



AMERICAN RIVER CHARTER SCHOOL P A R E N T H A N D B O O K

2023-2024

ARCS Office: 6620 Wentworth Springs Road Georgetown, CA 95634

Office hours: 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Phone (530)333-8340

<https://arcs.bomusd.org>

This Handbook is one of the primary communication tools designed to help you better understand your school. Please read it thoroughly. The Acknowledgement and Agreement sheet must be signed by the parent and returned to the Supervising Teacher.

American River Charter School is a non-profit, non-denominational, tax-exempt organization incorporated in the State of California. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex income, marital status or sexual orientation in the administration of our educational policies, admissions or Board membership policies, financial programs and other school-administrated programs.

Revised July 2023

Parent Handbook

Mission Statement:

American River Charter School (ARCS) provides a rigorous, challenging, and adventurous education. Varied programs which are responsive to student and family needs will be interesting and complex. Satisfying, high-quality student performance will be the result of powerful, consistent, teacher collaborated instruction, and diligent, persistent student effort. The atmosphere will be joyful, trusting and respectful. Students will become skillful, curious, lifelong learners, creative problem solvers, caring involved community participants, and global citizens.

The mission of the Home School Program is to support parents as the primary teachers of their children through positive collaboration between students, parents, and professional educators.

General Information:

As a public charter contracted with Black Oak Mine Unified School District, the Home School policies follow BOMUSD and statewide regulations regarding attendance, academic standards, and standardized testing. Our charter funding and renewal are based on adherence to these policies. For more information regarding these policies, see our charter petition available on our website at <https://arcs.bomusd.org/>.

What Can a Family Expect from the ARCS Home School program?

The school will:

- Provide the academic curriculum, resources, and materials through Instructional Funds and District resources.
- Ensure that every family is provided a State Credentialed Supervising Teacher (ST) that is able to work effectively with the parent-teacher and student.
- Provide a Supervising Teacher who will work in partnership with the parent-teacher to provide assessment, curriculum guidance, enrichment ideas, and feedback on student work.
- Monitor/assess student learning; The Supervising Teacher will meet with parent-teacher and student no less than once every twenty school days in coordination with monthly learning periods or more frequently (i.e. weekly) as needed for students to be successful in the program.
- Provide a personalized learning program/curriculum.
- Ensure that each family is aware of the school's opportunities and expectations.
- Provide a range of curricular activities.
- Provide needed support for students with an IEP /504 or English Language Learning.

Initial Meeting:

Your Supervising Teacher will be contacting you to set up an initial meeting. At this meeting, the student's Master Agreement will be developed outlining the student's personalized learning plan and courses of study. Both the legally responsible adult and student must be present in order to sign and initiate the Master Agreement. Attendance for each student may not be claimed until the Master Agreement has been completed, signed, and dated. Attendance is directly related to the amount of time spent and the completion of the work. Master Agreements are created and signed yearly.

At the initial meeting the following will occur:

- Determine appropriate courses/classes.
- Review the courses of study defined for the specific classes taken.
- Determine how academic progress will be measured.
- Determine appropriate curriculum, resources, and school supplies.
- Discuss policies, procedures, and student/parent responsibilities.
- Schedule regular Learning Period meeting times and locations.
- Discuss academic goals for the year, required assessments, ordering process, available vendors, and field trip options.

Home School Program Design/Responsibilities:

- Parents/guardians understand that all curriculum and instructional materials purchased by state funding must relate to the students' course of study and will be documented in the ARCS student's records by the Supervising Teacher.
- Parents/guardians have the primary responsibilities for the students' education with supervision and direction by a credentialed supervising teacher. **Parents will provide a minimum of 80% of the students' instruction and assessment.**
- The Parent-Teacher will prepare to share with the ST at every Learning Period meeting the completed assignments and graded samples of the student's work. The ST will collect one work sample from each of the core subjects (English, History, Math, Science) each learning period and at least one sample from all other courses written on the Master Agreement during the semester. Work samples are part of student portfolios. They are to be dated and evaluated by the ST and filed at the ARCS office for the annual audit.

Work Samples:

To meet California Independent Study Guidelines, work samples will be required and collected at the end of each Learning Period. Students are required to submit work samples as requested by the Supervising Teacher to demonstrate and document student learning. Failure to provide work samples may jeopardize your child's enrollment status at American River Charter School.

Acceptable Work Sample Criteria:

- Original or scanned PDF version
- Demonstrates neat and organized work
- Demonstrates a good reflection of your child's learning and abilities
- Includes student's first and last name and date in the top right-hand corner
- The sample needs to be completed and dated on a school-day within the collection Learning Period
- Must be non-sectarian (non-religious)
- Photographs must include a summary from the student's perspective
- Samples may be typed or handwritten by the student. Younger students may dictate to the parent to write or type for them.

Non-Compliant Work Samples Include:

- Missing student first and last name
- Missing date of work completion
- Scanned documents that are difficult to read or are very light
- A scanned or printed document of a certificate of completion or report from an online learning platform
- A photograph which does not include the student's summary of the project/concept
- Incomplete worksheets or work
- Samples from religious curriculum

Determining Academic Curriculum and Classes:

The Supervising Teacher will work with the parent-teacher and student to determine what courses of study and elective classes best suit the student's needs.

K – 8: Students study a minimum of six subject areas which are: Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education (20 minutes K-6th and 40 minutes 7th-12th every day), and an Elective Class such as Art, Music or Computers.

High School: Because regulations for High School credits are complicated and vary, parents need to work closely with their Supervising Teacher to make sure they are planning well for their child's future.

- High School students must be enrolled in a minimum of four classes, which are 20 credits per semester.
- In order for a student to graduate in four years, they need to complete six classes per semester.

- A high school student (11th and 12th grade) may take courses at a community college; only two classes can be taken each semester **while** concurrently taking 4 ARCS high school classes or 20 credits at ARCS.
- Recommended number of credits per semester is 30 or 35. More credits may be taken but must be pre-approved by administration.
- All courses must be taken in the sequence that matches the Black Oak Mine Unified School District and California Department of Education recommendations. For example, World History is taken in 10th grade and US History is taken in 11th grade and the sequence for math is Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II.
- Annually, the graduation plan will be reviewed with the student by the Supervising Teacher, parent-teacher, and student to ensure that the number of credits required for graduation and/or college entrance are attainable.
- High school student support services, i.e. career counseling, academic counseling, college preparatory guidance, and transcripts are available to all high school students. Ask for assistance through the Supervising Teacher and/or the school administration. Early enrollment in California Community Colleges is available to 11th and 12th graders with prior approval. The ARCS website contains links to local Community Colleges. The ARCS administration/designee must sign paperwork for students to register in Community College classes.
- High school students are allowed to participate in GSHS sports programs, clubs, and classes provided there is space available and grade standards are maintained. If interested, contact your Supervising Teacher for more information.
- High school students may participate in CTE-ROP courses. Students may also concurrently enroll in GSHS on-campus classes (space available) . ROP and GSHS classes are not recorded on the ARCS Master Agreement and to receive transcript credit, final grades must be sent to the ARCS office at the end of the semester. Contact your ST if interested.
- The multi-year high school plan will include: all required college entrance classes, career path classes and elective classes. Students planning to attend a four-year college need to review the requirements of each college they hope to attend. See more updated information on the ARCS website.

English Learners:

ARCS is committed to the success of its English Learners and support will be offered both within academic classes and in supplemental settings for students who need additional support for English language learning. ARCS will follow the Black Oak Mine USD Board Policy

[\(BOMUSD Education for English Language Learners policy\)](#) to meet all applicable legal requirements for English learners as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, English learners and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements.

WASC Accreditation:

American River Charter School participates in the WASC accreditation process. All public schools go through this same rigorous process of school-wide self-examination and study in order to prepare for accreditation. The WASC process is designed to allow us to go through an in-depth self-study of our school, focusing specifically on organization, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and school culture. We take a close look specifically at our high school students and their success. In addition, we identify and reflect on our progress towards our school-wide learning outcomes (SLOs). The WASC cycle includes targeting our areas of strength and areas of growth and the creation of an action plan to address those areas to increase student achievement.

When a school becomes accredited, it:

- Certifies to the public that the school is a trustworthy institution of learning.
- Validates the integrity of a school's program and student transcripts.
- Fosters improvement of the school's program and operations to support student learning.
- Assures a school community that the school's purposes are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable educational program.
- WASC accreditation is important because the military often requires applicants to be from accredited schools and many school districts and universities will only accept credits from WASC accredited schools.
- Allows high school students' courses, grades, and units to be accepted at more colleges and universities after graduation.
- American River Charter School is WASC accredited and successful completion of a-g coursework earns credits accepted by colleges and universities for entrance requirements.
- American River Charter School graduates can apply for all government aide programs, such as Cal Grants and are also able to apply for scholarships offered by schools and organizations.

Academic Integrity:

American River Charter School expects students to conduct themselves ethically and honorably. It is expected that the grade a student earns is based upon work that the student has been assigned and completed.

By definition, Academic Integrity is the moral code or ethical policy of academia. This includes values such as avoidance of cheating or plagiarism; maintenance of academic standards; honesty and rigor in academic work.

The following behaviors may be considered as acts that do not uphold Academic Integrity:

- Plagiarism
- Talking during a proctored exam
- Copying another student's test/assignment
- Allowing others to copy your work
- Exchanging assignments with other students (either handwritten or computer-generated)
- Using summaries or commentaries (e.g., Cliff Notes, Sparknotes) in lieu of reading the assigned materials
- Submitting purchased papers
- Altering a grade (on a computer, on a report card, on an assignment)
- Taking an exam for someone else
- Using bribery/blackmail/threats
-

Any student known to have acted without Academic Integrity will be subject to disciplinary action in the following manner:

- **First offense:** A grade of F and/or 0% on the assignment/exam with a chance to resubmit within 1 week and parent/guardian notification
- **Second offense:** A grade of F and/or 0% on the assignment/exam with no resubmit and conference with parent/guardian
- **Third offense:** A grade of F in the class, in-person conference, and placement on Academic Probation for 1 year

Students placed on Academic Probation may be subject to the following consequences:

- Copy of cheating referral placed in permanent cumulative file
- Proctored unit tests and finals by a school staff member
- Restricted from participating in school activities (field trips, prom, graduation)
- Ineligible to receive letters of recommendation from school staff

Withdrawing Your Student:

To withdraw your student, please provide your Supervising Teacher with the following information:

- Last date of attendance in ARCS
- Name of school or school district in which your student will be enrolling
- Reason for withdrawal
- Submit your final attendance log and work samples

Your Supervising Teacher will schedule a final meeting to collect the above information and assist you with the materials return process. All school property must be returned upon withdrawal, with the exception of assistive technology devices required by a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). In that instance, such materials must be returned to the School when alternative arrangements are made or until two months have elapsed from the date of withdrawal. Families may be billed for any school items that are willfully damaged or loaned to the student or family by the school and not returned.

Please Note: Last day of documented attendance is the last day of enrollment.

All Enrichment Classes for services beyond the student's withdrawal date will be canceled and any services attended/continued by the student after the student's withdrawal date, will be at expense of the student's parent/guardian.

Involuntary Removal Process:

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action ("Involuntary Removal Notice"). The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder. The Involuntary Removal Notice shall include the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's basic rights including the right to request a hearing before the effective date of the action. The hearing shall be consistent with the [Black Oak Mine USD expulsion procedures](#). If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the American River Charter School/Black Oak Mine suspension and expulsion policy.

Upon parent/guardian request for a hearing, the Charter School will provide notice of hearing consistent with its expulsion hearing process, through which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate. The notice of hearing shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall include a copy of the Charter School's expulsion hearing process.

If the parent/guardian is nonresponsive to the Involuntary Removal Notice, the student will be disenrolled as of the effective date set forth in the Involuntary Removal Notice. If the parent/guardian requests a hearing and does not attend on the date scheduled for the hearing the student will be disenrolled effective the date of the hearing.

If, as a result of the hearing, the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known school district of residence within thirty (30) days.

A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent the Charter School from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy continue or reoccur.

Non-Compliance with Homeschool Program Policy:

American River Charter School is committed to ensuring students are appropriately engaged in learning, particularly as it correlates to attendance reporting. After the Non-Compliance Process has been seen through, it may be determined that Independent Study is not the best educational placement for the student and as such, the student may be subject to involuntary removal pursuant to school policy and state law.

The purpose of the ARCS Charter Council and the BOMUSD Board of Trustees approving this Non-Compliance Policy is to accomplish the following:

1. Outline the Non-Compliance Process
 2. Outline the Student's Responsibility to complete Work/Progress, Assignments/Work Samples, and/or Student Activity Logs
 3. Outline the Parent's and Student's Responsibility to Schedule and Attend Monthly Learning Periods
 4. Establish Communication Requirements for the Supervising Teacher
 5. Outline the Non-Compliance Procedures
 6. Outline the Procedures for the ST when sending the First Non-Compliance Letter
 7. Outline the Procedures for the ST when sending the Second Non-Compliance Letter
 8. Outline the Procedures for the Administrative Meeting/Conference
 9. Establish the Non-Compliance Timeline/Checklist
1. **Non-Compliance Process:** The school's Non-Compliance Process can be triggered if a student/family is found to have violated the terms of the Independent Study Policy and Master Agreement, and/or missed the following:
- One or more missing Work Samples
 - One or more missing Attendance Logs
 - Missed or not scheduled one or more monthly learning period meetings or other meetings.
 - Has not responded to their Supervising Teacher after three sets of attempts (phone and email) over the course of six school days.
2. **Student Work/Progress, Assignments/Work Samples, Student Activity Logs:** It is required that all Supervising Teachers review and affirm student learning and collect Attendance Logs and Work Samples every Learning Period.

Acceptable Work Sample Criteria:

- Original or scanned PDF version
- Demonstrates neat and organized work
- Demonstrates a good reflection of your child's learning and abilities
- Includes student's first/last name and date in the top right-hand corner
- The sample needs to be completed and dated within the collection Learning Period
- Must be non-sectarian (non-religious)
- Photographs must include a summary from the student's perspective
- Samples may be typed or handwritten by the student. Younger students may dictate to the parent to write or type for them

Non-Compliant Work Samples Include:

- Missing student first and last name
- Missing date of work completion
- Scanned documents that are difficult to read or are very light
- A scanned or printed document of a certificate of completion or report from an online learning platform

- Samples completed and dated not within the Learning Period
 - A photograph which does not include the student's summary of the project/concept
 - Incomplete worksheets or work
 - Samples from religious curriculum
3. **Monthly Learning Period or Other Meetings:** It is the parent's and student's responsibility to make every effort to attend all monthly learning period meetings (every twenty school days). If the meeting is not successfully held after three sets of attempts (phone and email) it will be determined that the family has not met the school's meeting expectations and the Supervising Teacher should start the Non-Compliance Process.
 4. **Communication Requirements of the Supervising Teacher:** STs will keep positive and open lines of communication with each family. STs will follow a communication pattern with a pairing of a phone call, email message, and document as per school procedure. If an initial communication pair (#1) is not responded to within two school days, the ST will attempt to reach the family again with another communication pair (#2). If the second communication pair is not successful, the ST will attempt a third communication pair (#3) and start the Non-Compliance Process by sending Non-Compliance Letter #1.
 5. **Non-Compliance Procedures:** The compliance procedure can include two compliance letters and one Administrative Conference call. If after the Administrative Conference call, the student fails to meet expectations, the student may be subject to involuntary removal.
 6. **First Non-Compliance Letter:** Should any of the items listed in the Non-Compliance Process occur and there have been three Communication Pairs attempted, upon the third attempt, the ST will:
 - Send Non-Compliance Letter #1 to the family via email and certified mail.
 - Document date letter was sent, issue, and tracking number.
 - Remind student/family of the appropriate sections of the Master Agreement and Parent-Student Handbook that specifically address the issue/concern.
 - Talk with the family to see what the issues/concerns are on both sides as well as develop a plan to support the student and resolve any issues.
 - Hold all Instructional Funds until the family is compliant.
 7. **Second Non-Compliance Letter:** Without satisfactory resolution or response to the issues described in the Non-Compliance Letter #1 within five school days, the ST will:
 - Attempt to call and email the family (Communication Pair #4)
 - Determine a day and time to schedule an Administrative Conference Call with the parent(s)/guardian(s), ST, and Director, to be specified in Non-Compliance Letter #2. The date should be no sooner than the 6th school day from the date of the letter.
 - Send Non-Compliance Letter #2 to the family via email and certified mail.
 - Document date letter was sent, issue, and tracking number.
 - Remind student/family of the appropriate sections of the Master Agreement and Parent-Student Handbook that specifically address the issue/concern.

Letter #2 gives the family the opportunity to communicate and work with their ST to address and problem-solve the issues of concern. Should the family fail to communicate to

their ST within five school days from the date the letter was sent, the parent/guardian must either communicate and resolve the indicated issues with their ST or attend the Administrative Phone Conference as scheduled in the letter.

8. **Administrative Conference Call:** Without satisfactory resolution to the issues/concerns, the ST will:

- Send out a conference call number to all participants.
- Attempt to remind/confirm the parent/guardian of the call via phone and email.
- Document the communication.
- Document date the Administrative Conference Call was held including a brief summary of the outcome.

A team composed of Parent(s)/Guardian(s), ST, and Director must be present on the Administrative Conference Call. During this time the team will work towards resolution of the issues/concerns as well as determine if this is the best placement for the student. School Administration may determine the following:

- Independent Study is in the best interest of the student.
- The need to place the student on a student improvement plan.
- The need to implement different strategies to collect compliance documents (Student Activities Logs and or Work Samples).
- Determine that it is not in the student's best interest to remain in our independent study program. If the Administration finds this is not in the best interest of the student to remain in independent study, then the student shall be withdrawn from the school by following the procedures in the school's Involuntary Removal Policy.

If the student or parent does not attend the Administrative Conference Call, the meeting may proceed without them and the student may still be subject to involuntary removal. .

9. **Non-Compliance Timeline/Checklist:**

- Concern/Issue Arises
 - The ST will Call & Email Family (Communication Pair #1)*
- Wait 2 School Days
- Resolution – Stop Process
- If No Resolution Continue
 - The ST will Call & Email Family (Communication Pair #2)*
- Wait 2 School Days
- Resolution – Stop Process
- If No Resolution Continue
 - The ST will Call & Email Family (Communication Pair #3) + Send Non-Compliance Letter #1 (Certified Mail) Hold Instructional Funds*
- Wait 5 School Days
- Resolution– Stop Process
- If No Resolution Continue
 - The ST will Call & Email Family (Communication Pair #4) + Send Non-Compliance Letter #2 that includes Administrative Conference Call (Certified Mail)*
- Wait 5 School Days
 - Resolution – Stop Process
 - If No Resolution Continue

- The ST will Hold Administrative Conference Call and determine best course of action*
- Follow school involuntary removal policy, if applicable*

Notice of Decision and Opportunity to Request a Hearing Prior to Removal

Once the evaluation to determine whether independent study is in the student's best interests is complete, if it is determined that it is not in the best interest of the student to remain enrolled in the independent study program, the Parent(s) shall be notified in writing of American River Charter School's intent to remove the student as it is not in their best interest to remain in independent study. The Notice shall be in the native language of the Parent(s) and provided no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of student's removal. The Notice shall include the following:

- a. The School's intent to remove the student as it is not in their best interest to remain in independent study.
- b. The opportunity of the Parent(s) to request a hearing. Parent(s) (or the student if over 18) must submit the request for hearing writing within five (5) calendar days from the date of the Notice.
- c. If Parent(s) or student over 18 requests a hearing:
 - Within five (5) calendar days of the school receiving a request for a Non-Compliance Hearing, a written notice explaining the charges against the student and an explanation of the student's rights will be sent.
 - The Non-Compliance Hearing will be adjudicated by a neutral officer. Parents/students will have the opportunity to present testimony, evidence, witnesses, and cross examine adverse witnesses. Parents/Students have the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.
 - i. If as a result of the hearing the student is disenrolled, notice will be sent to the student's last known district of residence within thirty (30) calendar days.
 - ii. A hearing decision not to disenroll the student does not prevent ARCS from making a similar recommendation in the future should student truancy occur or reoccur.
- d. If no hearing is requested, the student shall be removed from the school on the date listed on the notice.

Measure Student Outcomes and Growth Area Goals:

21st century skills to be college and career ready are our goals at ARCS. Our general goals are that all students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and attitude that will prepare our graduating seniors to be successful when they leave our school. The skills are linked to one or more Common Core Standards which states that students will be college and career ready.

The 2022/2023 LCAP will continue to focus on academic improvement.

All students will continue to receive standards-based instruction and the additional support necessary to move towards mastery of grade level standards, both in math and ELA.

ARCS students will continue to improve their technology competencies designed to equip them with the skills necessary to be college and career ready.

School culture and parent engagement remain priorities. ARCS will continue to engage all stakeholders in improving school climate and creating a responsible, caring, and safe environment.

ARCS will continue the process of building an improved support system to assist our 9 - 12 grade Independent Study students in matriculating to both two- and four-year colleges.

This is in compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of EC 47605 and related statutes and as amended by the Charter School Act. See our Charter Petition and LCAP on the school's website for more details. ARCS's petition was renewed in May 2020 and approved for an additional five years.

Curriculum and Educational Opportunities: State funding is provided to each enrolled student in order to provide for the education of the student in required academic and elective areas. Each parent-teacher needs to review the Common Core Standards and Framework for the grade level of his or her students. (www.cde.ca.gov)

- Each family will work closely with their Supervising Teacher, together determining the best use of student funds to achieve these goals.
- Students must have California State Standards-based curriculum for all core subject courses (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) **before** funds are spent on elective courses or enrichment classes. In addition, students **must** complete School/District approved assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics **before** designating funding for enrichment classes.
- Students must be making academic progress in core subject areas as shown on school assessments, student work samples, and/or ST observations **before** funding for non-core/enrichment classes will be approved.
- All books and curriculum must be non-sectarian and approved by the Supervising Teacher before purchasing.
- It is recognized that the amount provided by ARCS for the education of each student may not adequately cover all costs of education and that parents may need to contribute funds for desired classes or to purchase school supplies and materials.
- According to California Education Code/Charter Law, the Charter School may not provide any funds or things of value to the pupil or his or her parent or guardian that a school district could not legally provide to a similarly situated pupil of the school district or to his parents or guardian.

*Parents must complete and sign the Academic Planning Sheet and the Annual Agreement to Receive Vendor Services prior to requesting materials/elective/enrichment classes.

This is also acknowledging the reading of and knowledge of the contents of this handbook. Parents must turn in an Emergency Card at the beginning of the school year to receive school materials and to place orders

- Instructional Funds are allocated twice annually (August and January) for the purpose of ordering instructional materials, curriculum, and approved enrichment classes.
- The parent and Supervising Teacher work in cooperation to determine the best use of allocated funds in order to produce the maximum possible program in terms of students learning.
- Instructional Funds, although allocated to each student when dispersed, may be used as a family account as needs are determined by the parent and ST.
- The Supervising Teacher is responsible for the professional and ethical distribution of the instructional funds.
- All materials purchased by American River Charter School for student use must have their use documented on the monthly assignment sheets for that student during that school year. All unused materials are to be returned to ARCS.
- Materials must be used to meet the California State Standards for the student for whom the materials are being purchased.
- All non-consumable curriculum and materials are the property of ARCS and are to be returned to the student's Supervising Teacher when the student is no longer using the materials, at the end of semester or school year, or when the student leaves the program.
- The parent assumes liability for the replacement and/or repair of lost or damaged items according to the depreciated value of the item. Technology Use Agreements must be signed by parents assuming responsibility for items valued over \$200.
- Student Use agreements must be signed by students using ARCS computers and or electronic devices.
- School expenses are audited annually.

Instructional Funds may be used for:

- **Basic school supplies** adequate for learning basic course skills (textbooks, workbooks, paper, pencils, books, etc.). Materials are required to be non-religious and are to align with the California State Standards. ARCS will provide the basic necessary school supplies and the value of them will be charged to the student's Instructional Fund account at the beginning of the year.
- Core subject tutoring.
- Enough basic materials and equipment (**not top-of-the-line**) for learning basic new course skills as recorded on the student's personalized learning plan and courses of

study. Supervising Teachers will assist in determining the type and quantity of the items purchased.

- Enrichment and/or Elective classes (e.g. music, art, physical education or educational field trips).
- Enrichment and/or Elective classes will be group lessons. An exception may be made to this policy for instrumental music lessons.
- All materials and equipment ordered by ARCS with state funding, including, paper, unused workbooks, art supplies, books, computers, software or instruments are the property of ARCS and must be returned to the school by the Supervising Teacher when the student has finished using them, leaves the school, or at the end of the year. Families will be billed for any and all items not returned upon leaving the school.
- Approved online classes and materials.
- Materials and textbooks for Community College classes.
- Classes at Golden Sierra High School: (\$400 per class/per semester).
- Introductory/Enrichment classes. ARCS believes in a well-rounded student and that we need to encourage investigation into varied interests. To help facilitate this exploration, ARCS will approve short-term exploration courses which, upon completion, the parent and student may choose to continue at their own expense. An example of this type of short-term course may be an introduction to equine care. Perhaps the student will discover a love of horses that will result in the parent purchasing their own horse with the appropriate riding /safety lessons to develop a lifelong love of equines. These types of courses will have a maximum of 8 lessons. A discussion with the Supervising Teacher will help to define the parameters.
- ARCS does not pay for “hobbies” or club memberships, recreational team sports (soccer/softball/little league). ARCS does not dispute the benefits of participation in these types of activities; in fact as a community, we encourage physical and social interactions amongst students. However, instructional funds may not be used to pay for these activities.

Instruction Materials - Ordering Process:

- During the first meeting of each semester, the parent/guardian/caregiver and their Supervising Teacher will determine the material and supply needs for the semester.

- The Supervising Teacher will prepare a requisition and submit it to the ARCS office for processing. All orders are subject to tax and shipping. Orders typically take 2-3 weeks to be received.
- All materials will be shipped to the ARCS office and distributed by the Supervising Teacher. Communications regarding order status are between the parent and the ST. Please do not call the office regarding order status.

Enrichment and Elective Classes - Ordering Process:

Enrichment and Elective Classes provide small group instruction, tutoring, driver's training, art and music, etc. The ARCS website has a list of approved enrichment vendors and classes offered.

- Parents request the use of instructional funds for student participation during the scheduled Learning Period meeting. If approved by the ST, a requisition will be prepared and sent to the ARCS office for final approval and processing.
- **Enrichment classes are not processed until student assessments have been completed.**
- A purchase order/approved student roster is required before attending enrichment/elective classes. Do not attend classes prior to receiving written notification from your ST that your requested class has been approved. Payment for classes started before written approval is sent to the parent by the ST will be the responsibility of the parent.
- Parents who wish to utilize a vendor not on the Approved Vendor List may request a Vendor Packet from their Supervising Teacher. Once the completed vendor packet is received by ARCS and has completed the approval process, the Supervising Teacher will be notified of the completed status. Any questions regarding the process are to be directed to the ST.
- Note: Enrichment class vendors are requested by parents/guardians, not the Supervising Teacher or ARCS.
- Enrichment courses do not replace core curriculum or the Parent-Teacher. **Enrichment courses are only funded if the student is using standards-based curriculum and is making adequate educational progress as determined by school/district approved assessments and Supervising Teacher observation and judgment.**

Field Trip Process

Field Trips are a valuable component of the educational process, contributing to the development of students. Experiential learning allows students to experience what has been learned in textbooks, reinforces cultural growth and personal development and provides for a fun hands-on-learning excursion.

ARCS plans for several field trips and school-wide events throughout the year. Your ST and the ARCS website will keep you informed of these activities. Should you have ideas other than what has been planned, please contact your ST.

Communication:

Face to face: You may call your Supervising Teacher / ARCS office /Director to schedule a sit down meeting. Your needs are important to us, so feel free to contact your Supervising Teacher or visit the ARCS office in Georgetown.

Telephone: Telephone calls are welcome, and someone will get back to you promptly. The ARCS school office phone number is (530)333-8340. The ARCS staff/office strives to return calls on weekdays within 24 hours. The Supervising Teachers will provide communication avenues through “Class Dojo” and their e-mail addresses to you at your initial meeting.

Calendar: You may request a *District calendar* from your Supervising Teacher or copy one from our website [American River Charter School](#) or the BOMUSD website at www.bomusd.org. This calendar lists important dates for school holidays and events throughout the school year.

Online Communication: Our school website is [American River Charter School](#). It contains an annual ARCS calendar and monthly calendar of events, and other programs under the American River Charter School “umbrella.” This website is updated regularly and has many downloadable forms such as this handbook, the School Accountability Report Card, and information about upcoming events.

Please ‘like’ our page: [American River Charter School - Facebook](#) .

Truancy and Determination of Truancy:

To earn attendance, a student must attend scheduled meetings and demonstrate daily engagement in the assigned work during the learning period (LP). If a student does not log daily engagement for 80 percent of school days during a learning period, the student will be considered truant. Parents must initial the Attendance Log daily. Additionally, if the parent and/or the student miss the scheduled monthly appointments, the student will be considered truant. The goal is 100% attendance.

Definition of Truancy: Students who fail to meet 80% of attendance or miss 4 out of 20 days in an assigned learning period will be considered truant. Failure to attend scheduled monthly appointments is also considered truancy. Please review the School Attendance and Review (SARB) procedures on the Master Agreement.

Student Expectations:

- The Home School Program is an optional educational alternative that has been voluntarily selected. A classroom option is available in a Black Oak Mine Unified School.
- Students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may enroll in ARCS but an IEP team meeting will be called to determine, as a group, if ARCS is the best placement for the student.
- Students must meet with their Supervising Teacher minimally once within an attendance month, which is every 20 school days. Some students will need to meet more frequently to be successful in the ARCS Home School program as determined by the Supervising Teacher and the Teacher-Parent.
- Students that fail to complete three consecutive assignments without valid reason will result in a referral to a Student Support Team (SST) to determine what supports and/or changes to the students program need to be made for the student to be successful. There may be a determination that the student would be more successful in another district offered program and should not remain in Home School.
- Students must follow all the discipline code and behavior guidelines of American River Charter School and BOMUSD. Any violation of these guidelines or failure to meet Charter school and District requirements could result in dismissal from American River Charter School. These guidelines and board policies can be found on the BOMUSD website. (bomusd.org)

- Visitation on any other school campus requires permission from that school. ARCS high school students must have an ARCS pass to be on the GSHS campus.
- The normal course load is five or six different subjects per semester for elementary students and six to seven subjects per semester for high school students.
- The goal for all ARCS students will be to complete assigned work and achieve at least the minimum performance requirements of 70% proficiency on the courses of study. The student and parent must understand that failure to maintain 70% proficiency, without valid reason, will result in an evaluation at a Student Success Team meeting to determine if the student should remain in American River Charter School. The student understands that credit, which is based on mastery of learning, can only be issued after a student has successfully completed an activity and it has been evaluated. Students realize that a minimum of 15 hours of work is needed for each unit of credit. Successful completion of a course is five (5) credits.
- Students are **required** to participate in the District/ARCS supervising teacher administered Writing, Reading, Math assessments, and State Standards CAASPP testing.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Expectations:

I agree to the above conditions listed under “Student Expectations.” I also understand that:

- Parents/guardians have the primary responsibilities for the students’ education and will **provide a minimum of 80% of the students’ instruction and assessment.**
- A Parent/Guardian/Caregiver with his/her student must be present at the first appointment with the Supervising Teacher to sign the master agreement. Students must meet with a Supervising Teacher a minimum of every 20 school days or once in a school attendance learning period. (LP) Monthly and daily assignments must be completed, graded, and turned in on time.
- Appointments cannot be missed unless it is an emergency and then must be rescheduled within the same week.
- Students could be dropped or reported to SARB (Student Attendance Review Board) if he/she does not attend the monthly appointment.
- Student’s individual course objectives are consistent with approved courses of study or California State Standards.
- The Parent/ Guardian/Caregiver understands **that ARCS students are expected to participate in all state testing; including CAASPP(state testing—grades 3-8 and 11), Physical Fitness testing(grades 5/7/9), and district required English and Math assessments.**
- Parent/Guardian/Caregiver is liable for the cost of replacement or repair for lost, damaged, or destroyed books and other school property checked out to a student (not normal wear and tear). This payment will be made before the student leaves the program. The school reserves the right to withhold a diploma and/or transcript for a bill not paid.
- The parent can request a transfer in writing of their student to a different Supervising Teacher. The request for a ST transfer must be submitted to the Charter Director or Designee. All requests for a Supervising Teacher transfer will be reviewed and, if appropriate, approved by the Charter Director. The Charter Director will notify the Supervising Teachers involved of the decision. Parents have the right to appeal any decision about their student’s placement, school program, or transfer according to the Black Oak Mine school district’s procedures.
- The Parent /Guardian/Caregiver will daily evaluate all student work and share it with the Supervising Teacher at regular appointments.
- The Parent/ Guardian/Caregiver will provide to the Supervising Teacher required, evaluated (graded) work samples for each Learning Period. The Supervising Teacher must review all students’ assignments.

- Parents will sign an agreement on the academic planning sheet that they have read and acknowledge receipt of this handbook.

Assessment and Accountability Systems:

The ARCS Petition states, “In order to have a complete picture of a student's growth, different types of assessments must be used. Assessments should focus on a student's growth towards a proficiency standard rather than comparing a student's performance against other students.” The staff at ARCS will assist parents in determining the appropriate materials and classes for each student by conducting assessments in Written Language, Math, and Reading at the beginning and ending of each semester.

In addition, each student in grade levels from 3rd through 11th has the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned through tests that are administered by the State of California. This is one way to show the growth of a student’s academic learning. By taking these tests, students learn how to take tests and parent-teachers can use the information from them to further target specific learning areas. Tests are administered by qualified staff, and our goal is to make them a positive experience for the students.

CAASPP includes:

- State Smarter Balanced Test (3rd-8th and 11th) - Administered in spring
- State STAR Science Tests (5th, 8th, and 11th)- Administered in Spring
- Physical Fitness Test (5th, 7th, & 9th) – Administered in Spring

California Smarter Balanced Testing Program is an important part of the state assessment system. By administering these tests every spring, parents, teachers, schools, and the State of California can measure how well the students are achieving the new California standards. In grades three through eleven, the Smarter Balanced tests target English-Language Arts and Mathematics. Each spring, all public school children, to include students with disabilities and English learners, participate in the state testing programs.

Testing: All students are expected to participate in the state testing program. Every school district and school must have at least 95 percent of its students participate in the statewide assessments in order to meet federal accountability requirements. **Charter petitions can be revoked for not having 95% or more of students participating in testing.**

Parent Support:

American River Charter School was founded by parents who believed in active participation in all aspects of their child’s education. This includes an active voice in directing the school. From its inception, American River has had a Parent and Community Member on our Charter Governance Council.

The Parent Representative to the ARCS Council is responsible for communicating needs or concerns from homeschool parents to the Council. Check the website for the Parent Representative name and contact information. Elections for council members occur in the fall.

Special Education and 504:

As a charter school authorized by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District (District), the American River Charter School operates as a public school of the District for all special education purposes. Accordingly, students eligible for special education who are enrolled in ARCS shall receive special education services in accordance with their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and in the same manner as any other student enrolled in the District. The District, as the local education

agency for special education purposes, offers special education instruction and related services that may be unavailable on the ARCS school site. A district provided Resource Specialist will be the case manager for all ARCS students with IEP's. Accordingly, an ARCS student requiring special education services may receive such services from the District at another site in the District or as otherwise arranged by the District in accordance with the student's IEP and the policies of the District and Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA).

A Student Success Team (SST) meeting is held when either the teacher or parent feels more information or focus is needed beyond the normal parent teacher conference to help the student be successful in school. If you feel your child is in need of support, Speech and Language services or Mental Health needs, please talk to your child's Supervising Teacher and a SST or IEP meeting can be arranged. The administrator is included and sometimes other specialists attend this problem-solving meeting to create a successful plan for the student.

Please contact the school director for more information or if you have questions with any of these procedures.

Community Relations:

The Board of Trustees places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in such a manner that employees are freed from unwarranted, spiteful or negative criticism and complaints. In order to promote communication that is fair and constructive, the following procedures for resolving complaints are provided. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint at the earliest possible stage.

1. Complaints concerning school personnel should be made directly by the complainant to the person against whom the complaint is lodged. Parent-teachers are encouraged to attempt to orally resolve concerns with the staff member personally.
2. If the complaint is not resolved at the first stage level, the complainant may submit the complaint in writing to the school director. The District will consider the complaint dropped if the complainant fails to put it in writing.
 - a. A written complaint must include the name of each employee involved and a brief but specific summary of the complaint and the facts surrounding it. It must also include a specific description of a prior attempt to discuss the complaint with the employee involved and the failure to resolve the matter
 - b. The director or immediate supervisor is responsible for investigating complaints and will attempt to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the person(s) involved. If the complaint is resolved, the director will also advise all concerned parties, including the Superintendent.

Copies of this regulation regarding the submission and handling of all such complaints shall be made freely available at the ARCS office according to AR 1312.1 (b).

[BOMUSD Uniform Complaint Procedures](#)

**American River Charter School Handbook Agreement
2023-2024**

Signature Page

Parents are expected to read the entire ARCS Parent Handbook and refer to it as you or your child have questions.

Please print name, then sign below. The ARCS Parent Handbook can be found at <https://arcs.bomusd.org/> and can be referred to as needed.

Please print names here:

I, _____, the parent/guardian, have read and fully understand and agree with the commitments outlined in the ARCS Parent Handbook.

I, _____, the student, have read and agree to the learning and positive behavior principles and procedures in the ARCS Parent Handbook.

Student's signature _____

Parent or Guardian's signature _____

Date _____ Teacher _____