



Cottonwood Valley Charter School

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Cottonwood Valley Charter School

Student - Parent Handbook

2015-2016

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Cottonwood Valley Charter School-a free public K-8 charter school in Socorro, New Mexico.

We hope that parents and students will read this handbook together, discuss it among themselves, and consult it as a reference. Not every contingency has been covered; policies and procedures may need to be changed from time to time to fit new circumstances. Nonetheless, it provides guidelines meant to produce a community in which we can grow and learn together. If you have questions about school policies, first contact the school Administrator. If your concerns remain unresolved, please contact a member of the Governing Council.

Admission

Admission is by lottery except for those students who are already in attendance, then their siblings, and then children of employees. Please refer to the Enrollment Policy for details. There are no registration fees or tuition and all New Mexico residents are eligible to apply for admission. CVCS does not discriminate in any way on the basis of race, disability, creed, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special services.

Curriculum

The academic program at CVCS is based on the Core Knowledge Sequence, a set of content guidelines in language arts, history, mathematics, science, and the fine arts developed by the Core Knowledge Foundation. The Core Knowledge Sequence comprises about half of the school's curriculum, allowing teachers the time and flexibility to meet the state curriculum requirements as specified in the NM Standards and Benchmarks and the Common Core State Standards.

Family/School Compact

It is the school's philosophy that full parental participation in the education of their children is vital to the educational success of their children. Each family and student is asked to sign the CVCS Family/School Compact annually. This compact describes expectations for the family, the student, and the school.

Governance

CVCS is governed by a Governing Council and it wants you to be involved in this school. In accordance with its Bylaws adopted on February 11th, 2015 the Governing Council comprises five parents, one member who is either parent or a community member, and one community member. The school Administrator and a teacher representative (chosen by the teaching staff) serve as non-voting members of the council. Members serve staggered terms and are elected by the parents of students enrolled in the school and the registered voters of the Socorro Consolidated School District. Governing Council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm and are conducted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. The public is welcome to attend. Copies of the Governing Council by-laws and monthly minutes are filed in the school office and available on the school website.

Governing Council Committees

In addition to serving on the Governing Council, parents and community members are invited to ask the Administrator or any Council member about joining the various standing and ad-hoc committees that help draft policies, ensure the school is following applicable laws, and plan the direction for the school's future. These committees, which are chaired by members of the Governing Council, are:

- Accountability/Advisory
- Budget/Fundraising
- Discipline/Safety
- Facilities
- Special Education/Gifted
- Technology

Mission Statement

CVCS offers a rigorous academic program designed to meet the individual needs of each student. CVCS will promote leadership, civic responsibility, and environmental awareness. Through community engagement, CVCS students will understand their effects on the world around them. The School offers the community a parent-driven public school choice in which teachers, students, and parents are partners.

The complete charter is available on our website (www.cottonwoodvalley.org). It includes organizational and student achievement goals which reflect the CVCS mission statement.

Personal Learning Plans

Every student at CVCS has a Personal Learning Plan (PLP). This is a written document, developed and signed by the student, parent(s)/guardian(s) and teacher(s), specifying the student's academic goals for the year. A review of the PLP is conducted at least annually or more often if recommended by staff or requested by the student and/or parent(s)/guardians(s). Students with identified special needs will receive an Individual Education Plan (IEP) as required by state and federal regulations.

School History

Over the years a group of parents met periodically to discuss alternative ways to educate children. They dreamed of a school where children's individual needs would be addressed; where children would be grouped according to academic level as well as age; where children would be encouraged to be curious and to explore the world; where teachers and parents would be empowered and would actually run the school; where academic standards would be high; where children with special needs would be fully included in the academic program; where each child would benefit from a personal learning plan.

In the spring of 1999 the New Mexico Legislature passed the Charter Schools Act and a group of parents began the process of establishing a new charter school in Socorro. It took two and a half years of hard work before CVCS opened in August 2001 with 112 students in grades K-6. CVCS now serves 170 students in grades K-8 on a campus on Neel Avenue near New Mexico Tech and several residential neighborhoods.

Volunteers

It is the school's philosophy that full parental participation in the education of their children is vital to the educational success of their children. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and for other school-related activities. Teachers are expected to encourage and welcome parent participation in the school.

INFORMATION, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to conduct themselves honestly and with integrity in their work. All forms of cheating and plagiarism are prohibited. Violators will be referred to the Administrator who will have a conference with the child and his/her parents to discuss the severity of such an offense and will be disciplined on a case-by-case basis depending on the seriousness of the violation, prior violations, and other factors.

Admission Policy

CVCS is a free, public school. Admission to CVCS is by lottery except for those students who are already in attendance. Siblings of enrolled students and children of staff must also go through the lottery but will be given priority over other new students. There are no registration fees or tuition charged and all New Mexico residents are eligible to apply for admission. Students entering kindergarten must have reached their fifth birthday before September 1st. All kindergarten students must provide a birth certificate and immunization record before the first day of school. CVCS does not discriminate in any way on the basis of race, disability, creed, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special services. The enrollment policy is available in the school's office and on the website.

Attendance/Tardy Policy

Attendance

Consistent, punctual attendance is considered by Cottonwood Valley Charter School to be an essential component of good education. Absences adversely affect the academic performance of children and also adversely affect the ranking of our school by the Public Education Department.

For safety reasons, parents should call the school office before 8:30 am (838-2026) if their child will be absent from school. Teachers check attendance each morning and if a student is absent and there has been no phone call, the school may attempt to contact parents.

A. Excused Absences

An excused absence is an absence due to illness, injury, or death in the family, medical appointments, bad weather, and religious holidays. Parents should notify the office by phone before 8:30 am on the morning of an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to ask teachers for missed assignments and to complete all make-up work in a reasonable amount of time.

B. Official Absences

An excuse from a doctor, dentist, or other health provider allows the student to receive an official absence, which does not count against the school's attendance measures, but does count on the child's attendance record as reported on the school report card. Please provide the office with the official note from the provider.

C. Planned Absences

If a student has a unique educational opportunity and needs to miss school, a parent/guardian shall submit a request with educational objectives included to the Administrator for approval **prior** to taking days off.

D. Unexcused Absences

Any absence that does not meet the criteria for an excused absence is considered to be an unexcused absence. An absence not followed by a written note when a student returns to school is also considered an unexcused absence. When an absence is unexcused, teachers are not required to provide the student with the assignments that were missed or to give credit for incomplete assignments.

E. Excessive Unexcused Absences, Per Year

CVCS follows the truancy program adopted by the Socorro Consolidated Schools. A copy of the entire policy is available in the school office. The main points are summarized here.

- After a child has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences a notice will be sent by certified mail to the child's parents or guardians notifying them of their child's unexcused absences. The Administrator will make an appointment to meet with the parents or guardians to discuss the situation.
- After a child has accumulated seven (7) unexcused absences a notice will be sent by certified letter to the parents or guardians and the case will be referred to the Juvenile Probation Office.
- After a child has accumulated ten (10) unexcused absences a notice will be sent by certified mail to the child's parents or guardians, and the case will be referred to the District Attorney's office for prosecution of the parents for violation of the Compulsory School Attendance Law 22-12-2 NMSA.

Tardy Policy

All students must be **on time (8:00)** for school. Students arriving late often miss important beginning-of-the-day information that is relevant to their education and is disruptive. Arriving on time is aligned with our HOWL agreement of mutual respect as we expect our students to respect their school, their teachers and their learning. Students who are not in the assembly at 8:00 am will be considered tardy. If the assembly is over, tardy students must report to the office for a tardy slip. All tardies are recorded and are reported on progress reports and on the final report card.

A. First and Second Tardies

Student receives a warning and a reminder about the expectations to be at school, on time, every day, ready to learn.

B. Third, Fourth and Fifth tardies

Student will lose recess privileges and student will need to take a copy of the absence/tardy policy home. The policy must be returned to the teacher with a parent signature the following day.

C. Sixth Tardy

Student will lose recess privilege and a Teacher/Parent conference will be held.

D. Seventh Tardy

Student will lose recess privilege and is considered truant and CYFD may be called.

Bicycles, Scooters & Skateboards

Students who ride bicycles or scooters to school are expected to wear protective helmets. Bicycles and scooters must be walked when on campus unless riding on the bike path, and are to be locked up during

the day in the designated racks by the front office. The use of skateboards and scooters will not be permitted on school grounds. Students who ride scooters or skateboards to school should park them in the bicycle parking area.

Busing and Transportation

Field trip transportation by bus is a privilege and an extension of the school day. Your child's safety on the bus is essential. To guarantee your child's safety, the following bus rules apply to all students riding the bus to and from schools:

- Follow the directions of the bus driver the first time they are given.
- Keep all parts of your body and objects inside the bus.
- Remain seated in your assigned seat at all times.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- No fighting, spitting or cussing at any time.
- No eating or drinking.

Busing for CVCS students is provided by the Socorro Consolidated Schools using the district's school buses and established routes. If you have questions about bus routes, please call Socorro Consolidated Schools Bus Director Annabel Romero at 838-3117.

Cell Phones & Electronic Devices

Cell phones are allowed on campus, but must not be visible and cannot be used during the school day. Cell phones or MP3 players that are visible during the school day will be held in the office until after school is dismissed. Students may pick it up after the first incident. After that, parents will be required to pick up electronics from the school office. A student may use a cell phone at the discretion of authorized personnel while on field trips or while attending school functions sponsored or authorized by the school.

Child Custody Policy

The names of each child's legal guardian(s) must be on record at the school and only those persons authorized by these records are allowed to make decisions regarding that child. This includes transporting the child. If one of the student's parents has a court order stating he/she cannot have contact with his/her child, CVCS must have a copy of all legal documents in order to deny a parent rights to the child.

Civility Code

All visitors (including parents) on the CVCS campus are expected to follow the discipline policies of the school. Anyone who disrupts school activities, threatens students or school employees, damages school property, or uses loud and offensive language will be asked to leave the campus. If a disruptive visitor refuses to leave, law enforcement will be notified.

Community Service

CVCS encourages children to participate in community service. Throughout the year, we will offer opportunities for students and families to participate in activities that will contribute to the local and world community.

Daily Schedule & Hours of Operation

The school day begins at 8:00 and ends at 2:40 pm. The playground is supervised from 7:30 to 8:00 in the

morning, during lunch and recess. From 2:40 to 3:00, supervision is provided at West Place Park for Pick-ups and students in the Bus Zone area.

CVCS is not responsible for children who come to school before 7:30 am. **All students remaining on school grounds after 3:00 will be expected to wait in the library** until a parent picks them up. The student will attempt to call the parent to find out what the delay may be, and if a parent is not located, the CVCS staff will call the student's emergency numbers to find someone to pick the student up.

Office hours are from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Individual class schedules are either posted on the school website at cottonwoodvalley.org or are available from classroom teachers.

The Cottonwood Valley Charter School recognizes the importance of a safe learning environment. In accordance with the school's philosophy, CVCS strives to teach students acceptable behavior. It is the intent of the school to safeguard the dignity of each individual and to give teachers and students a pleasant working environment. Each classroom has its own discipline policy developed by the teacher and students in that classroom. A school-wide discipline policy has been developed by parents, teachers, and the administration and is used to determine the outcome for unacceptable behavior once it has surpassed classroom management. A copy of this policy can be found in the school office.

In discipline cases where parents need to be involved, the school will call the parent. If a parent or guardian has difficulty understanding a discipline procedure he/she should make an appointment to discuss the situation with the student's teacher. If that does not adequately resolve the problem, an appointment should be made to meet with the administrator.

All students, parents, faculty, staff, visitors, and Governing Council members shall abide by the school's discipline policies.

Discipline

A. Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying behavior by any student in the Cottonwood Valley Charter School is strictly prohibited and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Bullying means any aggressive behavior that is intentional, repeated and pervasive that is intended to cause distress or harm to another student in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at school sanctioned events. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: hitting or punching (physical); teasing, belittling or name calling (verbal); intimidation through gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal); and sending insulting or derogatory comments through email or text messages (electronic). Bullying has the effect of causing or creating fear of physical harm or damage to property and can include insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.

Students will participate in an Anti-Bullying Program at the beginning of every school year. Anti-Bullying will also be included as part of the health education content standards.

Cottonwood Valley staff will teach students to proactive life skills which builds positive relationships and prevents victimization.

Staff will be reminded at the beginning of each school year about the Anti-Bullying Policy and their reporting responsibilities regarding bullying behavior. A copy of the policy will be disseminated annually.

Students and parents may file complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior to school personnel and

Administrators. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed.

B. Bullying

As described in the anti-bullying policy, bullying behavior by any student in the Cottonwood Valley Charter School is strictly prohibited and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Bullying means any aggressive behavior that is intentional, repeated, and pervasive that is intended to cause distress or harm to another student in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at a school sanctioned event. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: hitting or punching (physical); teasing, belittling or name calling (verbal), deliberate exclusion; or derogatory comments through email or text messages (electronic). Bullying has the effect of causing or creating fear of physical harm or damage to property and can include insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.

Reporting Intimidation, Harassment, or Bullying Behavior:

1. Any student who believes s/he has been the victim of harassment, intimidation, bullying or hazing by a student or school personnel, or any person with knowledge or belief of such conduct that may constitute harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing toward a student should immediately report the alleged acts.
2. The report may be made to any staff member. The staff member will assist the student in reporting to the principal or the principal's designee.
3. Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying are required to promptly notify designated staff.
4. The administrator is required to accept and investigate all reports of bullying and to notify the parent or guardian of a student who commits a verified bullying act. The administrator should make every effort to inform parents/guardians prior to an investigation.
5. The administrator and staff should make every effort to maintain the anonymity of anyone reporting a bullying incident. Retaliation against an individual who reports a bullying complaint or cooperates in a bullying investigation is prohibited.
6. The right to confidentiality, of all involved parties, shall be preserved consistent with applicable laws.
7. Parents may file a report using the CCI (*Concerns, Complaint, or Inquiry*) Form available in the front office. A copy of either form will be submitted to the Safe Schools Coordinator. Parents may fill out a *concerns, complaint or inquiry* and submit it to the administrator.
8. Investigating Bullying Behavior
 - a. The administrator will appropriately and promptly investigate all reports of bullying. The administrator will consider the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct, the student's history and the context of the incident.
 - b. The investigation will include personal interviews with all parties involved and others who may have knowledge of the incident. The administrator may use other methods or documents deemed relevant to the investigation.

- c. A written report of the investigation should be completed as soon as possible.

Consequences for Bullying

1. Verified acts of bullying will result in intervention by the administrator that is intended to ensure that the rules against bullying behavior are enforced.
2. Bullying can take many forms and can vary in levels of seriousness, and what impact it has on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one response to bullying. Disciplinary action (detention, in and out-of-school suspension, loss of privileges, or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the administrator.
3. False charges will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

C. School Property

Students are expected to respect the property of the school. The destruction or defacing of school property is not allowed and will be handled in accordance with state law. Students may face criminal and/or civil damages for property they have damaged or lost. Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books checked out to them. If a book is lost or damaged, the student is expected to pay full replacement value plus a replacement fee. Students are encouraged to care for all CVCS books, keeping them away from water at all times.

D. Teacher/Parent Communication Folders

Children in grades K-5 will bring home teacher/parent communication folders each day. Grades 6-8 will use an agenda book for daily communication between teachers and families. The school will provide one folder for each student, but families will be expected to pay for replacements: \$5.00 for a folder or \$10.00 for an agenda.

E. Personal Property

Students are required to respect the property of others.

F. Other Rules of Conduct

- Children may not leave the School grounds without adult supervision that has been approved by school authorities.
- All students must readily identify themselves to, and cooperate with, school personnel.
- Lying to school personnel is not tolerated and will be addressed with discipline if encountered.
- Throwing rocks or other dangerous objects is not tolerated.
- No pornography or sexually explicit material is allowed on school grounds. Any such material will be confiscated and turned over to a parent/guardian.

Dress Code Policy

Wearing appropriate clothing to school promotes a positive, productive learning environment. Students are expected to follow the Dress Code Policy. The first time a student comes to school wearing improper clothing he/she will be provided with appropriate clothes to wear for the day and a note will be sent home to the parents. Subsequent violations of the dress policy will result in a phone call to parents requiring them to bring appropriate school clothes to school. Continued violations may result in expulsion from

CVCS. We expect students and parents to take the dress policy seriously. CVCS has chosen to enact a school dress policy, and if a family chooses to attend CVCS, they choose to abide by these rules.

General guidelines for acceptable school attire:

- Shirts, blouses, sweaters, or dresses with collars and sleeves.
- Knit shirts with turtleneck collars and sleeves.
- Jumpers, skirts, and skorts.
- Pants and shorts of a single solid color or plaid.
- Tights and leggings worn with tunic length tops no shorter than fingertips when arms are held straight down.
- Walking shoes (no flip-flops, hee-lies, high heels, untied shoe laces).

The following clothing and accessories are not appropriate school attire:

- Athletic clothing even for PE (t-shirts, sweat shirts and pants, spandex, fleece, and knit pants).
- Clothing with holes, rips, ragged edges, etc.
- Clothing with large logos or text (small logos are acceptable).
- Shorts, skirts, skorts, dresses, and jumpers shorter than fingertips when arms are held straight down.
- Pants with low-hanging crotches, or those worn below the hip bones.
- Revealing or see-through clothing.
- Visible undergarments.
- Hats, caps, or bandanas worn indoors except for religious or medical reasons.
- Spiked jewelry, chains, or dangling earrings longer than 1.5 inches.
- Excessive piercing or tattoos.

Drop-off, Pick-up, and Parking Policy

The drive entrance to the parking lot off Neel has a yellow curb, which designates no parking. When dropping off or picking up your children, use the drop off turnaround on West Place, by the park. Please **DO NOT** drop off your children on Western Avenue, at the bus lane on Neel Street, or in the school parking lot. If the lot at CVCS is full, please park in the empty lot across the arroyo and walk to campus using the bridge. We encourage children and staff to walk or ride bicycles to school!

Drugs, Alcohol, and Weapons Policy

Illegal drugs, alcohol and weapons are not allowed on school grounds. Offenses will be handled in conjunction with law enforcement agencies.

Early Release Days (Wednesdays, 12:15 dismissal)

CVCS has the same early release days as the Socorro Consolidated School. Please see the calendar insert in the appendices of this handbook for exact days. The early release afternoons are used for school-wide parent teacher conferences or for professional staff development.

Emergency Drills & Campus Evacuations

In emergency situations, students may be required to evacuate their classrooms and/or the campus. Drills are provided throughout the school year in order to train students on what to do during fire alarms, school lockdowns, or other emergencies.

Enrollment Policy

Students are admitted to CVCS based on the following priorities:

1. Children who are currently attending CVCS.

Children who are current students at Cottonwood Valley and who have remained in attendance do not have to participate in any further lotteries, and will be enrolled in CVCS for the following academic year as long as their parents return the "Intent to Re-enroll" form, distributed to all students each spring, by the deadline given.

2. Siblings of those students attending who have completed an application form. These children are granted Sibling Preference in accordance with New Mexico State Law (22-8B-4.1. Charter schools' enrollment procedures).

The intent of the law is to keep families together. Once a child attends their first day at CVCS, the siblings of that child become eligible for Sibling Preference.

Sibling by definition is a:

- A. Biological/adoptive sibling
- B. Stepsibling residing in the same household. Stepsiblings living in different households are not considered for a sibling preference
- C. Foster children residing within the same household. Foster Parents must provide documentation showing they have legal guardianship

An 8th grade student or alumnus of the school with a sibling applying for the following year does not qualify for sibling preference.

3. Children of CVCS employees.

4. Children on the waiting list from the previous year.

5. All other children must go through the lottery process.

LOTTERY PROCESS

Enrollment for all other vacancies shall be determined by lottery. The first lottery is held in the spring preceding the academic year of enrollment. Additional lotteries are held throughout the summer and school year as needed. A notice will be placed in the newspaper to announce the spring lottery. Said notice shall include the closing date and time of the lottery; the date, time and location of the lottery drawing; and contact information for interested parents. This same information about the lottery will be placed on the web site.

Interested parents must fill out an enrollment form for each child they wish to register. The enrollment form must be received in the office of CVCS by the designated closing date and time for inclusion in the lottery. Forms can be hand-delivered, faxed or mailed, and must contain the signature of the parent/guardian. No e-mailed forms may be accepted, unless they are scanned attachments and contain the signature of the parent/guardian.

Attendance at the lottery is not required, though parents are welcome to attend. Names will be drawn as described in the charter to fill available spaces. Children whose names are drawn will be allowed to attend school provided they comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Children will be enrolled in a class or placed on the waiting list according to the order that names are drawn. The waiting list will stand until the child is placed or the parents remove the child from the waiting list.

Because CVCS has a maximum enrollment of 170 students despite a maximum classroom size that can accommodate 180 students, a method of filling openings is required. Children will be placed from the waiting list via the following methods:

For grades Kindergarten through 5th:

The child at the top of the waiting list for the grade with the most recent opening will be given the opportunity to enroll. If the opening is declined, the next child on the waiting list in the same grade will be given the opportunity to enroll. If that grade's waiting list is exhausted, the waiting list for the next lowest grade will be cycled through in the same manner and this process will be repeated until the opening is filled.

For grades 6th through 8th:

Openings will be filled via selection of students on the waiting list at the discretion of the Administrator. The intent of this method is to help ensure a full kindergarten class in the following school year, if necessary.

Children who are admitted to CVCS are expected to attend the first day of school. If a child is offered a space during the first two weeks of school, that child is expected to attend CVCS the following school day. If a student has an excusable absence on the day that is to be their first day at CVCS, parents must notify the office, otherwise that child's name will be removed from the enrollment list and the space will be given to the next person on the waiting list.

At all other times during the school year, when a child is offered a space at CVCS, parents have 3 school days to accept and have their child attend CVCS. If parents do not notify the school of acceptance within three days and/or do not notify the office of an excusable absence during this period that child's name will be removed from the enrollment list and the space will be given to the next person on the waiting list.

If an opening occurs within five business days prior to the 40th, 80th, and 120th school day, vacancies will be filled via the following method:

Openings will be filled via selection of students on the waiting list at the discretion of the Administrator. The intent is to ensure full enrollment on days where enrollment is used to calculate school funding.

CVCS will not enroll any new student after the 120th day of the school year.

Any child who withdraws from CVCS and who wishes to re-enroll at CVCS in the future will be required to participate in the lottery drawing process. Previous enrollment that has been interrupted by a withdrawal from CVCS does not give priority placement to a child or his/her sibling(s) in the lottery process.

WAITING LIST INFORMATION

If info on the waiting list is requested, CVCS shall give the parent or guardian their child's place on that grade's waiting list. If the actual list is requested via a written request, CVCS shall provide a list, with

redacted personal information, per the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act.

Field Trips and Leaving Campus

During the school year, students will have opportunities to go on field trips. Signed permission forms are required and all school rules apply while on field trips. Parents will be given adequate notice of upcoming field trips and parents/guardians who do not want their child to participate should request an excused absence from the school Administrator; otherwise a student's absence will be deemed to be an unexcused absence.

- 1) Adequate supervision must be provided when classes leave campus. A teacher and one other adult must be available at all times for Grades K-2. At least one certified teacher must accompany Grades 3-8.
- 2) When leaving campus, teachers must carry a cell phone and emergency contact information. Teachers will be trained annually on emergency procedures.
- 3) All field trips will be approved by the Administrator in advance. Families will be notified of any field trip that will last more than one hour. Teachers will provide the following information to the school office on the day of the field trip:
 - a) The time they plan to leave campus
 - b) What time they expect to return
 - c) The planned route to their destination
 - d) The number of the cell phone that they are carrying
- 4) Substitute teachers will leave campus with a classroom only if they are accompanied by a Cottonwood teacher or educational assistant, unless they are a certified, long term substitute.
- 5) Every effort will be made to provide students with restroom facilities and access to drinking water when leaving campus. Grades K-2 will have adult supervision when going to a restroom.
- 6) Teachers will provide parents with a copy of the daily/weekly classroom schedule when requested.
- 7) Parents will sign an annual permission slip for all local walking and/or bus trips (within a 20 mile radius of Cottonwood) at the time of enrollment.

Free or Reduced Lunch Form

In order for your child to become eligible for reduced or free lunch, a form must be filled out and approved by the cafeteria manager. If you think you may qualify for free or reduced lunch/breakfast, please fill out a form in the office. All of the information is confidential. The number of children that participate in the free and reduced lunch program helps our school qualify for extra federal funding. If you do not want to participate in the free or reduced breakfast/lunch program and you qualify, it still supports the school's opportunity for additional funding.

Fundraising

All fundraising activities require prior approval. CVCS students are not allowed to raise funds by selling door-to-door. Fundraising money is earned from Smith's Earn-n-Learn, BoxTops, and Labels for

Education, Book Fairs, student pictures, and other activities organized by the CVCS Fundraising Committee.

Homeschooling

Cottonwood Valley Charter School does not allow for the part-time home schooling of its students. The reasons for this policy are as follows:

1. In order for the school to receive full SEG funding from the State, students are required to attend CVCS half-time or more. All students in grades 3-8 who attend half-time or more are required to take the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (NMSBA) and their scores count in determining the school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). If CVCS is held accountable for these student's scores these students should be taught by CVCS teachers.
2. Part-time home schooling is generally disruptive to the functioning of the school with children coming and going at different hours from their classrooms. It would also hamper the cross-curricular integration that teachers are working hard to implement.
3. In situations where there are waiting lists for enrollment, it is unfair to allow students to attend part-time when there are others students who would take advantage of our full-time program.

Homework

The amount of homework assigned is at the discretion of the individual teacher, and will be appropriate to the age and ability of the student. It is the responsibility of the students and their parents to ensure that homework is completed.

Library

Students are encouraged to use the school library and to sign out books for use in the classroom and at home for a one week check-out period. Students are responsible for the replacement costs of books that are lost or damaged. Please help your child be responsible about caring for books. Be especially careful to avoid water damage and carrying CVCS books in a full backpack!

Lost and Found

Mark all of your child's possessions. Items found will be brought to the lost and found area. All items, left in lost and found for an extended period, will be donated to charity.

Lunch Program

Students may bring a bag lunch from home or purchase a hot school lunch tray. CVCS offers a hot lunch program through the Socorro Consolidated Schools. Families whose students are eligible for free or reduced meals should request the appropriate forms from the school office. Parents will be billed through the CVCS office and all checks can be made out to Socorro Consolidated Schools. Advanced payment is appreciated, but not necessary. Students with large unpaid lunch balances may be required to pay for all meals in advance. Due to state health guidelines, **sodas are not allowed at school.** Sodas brought by students will be held in the office until school is over for the day.

Medication and Medical Forms

Medication

School personnel are not allowed to administer medication to students. Office staff will supervise self-administration if the parents have provided a doctor's authorization form with the proper instructions on the dispensing of the medication during school hours. Do not send any medication to school with your child or in their lunch. Send medications with a written note for over the counter medications or any authorization form for prescription medication directly to the office. These drugs will be kept locked up in the office.

Immunizations & Medical Forms

Immunizations are required to enter public schools in every state. All students entering Cottonwood Valley Charter School must present a certificate/shot record showing immunizations against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio oral vaccination, Measles (Rubella, Rubella) and Hepatitis B. Students will not be allowed to attend school until a shot record is produced. Check with your pediatrician, the school or the local health department to determine if your child's immunizations are up-to-date.

All students must provide evidence of immunization as required by state laws and regulations. Records must be on file in the office before a child can be enrolled. The school nurse will communicate with parents about any necessary immunizations students are lacking. Parents are expected to get their children immunized in a prompt manner. Parents may request on exemption from required immunizations by completing the necessary paperwork.

Nurse and Medication Policy

CVCS does not employ a full time nurse. A qualified nurse will review immunization records and screen students for vision and hearing. School personnel are not allowed to administer medication to students. Office staff will supervise self-administration if the parents have provided a doctor's authorization form with the proper instructions on the dispensing of the medication during school hours. Do not send any medication to school with your child or in their lunch. Send medications with a written note for over the counter medications or any authorization form for prescription medication directly to the office. These drugs will be kept locked up in the office.

Parent Communications

If a parent has a concern about an issue that occurred in the classroom, the parent needs to talk with the classroom teacher. If the parent does not feel the issue is resolved after discussing the incident with the classroom teacher, the parent may call the Administrator and set up an appointment to review the issue with the classroom teacher and the Administrator. If the concern still has not been answered to parental satisfaction, contact a CVCS Governing Council Parent Liaison.

CVCS publishes a weekly newsletter which is sent home with the students on Monday afternoon. Please check your child's backpack for this note, since it lists all upcoming events and any changes in the school schedule. This newsletter is also available on the school's web site, cottonwoodvalley.org.

Parent-Teacher Conferences, Personal Learning Plans, and Report Cards

Parent-teacher conferences for all students and their parents or guardians will be held during the first quarter during which Personal Learning Plans will be developed for each student. A second conference will be scheduled for the middle of the third quarter. If parents wish to meet with a teacher at other times they should make arrangements directly with the classroom teacher.

IMPORTANT: Student attendance at the conferences is mandatory.

Personal Learning Plans

Each CVCS student has a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) developed by the student, the parent/guardian, and the teacher. The PLP is a written document that specifies the student's academic goals for the year. Parents and teachers may revise the student's PLP at any time if they feel that the goals and objectives are no longer appropriate. A student with special needs also has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) as required by state and federal law.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times a year at the end of each marking period. After each marking period CVCS has the right to hold a report card until lunch bills are paid and library and/or textbooks are returned or paid for if lost. End-of-the-year report cards are not given out until students have returned all school-books and materials and/or have paid for any items that have been damaged or lost.

Personal Items

Personal educational items are allowed at school. All other items should be left at home. Any personal item brought to the school is the student's responsibility, and the school does not assume responsibility for loss or damage.

Religious Holidays

We encourage the members of the school community to observe their respective religious holidays. Teachers will work with students who miss school because of religious commitments. Please be sure to discuss religious requirements and commitments with your child's teacher.

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

Cottonwood Valley does not allow the use of any tobacco products on campus at any time. No tobacco slogans or materials containing tobacco advertising or mascots are allowed on school grounds. We are a smoke free campus.

Snow Policy and Inclement Weather

We will close or delay school according to the decision of the Socorro Consolidated Schools. Watch channel 4, 7 or 13 or go to their websites for the most up-to-date information regarding school delays. If school is in session, but parents think the roads are too dangerous to travel, their children will not be penalized for missing school, provided the parent calls the school as soon as possible.

Special Education Services

CVCS offers special education services including speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and assistance with specific learning disabilities to students who qualify. CVCS complies with all federal and state laws regarding special education. CVCS also identifies students who qualify for Gifted and Talented services and insures that their needs are met by the development of appropriate educational plans.

Sports

Students in 7th and 8th grade may try out for the interscholastic sports teams at the Socorro District Schools. Please contact the CVCS office or the Socorro Consolidated School Central Office for details.

Student Assistance Team

CVCS has established a Student Assistance Team to support students who are experiencing difficulties that are preventing them from succeeding academically or socially. The SAT addresses problems found through general screening or brought up as concerns by parents, teachers, or other staff. It then suggests interventions that may alleviate or resolve the situation prior to referral for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Teacher Qualifications

As a parent, you have the right to request information on the qualifications of your child's teacher and any paraprofessional that instructs them. If your child is assigned to a teacher that is not "Highly Qualified" as defined by law, or is taught for at least four consecutive weeks by such a teacher, you may also request information by contacting administration.

Telephones

Students are allowed to use the office telephone for emergency reasons only and may not use cell phones on campus during the school day. Visitors are asked to turn their phones off while on school grounds.

Textbooks

As required by Senate Bill 1019 (2007 Instructional Materials Allocation) Cottonwood Valley Charter School will provide student textbooks in all subject areas where textbooks are used. Each student will receive his/her books at the beginning of the year or at the beginning of the course of study and will be responsible for returning them in good condition. CVCS permits students to take books home.

Books that are lost or damaged must be paid for by the student, parent, or guardian before Report Cards or Transcripts will be released.*

Library books are also considered Instructional Materials and their use is subject to the same policies as textbooks.

*Section 22-15-10.B – Public School Code states “a school district, state institution, private school, or adult basic education center may hold the parent, guardian, or student responsible for the loss, damage or destruction of instructional material while the instructional material is in the possession of the student. A school district may hold the grades, diploma, and transcripts of the student responsible for damage or loss of instructional material until the parent, guardian, or student has paid for the damage or loss. When a parent, guardian, or student is unable to pay for the damage or loss the school district shall work with the parent, guardian, or student, to develop an alternative program in lieu of payment. Where a parent or guardian is determined to be indigent according to the guidelines established by the state board, the local school district shall bear the cost.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome on campus and in the classrooms. For safety reasons, **during school hours all visitors must sign in at the office.** Please remember that an unscheduled class visit is not the time for lengthy discussion between parents and teachers as it interferes with the functioning of the class. If parents wish to have a conference with a teacher they should call the office for an appointment, or set up an appointment with the teacher before or after school. All visitors on the CVCS campus are expected to follow school policies. Anyone who disrupts school functions, threatens students or school employees, damages school property, or uses loud and offensive language will be asked to leave the campus immediately.

Web Site

Cottonwood Valley Charter School's web site is a source of information about the school. Please check the site regularly at www.cottonwoodvalley.org.

APPENDICES

These appendices contain additional forms or information related to the Student/Parent Handbook.

Cottonwood Valley Charter School
Discipline Referral Form

Student _____ **Referring Staff:** _____

Grade: K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **Time** _____ **Date** _____

LOCATION of incident:

PROBLEM:

COMMENTS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION (if needed):

ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION/CONSEQUENCES:

- Parent Contact/Conference** **Detention: Lunch/Recess**
 In School Suspension (# of days _____) **Out of School Suspension** (# days _____)
 Other

Referring Staff

Administrator

To Parent: Please sign and return this behavior referral and return to teacher tomorrow morning. Go over it with your child and have him/her sign it, as well. Call if you have any questions: (575) 838-2026.

Parent/Guardian

Student

Parent Comments:

CVCS Teacher/Parent/Student Compact

As a parent/guardian at CVCS, I will:

- Get my child to school, on time (8:00) every day, ready to learn (clean, rested, with materials.)
- Show respect and support for my child, the teachers, and the school.
- Support the school's discipline policy.
- Provide a quiet, well-lit place for study and supervise homework.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Talk with my child each day about his or her school activities.
- Limit my child's screen time (video, tv, etc.)
- Volunteer for at least one hour of school or classroom activity each semester.
- Read with my child for at least 10 minutes each day and let my child see me read.

As a student at CVCS, I will:

- Come to school every day *on time*, prepared with my homework and my supplies.
- Always try to do my best work.
- Be kind and helpful to my classmates.
- Show respect for myself and the CVCS community (people) and property.
- Obey classroom, school, and bus rules.
- Believe that I can and will learn.
- Do the work at home that is assigned to me in school.
- Read every day.
- Talk with my parents each day about my school activities.

As a teacher at CVCS, I will:

- Show respect for each child and for his or her family.
- Make efficient use of learning time.
- Provide a safe and comfortable environment that's conducive to learning.
- Help each child grow to his or her fullest potential.
- Provide meaningful and appropriate homework activities.
- Provide necessary assistance to parents so they can help with assignments.
- Enforce school and classroom rules fairly and consistently.
- Supply students and parents with clear evaluations of progress and achievement.
- Demonstrate professional behavior and a positive attitude.

Now, hand in hand, we will work together to carry out this compact.

_____	_____	Parent signature/date
_____	_____	Student signature/date
_____	_____	Teacher signature/date



Cottonwood Valley Positive Behavior Support Matrix

	Classrooms	Restrooms	Transitions	Lunch	Assembly	Recess/ Playground
<p>H Honor Yourself and Others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on Time! • Be an active listener • Help others when you can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect each other's privacy • Quiet voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet voices so as not to disturb classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use please and thank you • Keep the area clean • Keep hands and feet to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on time! • Respect personal space • Observe proper flag procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be active, include all. • Think and act safely
<p>O Own your Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself • Be proud of how you act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lights must remain on. • Flush • Trash in can • Do your business quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Go directly to your next class. Be on time! • Keep your place in line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up your place • Line up to discard your trash and to return trays • Walk at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand with your class. • After assembly, walk to your classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line up as soon as whistle blows • No tackle games • Stay where you can see teacher and teacher can see you
<p>W Work to be your Best!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to Learn: Have all materials/ homework • Always do your best work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands: 2 squirts of soap, 2 paper towels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold open doors for others • Show kindness to everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try a few bites of all of your food • Be helpful and kind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment properly • Return equipment
<p>L Listen and be Heard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an active listener • Participate as well as listen to other's ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use words to solve conflicts • Follow directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait outside until a teacher sends you in to lunch line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen respectfully to all presenters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use words to solve conflicts • If you need help, ask an adult

Aug 2015						
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Feb 2016						
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Jun 2016						
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Jul 2016						
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Important dates

First and Last Day First Day: August 17, Return from Winter Break: January 5, Last Day: May 26, 2016

Elementary Early Release 12:15 pm: Sept 23, Oct 14, Feb 10

District Early Release 12:15 pm: Sept 2, Oct 28, Nov 18, Feb 24

Personal Learning Plan Conferences September 26 and February 25(School not in session so that Parents and students will attend conferences together)

Report Cards Oct 23, Jan. 15, March 18, May 26

School Holidays: Sept 7 Labor Day, October 12 Columbus Day, Nov. 25-27 Thanksgiving, Dec. 21- Jan 4 Winter Break, Feb. 15 Presidents' Day, March 25-April 1 Spring Break

Concerns, Complaints and Inquiries

Cottonwood Valley Charter School

201 Neel Ave

Socorro, NM 87801

575-838-2026 fax 575-838-2420

Student Name _____

Parent Contact: Name _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

How may we help you? (circle one)

Concern

Complaint

Inquiry

Please give us a description of your need: _____

Signed _____ **Date** _____

We will get back to you as soon as possible. Thanks You!

