or staff come down with Covid, we may elect to re-close our whole campus for two weeks in everyone's best interests, as well as take the additional step in terms of reporting any cases to the appropriate authorities.

Lastly, because the availability of timely Covid tests is still limited and often prohibitively expensive for many in our community, we are not able to offer them or require them. We therefore must rely on the best judgment of our families and faculty to take extra precautions, get their flu vaccination as soon as possible, and not come to campus or send any child to school suffering from:

- a. Fever
- b. Cough
- c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- d. Chills

- e. Repeated shaking with chills
- f. Fatigue o Muscle pain
- g. Headache o Sore throat
- h. Congestion or runny nose
- i. Nausea or vomiting
- j. Diarrhea
- k. ***New loss of taste or smell (a symptom far more indicative of Covid than the flu)***

Given that our school community will be contending with Covid's challenges for some time to come, our new, in-classroom HD cameras will provide a viable option for families who may prefer to wait for Los Angeles County to move to the “yellow/minimal” status before returning to campus. At a minimum, they will give our community options as we all make our way through this time.

Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee the safety of any child coming to our campus. Parents and Guardians are responsible for deciding whether their student(s) will attend and make their own assessments as to the safety of the conditions at that time. While we will observe the above precautions as conditions warrant, TREE Academy, not any of its staff, faculty, Administration, employees, or Board are not responsible for preventing Covid transmission, and families are urged to take their own precautions and attend school entirely at their own risk.

We have installed HD cameras and mics in every classroom so that from now on our faculty can offer simultaneous instruction online while on campus. We will then alternate the days on which the Middle and High School students attend classes on campus. For example, if our Middle Schoolers were on campus Monday, our High Schoolers would work from home online. On Tuesday, our Middle Schoolers would work from home online while our High Schoolers attended their classes on campus. The net effect would be that only half of our student population would be on campus on any given day. As important, using this approach will mean that no TREE student would ever be too far from the social contact they yearn for and need.

An additional benefit to having permanent cameras and mics means that students who may be in a vulnerable population, or who may be contending with colds or mild flus, will not miss out on their classes.

Under any circumstances, and while Covid remains a threat, TREE will require the wearing of face masks throughout the day, as well as hand sanitizing and a temperature check for anyone wishing to enter our campus. We will also have Face Shields for our faculty and staff to protect them as much as possible.

Our approach will be safety first.

Appendices

Appendix I: Emergency Response Plan

TREE Academy has prepared plans for various emergency situations. Our school staff has been trained, and drills are held regularly to ensure our community understands our emergency procedures.

Emergency Regulations and Procedures are posted in every classroom. Students should familiarize themselves with these regulations and procedures, and, in the event of an emergency, follow them. We undergo regular inspections by the Fire Department to make sure our preparations are as current as possible. The safety and welfare of the students is our primary concern in the event of an emergency. Your children should be instructed to obey the directions of their teachers and Administrators. If walking or riding bicycles to campus during an earthquake or other emergency, students should be told to continue towards their destination (either to, or from school).

We will communicate via email blasts to update our entire community should an emergency occur or develop.

Following an earthquake or other emergency, do not immediately drive to the school. The school access route and street entrance must remain clear for emergency vehicles.

All families or pre-designated parties who come for students must sign them out from the office, or at the temporary Student Release Station. Should we need to evacuate campus, as per our Emergency Plan, we will walk to the parking lot located at the end of Holloway Plaza Drive (located directly across from St. Victor's Church).

As per our Emergency Plan, families should go to the Sunset Plaza Parking Lot to pick up their student(s). There is a staircase connecting the Holloway Plaza parking area to the Sunset Plaza Parking lot above).

No communications with the media or other emergency personnel are to be conducted by anyone except the Director of School, the Assistant Director of School, or a designated person in charge.

Appendix II: Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, Smoking, Vaping, and Energy Drinks

At TREE, there will be no use of drugs, alcohol, energy drinks or cigarettes of any kind, including tobacco, marijuana, smokeless tobacco products, Juuls type vapes, or e-cigarettes. **TREE Academy is a smoke free campus.** Additionally, we expect and encourage families who host students at their home to respect both State and federal laws regarding alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

Our concerns regarding drugs, vaping and alcohol are:

1. To educate young people to make wise and life enhancing choices.
2. To keep the school free from drugs, alcohol, vaping, and any other health endangering substances.

3. To work with young people who have already used controlled substances and are struggling to make better choices in these matters.

TREE substance use policy is rooted in our concern for the well-being of our students, a concern that reaches beyond the school's boundary. If we have reason to believe that a student is using drugs or alcohol, we may become involved, no matter where that use takes place. Families who endorse or allow students to engage in these behaviors should understand that they are not permitted at TREE, at any TREE events, and will be proactively addressed as a school matter even if they take place at a private party.

The school strictly prohibits:

- The sale, distribution, possession, and/or use of drugs, alcohol, as well as any illegal substances, or drug paraphernalia.
- Being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or any illegal substance.
- The misuse of prescribed medication. Medication should not be administered other than in accordance with the labeled use as prescribed by the physician.

These limitations apply when a student is on campus, at any off-campus school-related event or activity, or in any other context where a student acts as a representative of the school. Again, our concern is for the welfare of our young people and their community. It is therefore not limited to campus boundaries or school sanctioned events, but to the welfare of our community.

We recognize that each family has different philosophies around substances, yet creating a safe community is our number one priority. Please talk to your children about how their actions related to these issues can affect others.

If any employee, volunteer, family member, or student reports any infraction of the above guidelines of conduct to any staff member, teacher, or our Administrative Staff, the Human Development Team will investigate and evaluate the report and submit recommendations to the Director of School. If deemed warranted, the Director of School will contact the family. If an infraction is determined to have occurred, no right to remain in school exists. At a minimum, the student will be assigned Days of Reflection, and may also be required to agree to an assessment, counseling, rehabilitation, medical treatment and/or ongoing drug testing to remain enrolled at TREE. When appropriate, the school will refer cases to the applicable State, Federal or local agencies. Reinstatement or re-application is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, we take racial epithets, physical violence, and egregious bullying very seriously. Should you come across any incidents of the above, please immediately refer them to the school Counselor and/or Human Development Team, or the Director of School. Based on the circumstances, we may either elect to move to counseling, mediation, Days of Reflection, or dismissal. Although we focus on a student's behavior while they are at school, because of the ways that online activity impacts in-person relationships, we include their use of the Internet. Whether it be during school hours or after school, we will regard any form of relational harm,

including bullying online, to be as serious as any matter at TREE, and subject to all the above remedies.

TREE's Honor Code

The purpose of this Honor Code is to communicate the meaning and importance of academic integrity to all members of the school community and to articulate and support the interest of the community in maintaining the highest standards of conduct in student learning.

TREE Academy embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty that is central to the very nature of learning and represents the highest possible expression of shared values among the members of the school community.

The core values underlying and reflected in the Honor Code are:

- Academic honesty is demonstrated by students when the ideas and the writing of others are properly cited; students submit their own work for tests and assignments without unauthorized assistance, students do not provide unauthorized assistance to others, and students report their research or accomplishments accurately,
- Respect for others and the learning process to demonstrate academic honesty,
- Trust in others to act with academic honesty as a positive community-building force in the school.
- Responsibility is recognized by all to demonstrate their best effort to prepare and complete academic tasks.
- Fairness and equity are demonstrated so that every student can experience an academic environment that is free from the injustices caused by any form of intellectual dishonesty.
- Integrity of all members of the school community as demonstrated by a commitment to academic honesty and support of our quest for authentic learning. This Honor Code summarizes the Honor Policy, which defines the expected standards of conduct in academic affairs.

We take academic integrity very seriously at TREE Academy. Violations of the Honor Code may result in a student being dropped from a class (and required to complete it over the summer at an accredited summer school), or in expulsion from TREE Academy. Essays or other writings with instances of plagiarism will result, at a minimum, in a student receiving a No Credit for the assignment.

Appendix III: Academic Dishonesty

Students of TREE Academy agree to maintain and assist one another in maintaining and promoting academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and may lead to dismissal from TREE.

The following is taken entirely from *The Bedford Handbook for Writers* (5th ed.), by Diana Hacker, St. Martin's Press, 1998. pp. 477-479: "Your research paper is a collaboration between you and your

sources. To be fair and ethical, you must acknowledge your debt to the writers of these sources. If you do not, you are guilty of plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Universities have been known to withdraw graduate degrees from students who have plagiarized. Professional writers sue for (and often get) thousands of dollars when they discover that someone has plagiarized their work.” Academic dishonesty can take many forms. Any of the following, without full acknowledgement of the debt to the original source, counts as plagiarism:

1. Direct duplication by copying (or allowing to be copied) another’s work, whether from a book, article, web site, another student’s assignment, etc., including but not limited to duplication in any manner of another’s work during an exam.
2. Paraphrasing of another’s work closely, with minor changes but with the essential meaning, form and/or progression of ideas maintained, including but not limited to, piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole.
3. Submitting one’s own work which has already been submitted for assessment purposes in another subject, and/or producing assignments in conjunction with other people (e.g., another student, a tutor) that should be your own independent work.

Consequences for academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from TREE.

Appendix IV: Financial Aid Policies

TREE Academy’s financial aid policies are intended to support the mission of the school which is to deliver an excellent and engaging college preparatory education to a diverse student population.

The following considerations guide our financial aid decisions:

- Economic need of the family.
- Particularly outstanding contributions, a student might bring to a school program.

As loans are readily available for college and university study, TREE Academy does not consider the expense of college education in financial aid decisions. TREE Academy makes every effort to be fair and consistent in all its decisions. We carefully consider our financial aid decisions; we would hope every qualified student could attend TREE, but there are limits to what we can offer. Should we not grant the level of aid requested, it is by no means a reflection on the legitimacy of the request.

Should a parent or guardian decline to submit all appropriate information to ISM Fast for a student attending TREE on a financial grant application, that guardian or parent will not automatically be included or contacted regarding Family/Teacher/Student Conferences or timely access to faculty consultations and should not expect the school to respond to their inquiries.

Appendix V: Chromebook/Computer Use Policy

Every student at TREE Academy has access to an assigned Chromebook for the school year. Every student is likewise also assigned a permanent charging dock station for the school year which is indicated by the number on the Chromebook. Students and families must sign the Acceptable Use Policy.

All Chromebook users will follow the Chromebook Acceptable Use Policy and Guidelines and Information. Chromebooks will remain free of any writing, stickers, or other graffiti other than labels added by TREE Academy. Chromebooks should only be used in teaching classrooms unless permission has been given by a teacher. Students should keep their Chromebooks in their assigned charging docks or locked in their allocated locker at break or lunch.

The guidelines below should be followed:

- Chromebooks should always be in the charging dock when not in use.
- Do not lean on the top of the Chromebook or put weight on it.
- Do not place anything near the Chromebooks that could put pressure on the screen.
- **Chromebooks are not to be taken home.**

Please keep in mind that Chromebooks can be damaged if subjected to anything but gentle treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure on the screen. Any damage to the Chromebook that compromises the Chromebook's practical use, or the loss of a Chromebook, will result in the family having to purchase a new Chromebook through TREE. The replacement fee is \$350, due immediately. If families are unable to furnish the replacement fee for financial reasons, there is a desktop in the Learning Lab that can be used, as available, to complete student assignments

Student activities strictly prohibited:

- Illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted materials.
- Sending, accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing offensive, profane, threatening, violent, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials, as determined by, and at the sole discretion of, TREE Academy.
- Use of sites selling exam papers, book reports and other forms of student work.
- Changing of Chromebook settings (exceptions include personal settings such as font size, brightness, etc.) that would stop the device from working as it was originally set up and intended to work.
- Spamming - sending mass or inappropriate emails.
- Gaining access to other users' accounts, files, or data.
- Use of the school's internet/e-mail accounts for anything other than academic school-related purposes.
- Participation in credit card fraud, electronic forgery, or other forms of illegal behavior.
- Vandalism (any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware, software, or data, including, but not limited to, uploading, or creating of computer viruses or computer

programs that can infiltrate computer systems and/or damage software components) of school equipment.

- Transmission or accessing materials that are obscene, pornographic, offensive, threatening, violent or otherwise intended to harass or demean recipients, as determined by TREE.
- Bypassing TREE Academy web filters through a web proxy.

Our goal as a school is to prepare students to use computers appropriately on their own, as they will do in a professional setting. We expect students to use the computers appropriately and respectfully. Violating the computer use policy will result in disciplinary actions.

Simple Rules for Using All School Computers

Any time a student is permitted the use of a computer for class, it is expected that they will use the computer only for the assigned task.

Do not damage the computer, and immediately report any problems or vandalism.

Keep your username and password safe, and do not let others log onto your account. Likewise, never log into anyone else's account.

Do not browse inappropriate websites. Students found browsing sex or hate-related sites at school will immediately be referred to Human Development to determine the appropriate consequences.

Print responsibly. Do not print anything other than academic-assigned material. Please also be sure to print double-sided -- save Trees!

Do not download MP3 files onto school servers.

Student logins are monitored for time logged in and out. The school reserves the right to charge any student, logged on to a computer, for the repair of any malicious or excessive damage done to the machine.

All assigned TREE student email accounts are the property of TREE Academy and are provided for the express and sole purpose of facilitating academic work. They are only for use by enrolled TREE students and families. **They are not private accounts and should never be used for confidential or non-academic communications or purposes.** TREE Academy reserves the right to review the contents and/or use of these accounts at any time, and at our sole discretion.

Appendix VI: Prescription & Non-Prescription Medication Administration Policy

TREE Academy recognizes that there are a variety of conditions that necessitate students taking medication during the school day, and that in some cases students are adequately trained to self-administer their medication. In all cases, the school will take action(s) based upon the recommendations and directions of the physician, with the authorization of families. We request that the following precautions be observed for the student's safety, the safety of others, and in compliance with all applicable laws.

1. Only medications prescribed by a California licensed Health Care provider as necessary to the student, in the manner listed on the TREE Academy Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form, may be brought to school. Written family and physician authorization is required.
2. All medication must be brought to the TREE Academy office by an adult along with the Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form, which must be signed by the family and the student's physician.
3. All medication that is not authorized to be self-administered by the student will be secured in the Administration office and dispensed by school staff according to the provisions listed on the Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form. Any special instructions for storage or security measures must be written by the health care provider and provided to the TREE office in advance.
4. The medication must be delivered in its original prescription container and must:
 - a) be clearly labeled.
 - b) comply with the Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form on file with the school; and
 - c) include the following information:
 - name of student, name of prescribing physician,
 - name of the dispensing pharmacy or manufacturer, expiration date of the medication,
 - name and strength of the medication, the times and amount to be given (dose), and method of administration (oral, inhaled, injected, topical, etc.).
5. Over-the-counter medication (including Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc.) that has been prescribed by an authorized health care provider or approved by the family must be in its original container, labeled with student's name and accompanied by written physician instructions on the Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form.
6. Students carrying and administering their own medication must have both physician and family written consent via the Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form (filed in advance at the TREE office). Any medications not on file with the TREE office in advance will be confiscated. The student will comply with the orders as always written and maintain the safety of the medication. Students who need medication while at school may carry medication (such as asthma inhalers, insulin, severe allergic reaction injection devices) and self-administer such medication under the supervision of school staff, provided the following documents are already on file in the TREE office:
 - A signed statement from the family with the following information:
 - Consent allowing the student to self-administer their medication
 - A release absolving school personnel from civil liability if the self-administering student suffers an adverse reaction or misuses the medication.
 - A "Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form" must be completed for **any change in dose, administration time, method of administration, medication, or health care provider. It will only be valid for the current school year.**
 - If there is no current Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form on file with the school, the family member may bring medication to school and administer the medication to their student in the TREE office. The family member must take the

medication with them since no medication will be stored in the front office without a current Prescription/Non-Prescription Authorization form.

- A family member must pick up medications by the last day of the school year, or they will be discarded.

Appendix VII: Email Contact List

Administration

Darryl Sollerh	darryl.sollerh@treeacademy.org	Director of School
Storey Sheinberg	storey.sheinberg@treeacademy.org	Assistant Director of School
Marissa Viramontes	marissa.viramontes@treeacademy.org	Admissions / Outreach
Alejandra Roman	alejandra.roman@treeacademy.org	Dean of Students
Ale Chamorro	ale.chamorro@treeacademy.org	Dean of Curriculum / Scheduling
Dominick Zesati	dominick.zesati@treeacademy.org	Administrative Assistant
Ron Fernando	ron.fernando@treeacademy.org	Faculty Coordinator
Chris Stevens	chris.stevens@treeacademy.org	Operations Manager

Human Development

Alex Yoon	alex.yoon@treeacademy.org	Human Development Team/Life Skills
Ray Ricafort	ray.ricafort@treeacademy.org	Human Development Team/Life Skills
Sophie Zanders	sophie.zanders@treeacademy.org	Human Development Team/Life Skills
Signe Grant	signe.grant@treeacademy.org	School Counselor

Department Chairs

Josh Nothom	josh.nothom@treeacademy.org	History
Blake Collins	blake.collins@treeacademy.org	English
Christy Elliot	christy.elliott@treeacademy.org	Math
Mike Aiello	mike.aiello@treeacademy.org	Science
Arturo Hernandez	arturo.hernandez@treeacademy.org	Spanish
Gene Kim	gene.kim@treeacademy.org	Director of Sports
Ami Abubakr	ami.abubakr@treeacademy.org	Art
Joy Levine	joy.levine@treeacademy.org	Meditation & Yoga