

# PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2018-2019



### **Charter Middle School**

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**The information contained in the PLN Parent Handbook is provided for informational purposes only. Information may be changed or updated without notice. This handbook is subject to all applicable laws and in all cases where there is a discrepancy between the handbook and the charter, the charter petition language supersedes the handbook.**

## Para Los Niños Overview and Services

Since 1980, Para Los Niños has worked to support children in their journey towards a more successful future. Para Los Niños provides comprehensive and integrated educational and family services that support the whole child from infancy through successive stages of school and life. Para Los Niños Charter Middle School provides sixth to eighth grade and is an integral part of the educational services provided by Para Los Niños. Additionally, we have Early Education Centers where we provide quality, research-based early childhood education that increases school readiness and prepared children for success in kindergarten and beyond. We also operate a Primary Center (TK-1) and Charter Elementary School (TK-5) which provides high quality, project based curriculum and an after-school program.

We understand that in order for our students to be successful academically, their physical and socio-emotional needs must be supported both at school and at home. With this in mind, Para Los Niños offers students and their families a wide array of student and family support services through our internal services and community partnerships. If, at any time, you want to become further involved in your student's education, the school community at large, have a concern about your child's behavior or a family crisis or emergency, please don't hesitate to reach out to the school's Case Aide for more information on one or more of the following services:

### **Counseling Services**

Para Los Niños offers counseling services for children ages 0-18 to enable the child to learn as effectively as possible in his/her educational program. Therapists provide community-based treatment services offered in the home or school based on parent's/caregiver's preference. Clinical services can support children and their families when functioning is impaired in the home, at school, or in the community. If a parent/caregiver is interested in seeking services for his or her child then a referral should be completed with the school's **Case Aide, Lionel Chavez**.

Clinical staff can provide a wide array of services including:

- Individual therapy
- Family therapy
- Group therapy
- Social skills development
- Case management
- Crisis intervention
- Treatment for children and families affected by trauma

**For more information, please contact the Community Schools Coordinator, Francis Jacobo (213) 250-4800 ext. 809.**

### **Family Support Services**

PLN offers assistance to families navigating the County's complex support systems, community resources for children, Nurturing Parenting and child development education, financial education, and support in times of crisis.

Your school's Case Aide provides support to students and families with on-site and in-home case management, parenting classes, support circles/groups, referrals to mental health services, concrete support, and linkages to community and county agencies. Their goal is to help children and families reach desired familial, educational and social goals while maintaining an adequate level of functioning.

### **Youth Workforce Services**

For families with older children, PLN prepares youth ages 14 to 21 for success in post-secondary education and the workforce through paid and unpaid work experience, career counseling, job placement, mentoring, case management and leadership development.

### **Parent and Community Engagement**

PLN provides guidance and leadership training to parents who would like to take on deeper roles within the school community serving on our School Site Councils, English Language Advisory Committees and Local Control Accountability Plan

Committees. In addition to these groups, there are opportunities to volunteer in our Parent Centers, classrooms, libraries, offices, and by recruiting community supports.

## **Para Los Niños Charter Middle School**

The Para Los Niños Charter Middle School, serving the children of working families in downtown Los Angeles, strives to cultivate and celebrate the potential within each child and equip students with the skills, knowledge and confidence necessary to pursue excellence and succeed in a multi-cultural world. The School provides a nurturing, safe environment that inspires critical thinking, imagination, self-reliance and respect for others.

### **Our values**

- Children come first.
- The Family is essential.
- Excellence in all areas.
- Respecting and embracing diversity.
- Empowering communities.
- Responsive, compassionate, and inspiring to those we serve.
- Highest ethical standards.
- Transparency and accountability.
- Teamwork and collaborative partnerships.

### **Our Guiding Principles**

- Every child and family has the right to reach high standards of achievement.
- Every child and family has the right to be respected.
- Every child and family has the right to be responded to as individuals with different academic, socio-emotional, physical, psychological, and cultural needs.
- Every child and family has the right to safe environments that facilitate healthy development and learning.
- Every child and family deserves opportunities to engage with and impact the local community and global society.

### **Overview**

Para Los Niños Charter Middle School is founded on the belief that every child has the potential to reach high standards of achievement, to ask good questions and to think critically. Because we believe that a comprehensive educational program is critical to the ability of our students to pursue their dreams and achieve future success, Para Los Niños opened its Middle School in September of 2008 with an entering class of 55 6<sup>th</sup> graders. At full enrollment, the PLN Middle School serves 360 students, 120 each grade level – 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

## **What it means to be a Charter School**

A charter school is a public school designed to meet a community's need for alternative educational programs. As individuals, all students come to school with differing needs, passions, and capacities. Families also come to school with a variety of needs and expectations. Local communities differ in the role they expect a school to play in the lives of their members. With this in mind, the charter school movement seeks to provide localized efforts to meet the needs of a variety of students, families, and communities through specifically designed educational programs.

As a publically funded school, charter schools are held accountable for ensuring that students achieve the same standard of academic achievement as their peers in public, non-charter schools. Charter school students participate in all state and federal testing and receive the same per pupil funding as public, non-charter schools. Any student residing in the state of California is eligible to attend PLN Middle School. Charter schools do not charge students tuition and may not discriminate against any student on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code.

# General School Information

## Hours

- Instruction begins daily at 8:00 a.m.
- Dismissal is at 2:45 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays
- Dismissal is at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and shortened/advisory days

## Emergency Contact Forms

Every family must fill out a new emergency card every school year with the main office. If at any point throughout the year, any of the information below changes, please fill out a new emergency form and turn it into the office:

- Home address (provide proof of address)
- Home, cell, work telephone numbers
- Doctor's phone number
- People who are authorized to be contacted in case of an emergency
- Telephone numbers of people to be contacted in case of an emergency
- People authorized to pick up your child from school

## Attendance and Truancy Policy

Regular and punctual attendance is important for student achievement. It is the intent of the Governing Board of Para Los Ninos Charter School ("PLN") to ensure that students attend school every day on time. Absences and tardies shall be marked as unexcused unless justified by any of the reasons listed below. If your student will be absent or tardy with a valid excuse, please call the office or else provide the student with a note and any documentation of the excusal.

- **Excused absences** – absences shall be excused if they are due to the following reasons:
  - Student illness
  - Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer
  - Medical/dental appointment (we recommend that appointments be made after school or on the weekends)
  - Attending the funeral of an immediate family member (e.g., mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, or any relative living in the immediate household of the student – one day within the state, three days outside the state)
  - Attendance at the student's naturalization ceremony to become a United States citizen
  - Justifiable personal reasons when the pupil's absence has been requested in writing by the parent and approved by the principal such as:
    - Mental Health Day Treatment
    - Appearance in court
    - Observance of a religious holiday or ceremony
    - Attendance at a religious retreat shall not exceed 4 hours per semester
    - Work in the entertainment industry for a period of not more than 5 consecutive days and for a maximum of 5 absences per school year.
    - Participation with a not-for-profit performing arts organization in a performance for a public school pupil audience for a maximum of up to 5 days per school year.
- **Unexcused Absences/Truancy**-- Any absence for reasons other than those mentioned above will not be excused. Such invalid reasons may include but are not limited to:
  - Running errands
  - Vacation or trips
  - Family emergency
  - Transportation problems
  - Inclement weather

### **Method for Verification of Absence**

When students have been absent from school, they must present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for absence. Parents/guardians have ten (10) school days from the first day of absence to justify the absence. After ten (10) days, the absence will be documented as unexcused in the student's attendance record.

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Signed, written note from parent/guardian
2. Verbal conversation in person or by telephone between the parent/guardian and verifying employee. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
  - a. Name of student;
  - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative;
  - c. Name of verifying employee;
  - d. Date or dates of absence; and
  - e. Reason for absence.
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method, which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. A written recording shall be made, including information outlined above.
4. Healthcare provider verification (doctor note)
  - a. When a student has had eight (8) absences in the school year for illness or confidential medical services verified by methods #1-3 above without a healthcare provider's note, any further absences on account of illness or confidential medical services must be verified by a healthcare provider.
  - b. A healthcare provider's verification is required to excuse absences of more than three (3) consecutive days due to illness or confidential medical services. The student's return to class will NOT be conditioned upon a health-care provider's verification of good health, unless the absences were due to a serious medical condition or contagious disease.
  - c. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, PLN staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.

### **Procedures for Addressing Absences**

1. Each of the first two (2) unexcused absences will result in a call home to the parent/guardian.
2. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a call home to the parent/guardian. In addition, upon reaching three (3) unexcused absences and/or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes each in a school year, the parent/guardian will receive an "Initial Notification of Truancy" letter from the School and the student will be classified as **truant**. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the School. This letter, and all subsequent letter(s) sent home, shall be sent by Certified Mail, return receipt requested, or some other form of mail that can be tracked.
3. Upon reaching six (6) unexcused absences and/or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes each, the parent/guardian will receive the "Second Notification of Truancy" letter with an invitation for both the parent and student to attend a mandatory attendance workshop. At the workshop, concerns regarding the student's attendance will be discussed in addition to reviewing possible interventions and supports and best practices for improving attendance. The workshop facilitator can assist families who require or request additional assistance after the workshop.
4. Upon reaching a combined total of nine (9) unexcused absences and/or unexcused tardies over 30 minutes each, the student will be classified as **habitual truant**. The parent/guardian will receive the "Third Notification of Truancy" letter and will be referred to the School Attendance Review Team (SART). The SART panel may be composed of the school's administrator, social/mental health services, Case Aide, school police officer, community agency representatives, and a referring school site representative. The SART panel will discuss the absence problem with the parent/guardian to work on solutions, develop strategies, discuss appropriate support services for the student and his/her family, and establish a plan to resolve the attendance issue.

- a. The SART panel shall direct the parent/guardian that no further unexcused absences or tardies will be tolerated.
  - b. The parent shall be required to sign a SART Contract (“contract”) formalizing the agreement by the parents to improve the child’s attendance or face additional administrative action. The contract will identify the corrective actions required of the student/family moving forward, and indicate that the SART panel shall have the authority to order one or more of the following consequences for non-compliance with the terms of the contract:
    - I. Parent/guardian to attend school with the child for one day;
    - II. Student retention;
    - III. After school detention program;
    - IV. Required school counseling;
    - V. Loss of field trip privileges;
    - VI. Loss of school event privileges;
    - VII. Required remediation plan as set by the SART; and
    - VIII. Possible referral to the District Attorney (please see more on this below)
  - c. The SART panel may discuss other school placement options.
  - d. Notice of action recommended by the SART will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian.
5. Follow-up meetings: The Case Aide will conduct two (2) follow up meetings with the student and parent, following the initial SART meeting, at 4-6 week intervals.
  6. Home Visits: Two (2) members of the SART panel may conduct a home visit to further explore, identify, and troubleshoot any issues that may be contributing to your child’s poor attendance.
  7. For all communications set forth in this process, PLN will use the contact information provided by the parent/guardian on the emergency form. It is the parent’s or guardian’s responsibility to update PLN with any new contact information.

**Referral to Appropriate Agencies or Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office**

It is PLN’s intent to identify and remove all barriers to the student’s success, and the School will explore every possible option to address student attendance issues with the family. For any unexcused absence, PLN may refer the family to appropriate school-based and/or social service agencies.

If a child’s attendance does not improve after a SART contract has been developed according to the procedures above, or if the parents fail to attend a required SART meeting, PLN may notify the District’s Attorney’s office, which then may refer the matter for prosecution through the court system. Students 12 years of age and older may be referred to the juvenile court for adjudication.

These policies will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently without regard to the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

**Involuntary Removal from PLN**

Egregious or habitual violation of the attendance and truancy policy may result in involuntary removal of the student from enrollment at PLN. Such removal will be at the discretion/recommendation of the SART panel and/or Executive Director under the following circumstances:

- 1) Student is absent from school ten (10) consecutive school days without communication from the parent/guardian; or
- 2) PLN follows the SART procedures above and the student continues to have unexcused absences.

If the student is recommended for involuntary removal, PLN will inform the parent/guardian in writing. Removal will be effective five (5) school days from the date of the notice unless the parent or legal guardian requests a hearing on the matter.

This hearing process shall be conducted in accordance with PLN’s expulsion hearing procedures. A copy of the expulsion hearing procedures is available upon request and will be provided to a parent when a hearing is requested. Pursuant to these procedures

and consistent with laws governing involuntary removal, the hearing shall be adjudicated by a neutral officer (hearing panel or Board of Directors led by a neutral officer) within a reasonable number of days, at which the student may present testimony, evidence, and witnesses, confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and bring legal counsel or an advocate. Consistent with PLN's expulsion hearing procedures, the hearing shall take place within thirty (30) days after the notice of removal is provided to parent/guardian and a written decision issued after the hearing. If a hearing is requested, the student will remain enrolled and will not be involuntarily removed until a final decision is issued.

## **Arrival at School**

Students may arrive on campus at 7:00 a.m. and go directly to the play yard or the lunch benches. They may also pick up breakfast and eat on the tables and benches on the lower level. These are the only areas of campus that are supervised before school starts. Unless students have made special arrangements (e.g., to meet with a teacher), they are to be in one of these supervised areas until 7:55 a.m. when the students will be directed to go up to their classrooms.

Parents can drop students off in front of the school by driving south on Stanford from 8<sup>th</sup> Street utilizing our valet drop off. Per LA City ordinance, please fully enter the coned area and proceed all the way to the stop sign before allowing children to exit the car. This area is only for immediate drop-off or pick-up. After dropping off your children, drivers should continue south to 9<sup>th</sup> Street. **The School parking lot is reserved for staff only.**

## **Dismissal from School**

Parents of any student not enrolled in the after-school program must indicate on our dismissal form whether their child will walk home, take public transportation, or wait to be picked up. If your child is not in the after-school program, please ensure they are picked up no later than 15 minutes after school is dismissed. It is the parents' responsibility to arrive on time to pick up their child. Parents should call the front office to inform staff of their late arrival. Parents must arrive on time barring an emergency situation. Only adults (over the age of 18) listed on a student's emergency card will be allowed to pick up students

If there are repeated incidence of late pick-up, the school administration will require a meeting with a student's parents to address the situation. If late pick-up continues and is unaddressed, appropriate authorities (i.e., Child Protective Services, etc.) may be notified for assistance.

## **Permission to Leave School during the Day**

Only adults (over the age of 18) listed on a student's emergency card will be allowed to pick up students. The person picking up the student must present a proper form of identification. If a person not listed on the emergency card is attempting to pick up the student, the office staff will contact the parent/guardian from the office phone using only the numbers listed for them on the emergency card to confirm the authorization. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to update the emergency card whenever there is a change to phone numbers, addresses, or names of people that are authorized to pick up the student.

Parents who need their child to be released from school on their own prior to regularly scheduled dismissal time must provide written permission or come in person to the front office to inform the office staff. Students will not be released from campus at any time during the regular school day, including during the lunch period, without express written permission from or in the presence of a parent/guardian. If a written notice is received, the parent/guardian will be called to verify the request prior to releasing the student. Only the phone numbers listed on the Emergency Card will be used to contact the parent/guardian. Phone calls from the parent/guardian requesting their child to be released will only be accepted in emergency situations.

## **Contacting a Student during the School Day**

Parents needing to contact their child during the course of the school day should call the front office. Every effort will be made to get your message to your child.

## **After-School Program**

The Para Los Niños After-School program serves K-8 grade students at our Charter Elementary School, Charter Middle School and Gratts Primary Center. Our program is designed to provide all students with a safe and engaging environment. All of our after-



school activities support general education core curriculum with academic enriching activities to reinforce and enhance academic achievement.

Our goal is to improve the academic performance and scholastic success of students in the program by providing high-quality academic programming after school. To meet this goal, the program offers students homework support to students, academic enrichment, recreation and enrichment activities, and linkages to other Para Los Niños Services.

All components and group activities also teach youth socialization skills as well as valuable lessons about sharing and cooperation. Throughout, the program builds team spirit and self-esteem through games and activities that incorporate “playing with a purpose” and “disguised learning”.

We provide the following components:

- Academic support, homework assistance, academic enrichment
- Enrichment: Creative expression involving arts, crafts, music, and dance-- often conducted in collaboration with artists and arts organizations
- Physical recreation, organized sports, and team building activities
- Field trips
- Variety of programs from partners and collaborators
- Nutrition – daily snack and drink
- Referrals / linkages to other Para Los Niños Services Collaborations and Partnerships

PLN draws on the expertise of our partners to offer additional enrichment academic components. PLN also utilizes community partners to provide students with access to arts, music and other educational enrichment activities. Students receive a variety of enrichment activities provided by our collaborative partners. These activities form a crucial part of the program’s curriculum and will encourage youth to engage in creative expression, community service, and other activities.

Students enrolled in the after-school program will also be provided with an afternoon snack.

**ALL SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL DAY WILL BE EXPECTED DURING THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM.**

For more information regarding the After-School Program at PLN Charter Middle School, please contact:

PLN Middle School Site Supervisor	OR	After-School Program Director:
Salvador Ortiz (213) 896-2640 sortiz@paralosninos.org		Cecilia Hernández, M.Ed. 1617 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> Street Los Angeles, CA 90017 (213) 239-6605 chernandez@paralosninos.org

## Valuables

The use of electronic devices or other personal items by students is prohibited during normal school hours. The school is not responsible for valuables brought from home, will confiscate them if they are seen on campus, and will not be responsible for the condition of any confiscated item. Please regularly check your child’s backpack for items not allowed in school. Any cell phone must be in a backpack and cannot be kept on a student’s person. The following items are not allowed in school as they often become a distraction during school hours:

- Tablets, MP3 players, iPods, other music devices and/or cameras
- Cell phones
  - Although we realize that students may carry a cell phone for emergency purposes, cell phone use is not allowed during school hours, including during recess and lunch periods. We discourage the display and use of cell phones during school time.
- Handheld gaming devices

- Toys including but not limited to all balls, action figures, playing /trading cards, plush toys, dolls, costumes, skate boards, finger boards, elastic bands, board games etc.
- Clothing that is not part of the school uniform (hoodies, hats, etc.) will be confiscated when seen on campus.

If such a device or item is observed or heard by school staff, it may be confiscated and the student's parent will need to pick it up from the office. Photographing, videotaping or otherwise recording individuals without their permission is strictly prohibited. If a cellular phone, or electronic signaling device rings or is visible during testing, the device will be confiscated and the student removed from the test situation.

**\*If an item is confiscated, PLN staff is not responsible for the item if it is lost or stolen while in the staff member's possession.**

## School Uniform

PLN Charter Middle School is a proud community of learners. One element in developing our community identity is our school uniform. Students are required to wear a uniform at school during school hours.

**Our top reasons for asking our students to wear uniforms are:**

1. There are many other schools in the area where our schools are located. For safety reasons, we want to be able to identify our students at a glance.
2. The clothing we wear indicates our purpose. When we go to the beach, we wear swimming suits. When we go to a wedding, we put on our best clothes. At PLN Charter Middle School, we dress for learning.
3. School uniforms put the focus on learning, not fashion. Uniforms also reduce bullying and teasing. ***Please support our mission by taking our uniform seriously and wearing it with pride.***

**Description of the Uniform Policy:**

- Uniform items should be no larger/smaller than one size of the student's clothing size
- The PLN Charter Middle School uniform is:
  - Navy blue polo shirt
  - Khaki bottoms – pants, shorts, skirts, skorts or jumpers (bottoms must be of appropriate length, no more than 3 inches above the knee, cannot have rips or be torn)
- No bandannas, head coverings, baseball caps, or hats of any kind.
- Only closed-toe footwear with flat rubber soles – no shoes with straps of any kind.
- Any attire that may be a distraction will be confiscated. Distracting attire includes but is not limited to accessories such as belts not in the belt loops, extra clothing pieces, torn pants or shirts, and excessive or large pieces of jewelry. School site personnel retains the discretion to decide what is considered distracting attire.
- Students are not permitted to wear non-uniform items on their arms, draped on shoulders, or anywhere else on their person.
- Out of uniform consequences are:
  - 1st offense – Verbal warning
  - 2nd offense – Parent phone call
  - 3rd offense – Parent meeting
  - Continued offenses may result in other consequences

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### ***What outerwear is acceptable?***

The PLN Charter Middle School uniform only includes the navy blue (6<sup>th</sup> grade), dark green (7<sup>th</sup> grade), or grey (8<sup>th</sup> grade) polo shirt and the khaki bottoms. PLN does not require official outerwear, but we ask that outerwear be either solid blue, black or grey, **NO LOGOS, CHARACTERS, DESIGNS, HOODIES, DENIM JACKETS or FLANNEL SHIRTS can be worn or be around the waist. Any inappropriate outerwear must be in backpacks and not visible. If the outerwear is visible, it will be confiscated.**

***What attire is allowed during free dress days?***

Students are allowed to wear the clothing that they want as long as it is not inappropriate, offensive or violates any of the rules listed above. In addition, students are not allowed to wear any bandannas, head coverings, hats, etc., as part of their free dress or their regular uniform.

***Does the polo shirt have to bear the PLN logo?***

No. Polo shirts without the PLN logo are acceptable as long as they are in the right color.

***Does PLN work with a vendor that sells clothing that meets the uniform requirements?***

Yes, please contact the school office for current vendor information. The school will also schedule uniform sale days throughout the school year and inform families of the events in anticipation.

***What if I can't afford a uniform?***

If you cannot afford a PLN uniform for your child, please talk to the school's office manager or Case Aide.

***If my child does not wear the uniform, can he or she still attend school?***

Out of uniform students will not be denied admission on campus, participation in school, educational activities, nor denied continued enrollment in school. However, the consequences listed above are in place to encourage students to cooperate with uniform requirements.

Students who arrive to school out of uniform will be provided a uniform to borrow for the day. The uniform must be returned at the end of the school day. **Any clothing that is not a part of the uniforms and considered a distraction will be confiscated.**

## **Physical Education (PE) Uniforms**

PLN Charter Middle School students are also required to wear a PE uniform every day. This includes:

1. PLN Mustangs Navy Blue Shorts
2. PLN Mustangs Gray PE Shirt
3. Name must be written on each item.
4. Shoes (with socks) that are appropriate for vigorous physical activity.

Each Friday, students are expected to take their PE uniforms home to wash them; students should bring their PE Uniforms back on Mondays.

All newly enrolled students will be provided with a free PE uniform. If parents wish to purchase an additional PE uniform for their child, they may do so in the main office. If you cannot afford a PE uniform, please talk to the school's office manager.

### **Cold Weather and PE**

Sweat pants and sweatshirts are permitted on cold days for PE activity. We recommend Solid Navy Blue sweatpants and Solid Gray colored sweatshirts. These items are not provided by the school. **NO LOGOS, HOODS, POCKETS, OR ZIPPERS ON SWEATPANTS OR SWEATSHIRTS.**

## **Free Dress Days**

The Principal or his/her designee authorizes and approves all Free Dress Days. They may reflect a particular holiday and/or theme; however, the following guidelines are to be observed on all Free Dress Days:

1. Boys and girls are permitted to wear casual pants, including clean and un-torn jeans.
2. Boys and girls are permitted to wear t-shirts, sweatshirts or other causal shirts/blouses provided they are modest and do not make reference to drugs, alcoholic beverages, profanity, offensive activities, etc. Midriff t-shirts, sweatshirts or other causal shirts/blouses or any clothing that exposes the midriff (stomach/waist) are not allowed.
3. Girls may wear casual slacks, skirts, shorts and skorts and appropriate blouses. Skirts and skorts are not permitted if they are shorter than the uniform skirts and skorts.
4. Sandals are not permitted for either boys or girls.

5. Neither boys nor girls are permitted to wear caps or hats.
6. Any student, who has doubt about what to wear, should simply not wear it. Use your judgement.

## Spirit Shirt Days

All Mustangs are encouraged to wear their school spirit shirt on designated days. Students may wear the school spirit shirt with their regular uniform bottoms, even if students have not earned Free Dress.

## Visiting Campus

In order to preserve the safety of our students and staff, we require that all visitors go directly to the main office. Upon arrival, visitors must state their reason for the visit, provide the appropriate identification (if applicable), sign in, and obtain a visitor's badge if they will proceed to be onto campus. Reasons to be on campus include:

- Observing child's classroom
  - Parents may only observe their child's classroom
  - **Visit is limited to 20 minutes with prior approval**
  - Visitors are asked not to interact with their child, any other student, or the teacher/staff
  - If you would like to speak to your child's teacher, an appointment can be made in the office
- Meeting with a staff member which they have set an appointment with (e.g., principal, teacher, etc.)
- Parent meetings (e.g., Coffee with the Principal, committee meeting such as ELAC, etc.)
- Participation in a Workshop or Training
- Volunteer work (please see office for Parent Volunteer Handbook for detailed information on procedures for this)
- Principal approval for any other reason

Length of visits should be the time it takes for any of the above to take place unless the principal has approved for the visitor to stay on campus for an extended amount of time. All visitors should return to the office at the end of their visit to sign out. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment.

If the purpose of the visit is to drop off an item to a student or staff member, the item must be dropped off with a staff member in the front office. This person will make sure to deliver the item to the designated person as soon as they are able.

**\*For more information on the PLN Visitor's Policy, please visit the school office**

## Food Service

At PLN Middle School, we recognize the critical connection between a healthy mind and a healthy body. We are proud to offer our students well-planned meals that are produced by our vendor partner. All meals meet recommended nutritional guidelines and are provided to students by Para Los Niños Students with specific dietary requirements including food allergies or other food restrictions should notify the front office and parents should complete a "Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or accommodations form.

Meals may only be consumed by students currently attending Para Los Ninos Charter Middle School. Food not consumed by the student may not be taken out of the lunch area. Per health and safety regulations, Para Los Ninos kitchen staff will dispose of all uneaten items. The funding PLN receives for student meals is contingent on our adherence to relevant policies, thus we must be very careful to follow these rules.

**Students may bring snack from home but snack is limited to fresh vegetables, fruits and water or any item listed from the state of California as a 'healthy item' as stated in the Wellness Policy. Any other food may be confiscated from the child.**

Free or reduced-price lunches are available at school for pupils whose parents or legal guardians qualify, based on annual household income, and complete the required application form. Pupils participating in the program will not be identified, and the information on the application will be kept confidential. Applications will be sent home and collected during a specified time.

## Admissions

PLN CMS is an open enrollment, tuition-free public school with no specific requirements for admission (e.g., minimum grade point average, test scores, discipline records, etc.). Enrollment to the school is open to any resident of the State of California. PLN CMS enrolls all pupils who wish to attend to the extent that space allows. CA Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).

PLN CMS is fully committed to serving all students who wish to attend, regardless of socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, academic achievement, special education needs or other “risk factors.” If the number of students who wish to attend the school exceeds the openings available, entrance shall be determined by single random public drawing in accordance with Education Code §47605(d)(2) and all federal requirements.

The admission process for a new school year happens during the open enrollment period in the month of February or March. If the number of applications received during the open enrollment period exceeds the school’s capacity at any grade level, attendance will be determined by a public, random drawing. The rules and procedures of the drawing will be communicated to all applicants via a written letter accompanying the Lottery Application form. Lottery procedures will be fairly executed, and will be overseen by PLN CMS principal to ensure that they are accurately followed. The lottery will take place at the Charter School on a date publicized to applicants, at a time convenient for families to attend (evening hours). Families need not attend the lottery to claim their child’s enrollment space. Once the open enrollment period ends, the lottery will take place 14 days later, if needed.

Students will be enrolled by grade level applying the following priorities and pursuant to 47605 (d)(2)(B) that students who reside in the District must be given priority over all other categories:

1. Students currently enrolled at PLN Middle School
2. Siblings of students enrolled at PLN Middle School.
3. Students residing within LAUSD.
4. Children of PLN staff, not to exceed 10% of total enrollment.
5. Students residing outside of LAUSD.

Within two weeks following the lottery, students who are offered spots will be asked to complete an Enrollment Packet within two weeks to secure their spot. School staff will be available to assist families in completing this paperwork if needed. Students who are on the wait list will be notified of their status in writing.

Those who apply after the lottery deadline are added to the end of the lottery waitlist in the order they are received. Vacancies that occur during the school year will be filled according to the wait list order determined during the lottery drawing. When an offer occurs during the school year, families will be contacted in the order of the wait list and will be given 48 hours to decide whether or not to accept a space at the school. In the event that no such wait list exists where the space is available, the space will be made available on a first come, first served basis to the next interested family at the appropriate grade level.

The waitlist for the current school year remains active until the end of the school year and does not “roll over”; applicants must reapply for the lottery annually if the school is unable to offer them admission for the current year.

Application forms, the manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers, and other lottery-related documents will be physically filed on campus, and lottery results and waiting lists will be readily available in the school’s main office for inspection upon request. Each applicant’s admissions application will be kept on file for the academic year with his or her assigned lottery number in the school database and on his or her enrollment application.

Families that are interested in enrolling after the school year has started may do so if space is available. If space is not available, they will be placed on the wait list.

## Foster and Homeless Youth

Foster youth means a child who has been removed from his/her home pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code section 309, is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code sections 300 or 602, or has been removed from his/her home and is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code 300 or 602.

The term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. It includes children and youths who (42 U.S.C. § 11434a):

1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
2. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
3. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition of “homeless.”

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parent or guardian. In the case of unaccompanied youth, status is determined by the School Liaison.

PLN Middle School designates the following person as their **School Liaison for Foster and Homeless Youth**:

**Lionel Chavez, Case Aide**  
**835 Stanford Ave.**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90021**  
**(213) 896-2640**

\*For information regarding the Homeless Policy, please visit the school’s main office.

## **Code of Conduct**

Para Los Niños staff and students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes the safest and highest quality learning environment for all members of our school community. PLN students and staff will be safe, responsible and respectful so that we can create a Community of Inquiry.

### **Safe School Guidelines:**

1. We will respect differences of all types—physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual. We will choose our words and actions to help, not hurt others. We will work to keep our school free of verbal and nonverbal put-downs regarding the following:
  - Academic progress
  - Age
  - Appearance/body image/mannerisms
  - Athletic ability
  - Belief systems
  - Cultural, ethnic and/or racial background
  - Family background and family composition
  - Friendships
  - Languages
  - Learning styles
  - Physical challenges
  - Sexual harassment of any type, including gender stereotypes and homophobic taunts
2. We will use school-appropriate language.
3. We will not engage in or tolerate physical abuse, taunts or threats of any kind.
4. We will accept responsibility for our words and actions without excuses.

As a SAFE SCHOOL, we are committed to a caring community for learning in a safe environment. As a SAFE SCHOOL, we accept responsibility for our words and actions without excuses. As a commitment to the Safe School Guidelines, students, parents, and the principal are asked to commit to and sign a School, Parent, and Student Compact at the beginning of each school year.

## Student Policies and Consents

### Media and Publicity Informed Consent and Release

By signing this form, parents/guardians give PLN and its Partners permission to photograph and/or videotape their child and/or other members of the family for things such as Press Release, Advertising (e.g., brochures, PLN website) and Social Media. If you choose not to allow for your child to be photographed and/or videotaped, the office staff will document your request and inform the appropriate parties as needed. **\*\*Once signed during the student's initial enrollment at Charter Middle School, this form will be good for the student's duration of enrollment at Charter Middle School.**

The following are brief descriptions of the detailed forms that are part of the enrollment packet that must be signed to conform to the student policy or consent it corresponds to:

### Acceptable Use Policy for Use of Computers and the Internet

Our students live and will work in a world fully integrated with technology. We believe that students need opportunities to learn how to use these powerful tools responsibly and as a means to achieve their academic and personal goals. We are fortunate to have all of our computers directly linked to the internet. By turning a computer on, students can access information for learning from all over the world. The AUP outlines acceptable behavior while using computers and the internet at PLN CMS. Students may not use computers and the internet until this form has been signed by both the student and the parent/guardian.

**\*\*This form must be signed at the beginning of every school year.**

### Library and Textbook Parental Responsibility Form

This form provides information regarding the library process and what happens if students do not follow the library regulations when library material is in their possession. The legal parent/guardian must sign this form before the student is allowed to check out any library material. **\*\*This form must be signed at the beginning of every school year.**

## Discipline

Discipline policies for PLN Middle School reflect our vision to provide a comprehensive approach to education to meet individual students' educational, social and psychological needs. Furthermore, these policies reflect our goals of assisting at-risk students and their families in developing the competencies needed to overcome their challenging living environments. In order to ensure a caring community for learning in a safe environment, the administration, teachers, staff, students and parents/guardians of Para Los Niños Middle School are committed to maintaining a safe school for everyone.

Student discipline practices involve active participation of students, parents and staff and include opportunities for students to work cooperatively with each other, be respected and demonstrate respect for others, learn conflict resolution strategies, and take responsibility for daily behavior.

Discipline procedures involve individual conferences between student(s) and teachers and/or principal and administrators. Prevention and the development of appropriate behaviors will be taught in class lessons. Students will learn how problems are initiated and how problems escalate. Students, guided by the teacher, will learn appropriate "replacement behaviors" to resolve future problematic situations. Consequences for behaviors will include loss of privileges; letters or phone calls to parents/or guardian; parent/student/teacher conferences; behavioral contracts; in house suspension; and Student Success Team meetings.

When a student has repeated difficulty meeting the behavior standards of the school, a Student Success Team (SST) will be convened by parents (guardians), teachers, Para Los Niños Family Services, Para Los Niños Clinical Services, principal and other relevant program or after-school coordinators. The SST will develop a support plan that describes the behavioral goals, type of assistance, modifications and interventions to be implemented to assist the student and/or family in improving student behavior during the school day and after school. The team will come to a consensus on the support plan, identify who is responsible to implement each item of the plan and create a timeline in which to achieve the goals. Suspension may be one option employed by the SST to assist in developing acceptable student conduct; however in-school suspension is considered preferable whenever possible and appropriate. A follow-up meeting date will be set at the initial SST meeting to ascertain progress.

The parents (guardians) will be engaged in goal setting and be empowered to become self-advocates in regard to meeting family needs. Parents will be required to participate on a regular and consistent basis in the Student Success Team as a condition of their child's enrollment.

### **Behaviors requiring immediate action**

Our commitment to provide our students and staff with a learning space that is both physically and mentally safe for all our community members requires that the following behaviors will result in immediate action by the school's principal.

*Sexual Harassment:* All staff and students have the right to come to a school without threat of sexual harassment by any other adult, employee or student member of our community. Children will use the Safe School Form to make a report to the principal of any incident of alleged sexual harassment. The school principal will follow through with the Safe School Reporting Procedure. Adults will report any incidence of sexual harassment to the principal or the President and CEO of Para Los Niños.

*Bullying:* All staff and students have the right to come to a school without fear of or intimidation by any other adult or student member of our community. Children will use the Safe School Form to make a report to the principal of any incident of bullying. The school principal will follow through with the Safe School Reporting Procedure. Adults will report any incidence of bullying to the principal or the President and CEO of Para Los Niños.

*Drugs, Tobacco, & Alcohol:* Drugs, Tobacco, & Alcohol are prohibited on campus by all adults and students of PLN Middle School. Possession of these items must be reported immediately to the school principal and may be grounds for suspension or expulsion.

*Firearms, Weapons, and other Dangerous Items:* The possession of firearms, weapons, and other items that may be used as or are intended as weapons is prohibited on campus by all adults and students of PLN Middle School. Possession of these items must be reported immediately to the school principal and may be grounds for suspension or expulsion.

*Defacing or damaging school property and materials* will not be tolerated. Parents will be held responsible for the cost to replace or repair damages made.

A complete copy of PLN Middle School's Discipline Policy is available upon request and appears as Element 10 in the Charter Petition.

### **Grounds for Suspension/Expulsion**

*\*Please note that the information under this section will be revised. Please refer to the school's charter for the updated procedures on suspension/expulsion.*

Students are subject to suspension or expulsion for incidents occurring:

- While on school grounds.
- While going to or coming from school.
- During recreational time.
- During, or while going to, or coming from, a school sponsored event/field trips

Every effort will be made to avoid out-of-school suspension and expulsion, when possible. In-school suspension is preferred, due to lack of parental supervision during the school day and the anticipated at-risk nature of many PLN Charter School students. While the goal of the PLN Charter Middle School's discipline procedures is to avoid out-of-school suspension and expulsion when possible, the procedures for suspension and expulsion from PLN Charter Middle School will follow the procedures identified in the California Education Code, Section 48900. Identified infractions may result in immediate suspension or expulsion pursuant to all applicable sections of The Charter Schools Act and in accordance with California Education Code, Sections 48900 et seq. and 48915 as well as the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994.

A pupil shall not be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion, unless the PLN superintendent or the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has committed an act as defined pursuant to any of subdivisions (a) to (r), inclusive:

- (a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- (2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.



(b) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.

(c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.

(d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.

(e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

(f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.

(g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.

(h) Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit use or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription products.

(i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.

(j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.

(k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.

(l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.

(m) Possessed an imitation firearm. As used in this section, "imitation firearm" means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.

(n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.

(o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for purposes of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.

(p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

(q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

(r) Engaged in an act of bullying. For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the following meanings: (1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

(A) Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.

(B) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.

(C) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.

(D) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

(2) (A) "Electronic act" means the transmission, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following: (i) A message, text, sound, or image. (ii) A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to: (I) Posting to or creating a burn page. "Burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). (II) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated. (III) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in paragraph (1). "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.

(B) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) and subparagraph (A), an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet. (3) "Reasonable pupil" means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.

(s) A pupil shall not be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this section unless the act is related to a school activity or school attendance occurring within a school under the jurisdiction of the PLN superintendent or principal or occurring within any other school district.

(t) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, pursuant to this section, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (a).

(u) As used in this section, "school property" includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.

(v) For a pupil subject to discipline under this section, the PLN superintendent or principal may use his or her discretion to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion that are age appropriate and designed to address and correct the pupil's specific misbehavior as specified in Section 48900.5.

(w) It is the intent of the Legislature that alternatives to suspension or expulsion be imposed against a pupil who is truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from school activities.

#### **Mandatory Expulsion**

The PLN Charter Middle School shall comply with all sections of the California Education Code Section 48915, including, but not limited, to the following:

(a) 'Except as provided in subdivisions (c) and (e), the principal or the superintendent of schools shall recommend the expulsion of a pupil for any of the following acts committed at school or at a school activity off school grounds, unless the principal or superintendent determines that expulsion should not be recommended under the circumstances or that an alternative means of corrections would address the conduct.' and ending with 48915(h) as written below.

(A) Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense;

(B) Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil.

(C) Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, except for either of the following: The first offense for the possession of not more than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana, other than concentrated cannabis. The possession of over-the-counter medication for use by the pupil for medical purposes or medication prescribed for the pupil by a physician.

(D) Robbery or extortion.

(E) Assault or battery, as defined in Sections 240 and 242 of the Penal Code, upon any school employee.

(b) If the principal or PLN Superintendent makes a determination as described in paragraph (1), he or she is encouraged to do so as quickly as possible to ensure that the pupil does not lose instructional time.

(c) Upon recommendation by the principal or PLN Superintendent, or by a the governing board of may order a pupil expelled upon finding that the pupil committed an act listed in paragraph (1) of subdivision or in subdivision (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e) of Section 48900. A decision to expel a pupil for any of those acts shall be based on a finding of one or both of the following:

(1) Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.

(2) Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.

The principal or PLN Superintendent shall immediately suspend, pursuant to Section 48911, and shall recommend expulsion of a pupil that he or she determines has committed any of the following acts at school or at a school activity off school grounds:

(1) Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm. This subdivision does not apply to an act of possessing a firearm if the pupil had obtained prior written permission to possess the firearm from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal. This subdivision applies to an act of possessing a firearm only if the possession is verified by an employee of a school district. The act of possessing an imitation firearm, as defined in subdivision (m) of Section 48900, is not an offense for which suspension or expulsion is mandatory pursuant to this subdivision and subdivision (d), but it is an offense for which suspension, or expulsion pursuant to subdivision (e), may be imposed.

(2) Brandishing a knife at another person.

(3) Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code.

(4) Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or committing a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900.

(5) Possession of an explosive.

(d) The governing board shall order a pupil expelled upon finding that the pupil committed an act listed in subdivision (c), and shall refer that pupil to a program of study that meets all of the following conditions: (1) Is appropriately prepared to accommodate pupils who exhibit discipline problems. (2) Is not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior, or senior high school, or at any elementary school. (3) Is not housed at the school site attended by the pupil at the time of suspension.

(e) Upon recommendation by the principal the governing board may order a pupil expelled upon finding that the pupil, at school or at a school activity off of school grounds violated subdivision (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), or (m) of Section 48900, or Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, and either of the following:

(1) That other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.

(2) That due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others.

(f) The governing board shall refer a pupil who has been expelled pursuant to subdivision (b) or (e) to a program of study that meets all of the conditions specified in subdivision (d). Notwithstanding this subdivision, with respect to a pupil expelled pursuant to subdivision (e), if the county superintendent of schools certifies that an alternative program of study is not available at a site away from a comprehensive middle, junior, or senior high school, or an elementary school, and that the only option for placement is at another comprehensive middle, junior, or senior high school, or another elementary school, the pupil may be referred to a program of study that is provided at a comprehensive middle, junior, or senior high school, or at an elementary school.

(g) As used in this section, "knife" means any dirk, dagger, or other weapon with a fixed, sharpened blade fitted primarily for stabbing, a weapon with a blade fitted primarily for stabbing, a weapon with a blade longer than 3 1/2 inches, a folding knife with a blade that locks into place, or a razor with an unguarded blade.

(h) As used in this section, the term "explosive" means "destructive device" as described in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code. Whenever a PLN Middle School student is recommended for suspension or expulsion, PLN administration will follow the procedures set forth in Element 10 of the Charter Petition.

# Campus Search & Seizure Board Policy

## Student Searches

A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g. backpack, purse, etc.) may be searched if a school official has reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating either the law or PLN rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, possession of illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials. Illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials include those materials which are dangerous to the health or safety of students or school personnel, are disruptive or potentially disruptive, or which have been cited as unauthorized in school rules or regulations.

Articulable facts must support a school official's reasonable suspicion that a search is justified. In no case shall a search be conducted if predicated on mere curiosity, rumor or hunch.

Any search of a student and/or their personal effects shall be conducted in the presence of another adult witness whenever possible. The scope of the search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the pupil and the nature of the infraction.

In no case shall a strip search be conducted by school officials, including asking a student to remove or arrange some or all of their underclothing, and/or inspecting of parts of the student's underclothing or body.

## Student Use Areas

Student use areas, including, but not limited to, instructional and recreational space, are school property and remain at all times under the control of PLN. However, students shall assume full responsibility for the security and condition of these areas. Periodic general inspections of instructional space and other areas of the school may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time without notice.

## Lockers

Student lockers, including P.E. lockers, are school property and remain at all times under the control of PLN. Students shall assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers. Student lockers may not be used to store illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials.

The acceptance and use of locker facilities on school campus by any student shall constitute consent by the student to the search of such locker facilities by authorized school personnel and/or law enforcement. Inspections of lockers may be conducted by school personnel and/or law enforcement through the use of trained dogs.

## Seizure of Illegal, Unauthorized, or Contraband Materials

If a lawfully conducted search yields illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials, such materials shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

## Discipline

If illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials are discovered during a search, including but not limited to searches conducted by school officials, trained detection dogs or metal detectors, school officials may impose discipline upon the student(s) (including suspension and/or expulsion) in accordance with PLN's discipline policies and procedures. PLN shall notify law enforcement authorities if any search and/or seizure results in the discovery of illegal contraband.

**\*For more information on the Campus Search & Seizure Board Policy, please visit the school office.**

# Students with Disabilities and Medical Conditions

At Para Los Niños Charter Middle School we support the learning of all of our students. We follow all federal and state mandates and Los Angeles Unified School District policies and guidelines on the education of students with special needs and medical conditions.

## Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Discrimination/harassment in any form toward individuals on the basis of their actual or perceived disability is unacceptable and

will not be tolerated. The District will promptly investigate all complaints of disability-based discrimination/harassment and take reasonable actions to stop future incidents of discrimination/harassment.

Section 504 also requires that students with disabilities be provided a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). For students who are not eligible for special education services, but meet the federal definition of disabled under Section 504, a 504 Plan is developed which indicates the accommodations, supplementary aids and/or services that will be provided to assist the student in accessing the general education program. Parents or guardians must be notified in writing of any District decisions regarding the identification, evaluation, and/or educational placement of students and their right to participate in, and/or appeal these decisions under Section 504. For further information about Section 504 and/or assistance in filing an appeal or complaint regarding Section 504, contact the Educational Equity Compliance Office at (213) 241-7682.

### **Special Education Services**

Children learn in a variety of ways, with most students learning effectively in a traditional school setting. However, sometimes children with disabilities and learning differences need services beyond accommodations and modifications to the general education program. Children with disabilities may be eligible to receive special education services as determined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which includes the student's parent. Special education services are designed to meet the unique educational needs of students with disabilities and are provided at no cost to parents. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities must be educated with their non-disabled peers in the general education environment at school. Parents of school age children who suspect their child may have a disability who may need special education should contact the principal. Further information concerning special education programs and services is provided in the District's publication, *A Parent's Guide to Special Education Services (Including Procedural Rights and Safeguards)* which is available at our school and on the Division of Special Education website: <http://sped.lausd.net/>. Assistance related to special education issues is available from the principal.

## **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents' request to access their pupil's educational records must be submitted in a written form the custodian of records and the school will have five (5) business days from the day of receipt of the request to provide access to the records.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Charter School to amend a record should write the Charter School principal or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing regarding the request. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any personally identifiable information ("PII") from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)).

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34.
- To authorize representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5)). To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36.
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37.

Note that Charter School will not release information to third parties for immigration-enforcement purposes, except as required by law or court order.

"Directory information" is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Directory information can be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. PLN CMS has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

No information may be released to private profit making entity other than employers, prospective employers and representatives of the news media, including, but not limited to, newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations. Directory information may be disclosed without prior consent from the parent or legal guardian unless the parent or legal guardian submits a written notice to the school to deny access to his/her pupil's directory information. Directory information regarding a pupil identified as a homeless child or youth shall not be released unless a parent, or eligible pupil, has provided written consent that directory information may be released.

A release form for directory information must be completed every school year. You may request this form in the main office, or look for it in the welcome packet.

Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by PLN CMS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202

## Parent Engagement

We recognize that our parents are both committed to the well-being of their children and stretched for available time. We recognize that parent participation may look different for every family, and we encourage all parents and guardians to be active participants in their child's education. We expect at least one parent or guardian to be present 3 times a year at student/parent/teacher conferences. Beyond that, whether you are supporting academic success at home and/or if you are a regular face on our campus, we commend you for your commitment to your child's future.

### Volunteering

Parents are always welcome to volunteer. What's more, we encourage you to share your skills and talents by participating in school events, special occasions, and classroom projects. Please visit the school office to inquire about volunteer opportunities and obtain a copy of the Volunteer Handbook for detailed information regarding the volunteer policy and procedures and forms required to volunteer.

Para Los Niños Middle School encourages the participation of parents for increased parental involvement, but it is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at the charter school.

### Homework

The purpose of homework is to provide students practice with skills being learned, to extend learning, and to provide parents an opportunity to see their children's work. In addition, homework helps children to learn responsibility and time management. Parents can support their child in completing homework in two ways. First, parents should help to **identify a distraction free place and time** in which homework is regularly completed. It is always helpful if a parent or other responsible adult is close by to ensure that this space truly remains distraction-free. Second, **parents can check in nightly** with their child about his or her homework progress. Parents can ask their child to show them completed work and talk about upcoming deadlines. It always helps to establish a routine regarding homework. Homework should not be an unpleasant experience. If this is the case, please be sure to talk with your child's teacher.

All Para Los Niños Charter Middle School, students are expected to read for at least 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Additional assignments will be given on a regular basis by classroom teachers. If students are spending excessive time working on their homework and it is not completed, please contact the teacher.

### Committees

Parent engagement is an essential key to the teams that help make vital decisions that are critical to the performance and success of our school, therefore, we highly encourage parents to sign up to participate in the following committees:

#### **School Site Council (SSC)**

The school site council is an exciting committee that has direct impact on the way we spend a portion of our budget. The council is comprised of equal parts parents, teachers, and the school principal. SSC members also assist with preparing the school's Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) while learning how to plan strategically to support learning outcomes at their school and how these goals can be accomplished through measurable annual goals. The LCAP is a three year plan of accountability that is renewed annually. Each school district must create this accountability plan to assess the impact of funds from the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

#### **English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)**

The ELAC committee is comprised of a minimum of 3-9 parents of English Learner (EL) students that are interested in learning about and advocating for the academic journey of their EL student. The ELAC works closely with the School Site Council by making

recommendations based on data regarding curriculum, academic progress, and yearly academic goals. Committee members will also learn about the reclassification process and how they can support success in school.

### **Workshops/Parenting Classes**

PLN is committed to providing our parents with opportunities for development. Whether it be personal development or ways to help your child succeed, we are more than happy to work with outside partners to provide workshops, classes, and health care support that will provide you the opportunity to grow as a family and as an individual. In addition to workshops and classes provided by PLN, we have also partnered with the organizations throughout the community.

Our Case Aide help with organizing these types of partners and events. You will be informed of these opportunities through flyers sent home and through our parent communication system, One Call. However, if you have any suggestions for classes or workshops that you feel will assist you in raising your child or developing yourself, please share your ideas by visiting/calling the office and speaking to the Case Aide.

### **Five Ways You Can Make a Difference**

As a parent, you are your child's first teacher. Even while your child is in school, you still teach important lessons every day. Research shows that when parents and schools work together, students do better. Here are some suggestions from the Parent Institute on ways you can make a difference in your child's education. They don't cost money. They don't require training. All they need is you.

1. Read to your child every day. Long after children learn to read for themselves, they love this special time with you. Kids who are read to are the kids who want to read on their own.
2. Join your school's parent organization. When parents and schools work together schools improve.
3. Volunteer. The more help parents give teachers, the more time teachers can spend with students. Work full-time? There are still ways to help. Ask your child's teacher what you can do.
4. Let your children know school is important. Ask about their homework. Attend school events. Talk about how you use what you learned in school in your daily life.
5. Recognize your child's special gifts. Each child has special talents. Perhaps the most important thing you can do is help your child see how he or she is special. That boosts confidence and sets the stage for learning.

\*For information regarding the Title I Parent Involvement Policy, please visit the school's main office.

## **Policy against Bullying, Hazing, Discrimination, and Harassment**

PLN Middle School is committed to providing a safe and civil learning and working environment that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX (sex), Title VI (race, color, or national origin), and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA. The School prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, re race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. The School does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including bullying, discrimination, or intimidation, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which the Charter School does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. Intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the school community, whether by or against any student, staff, or other third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

The Para Los Niños bullying and hazing policy requires that all schools and all personnel promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students and staff. All students and staff have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure and peacefull [Article 1, Section 28(c) of the California State Constitution]. The School Administration and Charter School Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which (i) cause, or threaten to cause, or an objective and reasoned third-party would determine was intended to cause, bodily harm or personal degradation, or (ii) creates, or an objective and reasoned third-party would determine was intended to create, an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment for any student, staff member, member of the administration, parent or guardian, or other third-party.

This policy applies to all school-related activities and/or engagements, including, but not limited to classroom activities, recess or lunch activities, participation in clubs and activities, email messages, text messages, discussions, telephonic communications, or online forums related to school activities, field trips, open houses, school performances, school athletic competitions, and any other in-person school-related activities on school property. This policy also applies to those activities or engagements which occur off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or function, such



as field trips or events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, where an employee is engaged in school business, or where the prohibited behavior is facilitated through the use of any school property or resources.

Bullying means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (A) Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
- (B) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
- (C) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
- (D) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyber-bullying is bullying (see above) conducted via electronic communication technology (e.g., texts, e-mails, blogs, postings, etc.). A person who engages in cyber-bullying at school or school-related activities and events is subject to disciplinary action even if the bullying occurred on a personal electronic device. Cyber-bullying that occurs off-campus but impacts the educational environment or compromises the safety of the school may fall under Para Los Niños's jurisdiction.

Hazing is any method of initiation, pre-initiation, or rite of passage associated with actual or desired membership in a student organization or student body, whether or not it is officially recognized by the educational institution.

Parents and students are encouraged to immediately report any acts of bullying or cyber-bullying to the school and to work with their local school site administration to address any problems or concerns.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Para Los Niños is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. Any student who engages in sexual harassment of anyone in or from the district may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any employee who permits, engages in, or fails to report sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For a copy of the district's sexual harassment policy or to report incidences of sexual harassment, please contact the school principal.

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

Para Los Niños is committed to providing a safe work and school environment where all individuals in education are afforded equal access and opportunities. The school's academic and other educational support programs, services and activities shall be free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any individual based on the person's actual nationality, race, color, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, ethnic group identification, age, religion, religious affiliation, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes in the California Penal Code; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Specifically, state law prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in enrollment, counseling, and the availability of physical education, athletic activities, and sports. Transgender students shall be permitted to participate in gender segregated school programs and activities (e.g., athletic teams, sports competitions, and field trips) and to use facilities consistent with their gender identity. The District assures that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission or participation in District programs.

PLN adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA"). PLN is further committed to providing a work and educational atmosphere that is free of unlawful harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex); Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, or national origin); The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the IDEIA; and Section 504 and Title II of the ADA (mental or physical disability). PLN also prohibits sexual harassment, including cyber sexual bullying, and harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, religion, religious affiliation, creed, color, immigration status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. PLN does not condone or tolerate harassment of any type, including discrimination,

intimidation, or bullying, including cyber sexual bullying, by any employee, independent contractor or other person with which PLN does business, or any other individual, student, or volunteer. This applies to all employees, students, or volunteers and relationships, regardless of position or gender.

Complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying are investigated through the Uniform Complaint Process (UCP). Such complaints must be filed no later than six months after knowledge of the alleged discrimination was first obtained. For a complaint form or additional information, contact the school principal or UCP compliance officer.

## **Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP)**

Para Los Niños has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. Para Los Niños shall investigate complaints alleging failure to comply with those laws and regulations alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any protected group, as well as unauthorized charging of pupil fees for educational activities. Para Los Niños shall seek to resolve, at the local level, those complaints using policies and procedures known as the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) adopted by our governing board. Unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying complaints may be based on actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race or ethnicity, ethnic group identification, ancestry, nationality, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, age, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived categories, in any program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance.

Complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying must be filed within six (6) months from the date the alleged act occurred or the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged act, unless the time for filing is extended by the Compliance Officer or his or her designee.

The UCP shall also be used when addressing complaints alleging failure to comply with state and/or federal laws in:

- Adult Education
- After School Education and Safety
- Child Care and Development Programs including state preschool
- Consolidated Categorical Programs
- Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying
- Foster and Homeless Youth
- Nutrition Services - USDA Civil Rights
- School Facilities
- Special Education
- Lactating Pupils
- Unlawful Pupil Fees

A pupil shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in an educational activity, unless the charge for such a fee is specifically authorized by law and does not violate Education Code Section 49011. A pupil fee includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

1. A fee charged to a pupil as a condition for registering for school or classes, or as a condition for participation in a class or an extracurricular activity, regardless of whether the class or activity is elective or compulsory, or is for credit.
2. A security deposit, or other payment, that a pupil is required to make to obtain a lock, locker, book, class apparatus, musical instrument, clothes, or other materials or equipment.
3. A purchase that a pupil is required to make to obtain materials, supplies, equipment, or clothes associated with an educational activity.

A complaint of noncompliance should be filed first with the principal of the school under the UCP. A complainant not satisfied with the decision of the school may appeal the decision to Para Los Niños's UCP Coordinator and shall receive a written appeal decision within 60 days of receipt of the school site complaint. Complaints related to pupil fees for participation in educational activities may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence or information leading to evidence to support an allegation of noncompliance with the requirements of Education Code sections 49010 et seq.

The complainant has a right to appeal our Decision of complaints regarding specific programs, pupil fees and the LCAP to the California Department of Education (CDE) by filing a written appeal within 15 days of receiving our Decision.

The appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the originally-filed complaint and a copy of our Decision.

The complainant is advised of civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders that may be available under state or federal discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying laws, if applicable.

A copy of the complete UCP may be requested at the school office at any time.

**Chief Operating Officer**  
Para Los Niños  
5000 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027  
Phone: (213) 250-4800  
Fax (213) 572-0107

**A copy of the complete UCP may be requested at the school office at any time.**

## Safe Place to Learn Act

Para Los Niños is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, violence, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived characteristics set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code and EC 220, and disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. All school personnel who witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying must take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Any student who engages in acts of discrimination, harassment, violence, **Los Angeles County Office of Education (4/27/2018)** 36 intimidation, or bullying related to school activity or school attendance occurring within a school of the school district may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. To report an incidence and/or to receive a copy of the district's antidiscrimination, anti-harassment, anti-intimidation, and anti-bullying policies, please contact Sarah Figueroa for student related matters and Deanette Brewer for employee related matters.

## Health and Safety

The health and safety of all members of our school community are of central importance. The following policies are intended to support the ongoing success of all who attend, visit, or work at our school. For a more detailed description of PLN Charter Middle School safety procedures please see the complete PLN – CMS Safety Plan, which is available upon request in the main office and online at [www.paralosninos.org](http://www.paralosninos.org).

### Immunizations

All new students enrolling at PLN Middle School must present an up-to-date immunization record. **All 7<sup>th</sup> graders must also show proof of having received the TDap immunization before starting school.** There is no grace period for immunizations. Students who do not meet the State guidelines for immunizations must be excluded from the school until the requirements are met with the exception of students with a valid medical waiver that meets state requirements. The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires schools to enroll new students who are homeless even if their immunization records are missing or unavailable at the time of enrollment. California law requires schools to immediately enroll foster children transferring to their school even if a foster child is unable to produce immunization records normally required for school entry. Once a homeless student or a foster child is enrolled, the **School Liaison for Foster and Homeless Youth** should work with the foster family or school where the student was transferred from to obtain the student's immunization records quickly as possible. Students who have been exposed to a communicable disease for which they have not been immunized may be excluded from school at the discretion of the School.

Beginning January 1, 2016, parents of students in any school, will no longer be allowed to submit a personal beliefs exemption to a currently required vaccine. A personal beliefs exemption on file at school prior to January 1, 2016 will continue to be valid until the student enters the next grade span at kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade.

### Mandated Screenings

Para Los Niños Charter Middle School Parent Handbook  
2018-2019

The following health screenings are conducted during the school year at no cost to parents by credentialed school nurses:

- Vision: Kindergarten, 2nd, 5th, 8th and 10th grade
- Hearing: Kindergarten 2nd, 5th, 8th and 10th grade

All screenings are mandated by law unless they violate the personal beliefs of the family. Families may submit a written statement regarding this (personal belief) to the school office.

All girls in 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys in 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be screened for possible scoliosis (unnatural curvature of the spine). Parents/guardians will be sent a notification/waiver form before screenings are administered and will be notified of any findings as a result of the mandated screening tests that require further attention.

### **Injuries, Communicable Diseases, and Medical Conditions**

Children who arrive to school ill or with an injury are subject to be examined by the office staff or school nurse when on site. Children, who are injured or become ill during school hours are sent to the health office for first aid. The office staff or nurse (when on site) can only administer soap, water, ice and bandages for injuries or illnesses. If an injury or illness is deemed to be serious and/or endangering to student's health and well-being, parents will be called to pick up the child within one (1) hour as these conditions may require to be monitored by a parent and/or physician. Such situations include:

- vomiting
- open wounds
- contusions
- diarrhea
- acute coughing or sneezing
- extreme muscle pain or nose bleeding
- redness in eye(s)
- fever of 100° F or higher.

If a child is sent home due to a high fever, diarrhea or vomiting, he/she may not return to school until 24 hours have passed without the condition.

PLN Middle School will call 911 if school staff determine medical attention is required.

If a student sustains an injury that requires stitches, a cast, crutches, leg brace, or neck brace a medical/doctor note stating that the student is cleared to return to school will be required. This note should state any restrictions that the student may have (e.g. unable to use stairs, participate in physical education activity, etc.) and the student may only return on the date stated on the medical note. A student attending school in a wheelchair must inform the school office and/or school nurse prior to returning to school so proper accommodations can be made. Home remedies or cultural specialists (e.g., "sobador") are not an acceptable form of treatment/clearance.

If your child has a known pre-existing medical condition (e.g., allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.), please notify the office immediately. Notify the office if there are any special instructions or procedures for the care of your child if a problem should arise. Children with short-term health problems that prevent them from attending school should make arrangements with the school for a temporary plan to continue the student's education while at home.

Per state regulations, school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools are required to provide emergency auto-injectors (epi-pens) to school nurses and trained personnel and authorizes them to use epi-pens to provide emergency medical aid to persons suffering or reasonably believed to be suffering from a life-threatening severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

If your child contracts any of the following diseases, please notify us immediately. We will also notify you of any communicable diseases that your child may have been exposed.

Symptoms of Some Communicable Diseases (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016)

<b><u>Disease</u></b>	<b><u>Symptoms</u></b>	<b><u>Incubation Period</u></b>
•Chicken pox	Mild fever, small raised pimples	14-16 days
•Measles	Fever, cough, rash, red eyes	10-12 days
•Rubella	Fever, rash	12-23 days

•Mumps	Fever, neck swelling below ears	16-18 days
•Polio	Fever, sore throat, rash	3-6 days
•Scarlet Fever	Fever, sore throat, rash	24-48 hours
•Scabies	Itching of skin, rash	1-2 months
•Bacterial Meningitis	Fever, headache, vomiting, stiff neck	1-4 days

Students may be excluded for head lice at the end of the school day, but readmitted after appropriate treatment is instituted. The presence of nits alone (after treatment) is not an absolute indication for exclusion and children should not be absent from school for extended periods of time due to this treatable condition. An alert will be sent home to notify other parents about the finding, and PLN staff will not disclose the source.

## **Information Regarding Type 2 Diabetes**

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes in adults

- Until a few years ago, type 2 diabetes was rare in children, but it is becoming more common, especially for overweight teens.
- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in three American children born after 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in his or her lifetime.

Type 2 diabetes affects the way the body is able to use sugar (glucose) for energy.

- The body turns the carbohydrates in food into glucose, the basic fuel for the body's cells.
- The pancreas makes insulin, a hormone that moves glucose from the blood to the cells.
- In type 2 diabetes, the body's cells resist the effects of insulin, and blood glucose levels rise.
- Over time, glucose reaches dangerously high levels in the blood, which is called hyperglycemia.
- Hyperglycemia can lead to health problems like heart disease, blindness, and kidney failure.

### **Risk Factors Associated with Type 2 Diabetes**

It is recommended that students displaying or possibly experiencing the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes be screened (tested) for the disease.

#### **Risk Factors**

Researchers do not completely understand why some people develop type 2 diabetes and others do not; however, the following risk factors are associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes in children:

- Being overweight. The single greatest risk factor for type 2 diabetes in children is excess weight. In the U.S., almost one out of every five children is overweight. The chances are more than double that an overweight child will develop diabetes.
- Family history of diabetes. Many affected children and youth have at least one parent with diabetes or have a significant family history of the disease.
- Inactivity. Being inactive further reduces the body's ability to respond to insulin.
- Specific racial/ethnic groups. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, or Asian/Pacific Islanders are more prone than other ethnic groups to develop type 2 diabetes.
- Puberty. Young people in puberty are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than younger children, probably because of normal rises in hormone levels that can cause insulin resistance during this stage of rapid growth and physical development

### **Warning Signs and Symptoms Associated with Type 2 Diabetes**

Warning signs and symptoms of type 2 diabetes in children develop slowly, and initially there may be no symptoms. However, not everyone with insulin resistance or type 2 diabetes develops these warning signs, and not everyone who has these symptoms necessarily has type 2 diabetes

- Increased hunger, even after eating
- Unexplained weight loss
- Increased thirst, dry mouth, and frequent urination
- Feeling very tired
- Blurred vision
- Slow healing of sores or cuts
- Dark velvety or ridged patches of skin, especially on the back of the neck or under the arms

- Irregular periods, no periods, and/or excess facial and body hair growth in girls
- High blood pressure or abnormal blood fats levels

### **Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Methods and Treatments**

Healthy lifestyle choices can help prevent and treat type 2 diabetes. Even with a family history of diabetes, eating healthy foods in the correct amounts and exercising regularly can help children achieve or maintain a normal weight and normal blood glucose levels.

- Eat healthy foods. Make wise food choices. Eat foods low in fat and calories.
- Get more physical activity. Increase physical activity to at least 60 minutes every day.\
- Take medication. If diet and exercise are not enough to control the disease, it may be necessary to treat type 2 diabetes with medication.

The first step in treating type 2 diabetes is to visit a doctor. A doctor can determine if a child is overweight based on the child's age, weight, and height. A doctor can also request tests of a child's blood glucose to see if the child has diabetes or pre-diabetes (a condition which may lead to type 2 diabetes).

### **Types of Diabetes Screening Tests That Are Available**

- Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test. A blood test measures the average blood sugar level over two to three months. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- Random (non-fasting) blood sugar test. A blood sample is taken at a random time. A random blood sugar level of 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or higher suggests diabetes. This test must be confirmed with a fasting blood glucose test.
- Fasting blood sugar test. A blood sample is taken after an overnight fast. A fasting blood sugar level less than 100 mg/dL is normal. A level of 100 to 125 mg/dL is considered pre-diabetes. A level of 126 mg/dL or higher on two separate tests indicates diabetes.
- Oral glucose tolerance test. A test measuring the fasting blood sugar level after an overnight fast with periodic testing for the next several hours after drinking a sugary liquid. A reading of more than 200 mg/dL after two hours indicates diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes in children is a preventable/treatable disease and the guidance provided in this information sheet is intended to raise awareness about this disease. Contact your student's school nurse, school administrator, or health care provider if you have questions. For more information about Type 2 diabetes and to find this information in alternate languages, visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/type2diabetes.asp>.

### **Physical Fitness Test**

State law require schools to administer the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) annually to all students in grades five and seven. The state-designated PFT is the FITNESSGRAM. It is a set of tests designed to evaluate health related fitness and to assist students in establishing lifetime habits of regular physical health. Teachers are responsible for preparing students to do their best on the test by providing instruction and appropriate practice in the skills and abilities that are tested. Students are tested between February and May. Parents should see that their children participate in a regular program of physical activity and nutrition.

The complete test measures student performance in the following areas:

1. Aerobic capacity
2. Body composition
3. Muscular strength, endurance and flexibility

## **Medications**

If a student requires medication during school hours, a parent or guardian must have the student's doctor complete a "Request for Medication to be taken during School Hours" form that can be obtained in the school office. School staff will only administer medicine when this form has been completed and if the medicine has been prescribed by a physician and has a prescription label with matching directions and batch information on the bottle.

Students who need to keep medicine on campus in case of an emergency will need a doctor's note and the "Request for Medication to be taken during School Hours." All medication is stored in the health office and is inaccessible to children at all times. Renew this request by filling out a renewal form, UNLESS the type of medication or dosage has changed

## Prohibition against Firearms, Weapons, and Other Dangerous Objects

PLN Middle School Center maintains a Zero Tolerance Policy for any type of dangerous object. Therefore, school administrators will take immediate appropriate action against any student found in possession of a dangerous object. Dangerous objects include, but are not limited to, knives (including Swiss Army-style knives, X-acto knives, utility knives), razor blades, martial arts combat equipment, clubs, brass knuckles, explosives, and any type of firearm or BB/Pellet gun (including replica guns). Any student who inadvertently brings an object onto campus that is prohibited should turn it in to a teacher or administrator immediately; doing so will in most cases avoid disciplinary consequences. Pursuant to the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act, and in accordance with California law, any student found in possession of a firearm shall be recommended for expulsion. Possession includes, but is not limited to, on a student's person, in a student's lockers, in a pocket of a jacket not being currently worn, or kept in purses, backpacks, totes or automobiles. Students expelled for gun possession shall be expelled for the term of one calendar year.

## Overall Welfare

Para Los Niños takes all possible precautions for safeguarding children and youth in our care against bodily harm, illness, injury or any other form of maltreatment. In all suspected cases of child abuse, Para Los Niños and its employees are **mandated** by the State of California and agency policy to file a report with the proper authorities. School employees may not investigate to confirm suspicion.

Parents and guardians of students also have a right to file a complaint against a school employee or other person that they suspect has engaged in abuse of a child at a school site. Complaints may be filed with the local law enforcement agency; you may also notify the school of an incident by contacting the Superintendent of Para Los Niños Schools.

Child abuse does not include an injury caused by any force that is reasonable and necessary for a person employed by or engaged in a school:

1. To stop a disturbance threatening physical injury to people or damage to property;
2. For purposes of self-defense;
3. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within control of a student;
4. To exercise the degree of control reasonably necessary to maintain order, protect property, protect the health and safety of pupils, and maintain proper and appropriate conditions conducive to learning.

## Emergency Preparedness

We recognize that despite our best efforts to create a campus that is safe and secure for our students, there are potential situations outside of our control which may require emergency procedures. While we hope that we will never encounter such a situation, we are fully prepared should we need to evacuate or lock-down our campus. PLN Middle School is equipped with emergency supplies for a 72 hour period should students and staff be required to remain on campus. For a full description of PLN CMS emergency procedures please see the complete PLN – CMS Safety Plan, which is available upon request in the main office and readily available online at [www.paralosninos.org](http://www.paralosninos.org).

### **Evacuation Plan**

All PLN Middle School staff and students are trained on the procedures for evacuating the school. An evacuation will occur when school administration or emergency service providers have determined that it is unsafe for people to occupy our buildings. Examples of situations in which evacuation will occur include fire or earthquake. Evacuations will be orderly and have as their first priority the safety of all *people* on our campus. Students and staff must leave behind all non-emergency items when evacuating campus.

In many situations, students will be able to safely return to campus following an emergency evacuation once the campus has been deemed safe for occupation. In the event that students cannot safely return to campus, parents will be notified via a phone tree that they must pick-up their child. Parents should not enter an evacuated building. Students will only be released from the designated pick-up point to an adult listed on their emergency release form with a photo I.D. To update or complete an emergency release form, please see the front office. **Please do not call the campus in the event of an emergency.** Office personnel will be evacuated and unable to answer phone lines.

### **Lock-Down Plan**

All PLN Middle School staff and students are trained on the procedures for locking-down the school. Lock-downs will be orderly and have as their first priority the safety of all *people* on our campus. A lock-down will occur when school administration or emergency service providers have determined that it is unsafe for people to be moving around our building. Examples of situations in which lock-downs will occur include the presence of strangers on campus or riots on or off campus.

In the event of a lock-down, all parents will be notified of procedures via a phone tree. **Please do not call the campus while the campus is on lock-down.** We will need access to all our phone lines and will need to focus our attention to resolving the circumstances that have led to the lock-down. Parents should not enter a building that is on lock-down as it will compromise their own safety and the safety of those on campus.

## Home/School Communication

### One Call Now School Notification System

We use One Call Now to communicate with families and staff, regarding emergency situations, school events and other important issues that may impact you and your child. The One Call Now service allows us to send personalized voice messages to your home phone or cell phone, and contact you through email and via text messaging. Parents and guardians are responsible for the cost of text messages if selected as a means of communication. We are able to reach everyone in the school within minutes based on One Call Now capabilities, which improves school communication with families and staff. Keeping parents more informed and involved leads to higher student achievement and student safety. Please help us by ensuring we have your current contact information by providing all phone numbers in which you can be reached through voice and text and providing your email address. This can be done at time of enrollment and throughout the school year by visiting the office and updating your child's emergency form. In order to receive text messages, you must opt-in for text by texting the word ALERT to 22300. Please make sure that you are opting in with a phone number you provided on your child's emergency form. The number(s) you provide is where you are most likely to be reached during school hours. This number should be for the parent or legal guardian.