



# Anser Charter School

AN EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING SCHOOL

Dear Anser Families,

On behalf of the Anser Board, Family Council and staff, we would like to welcome you to Anser Charter School. Anser Charter School offers a different kind of educational program for our students, one that emphasizes rigorous academics, adventure, strong character and service to others. The curriculum leads to students taking responsibility for their learning through inquiry based, in-depth projects. We are both delighted and honored that you chose our school to play a central role in your child's education. We're excited to get to know each and every one of you and hope you will find this community an inviting and inclusive one. There are numerous ways to get involved and we invite you to find your passion through multiple opportunities extended to our families.

From the beginning, Anser has been committed to hiring highly qualified and effective instructional and administrative staff. They are extremely patient, hardworking, and committed to our students and families. Without these dedicated individuals we would not have the education program we desire for our children. Each year, they prove over and over again their commitment to children, families and their own professional learning.

Family involvement and community partnerships remain fundamental to our success. We are devoted to developing a culture that includes families and community members. We couldn't operate without the families and individuals who contribute many volunteer hours of direct support and service for teachers, students, and various programs. We invite you to get involved and enjoy contributing to the education of our students.

Sincerely,

Michelle Dunstan, Education Director/Principal

Heather Dennis, Organization Director

## **Daily Schedule**

Students may arrive at school no earlier than 7:45 am at which time an adult supervisor is on duty. Students need to dress for the weather as they will remain on the playground and not permitted in the building unless the weather is so severe it indicates otherwise.

### **School Begins:**

7:55 am for JH Students  
8:10 am for K-6 Students

### **Morning Break:**

K, 1, 2/3	10:15-10:30 am
4/5, 6	10:00-10:15 am
Junior High	10:33-10:42 am (Thursday, 10:12-10:32am)

### **Lunch:**

K(pm program only) & 1	11:30-11:45 (lunch) 11:45-12:15 (break)
2/3	11:40-11:55 (lunch) 11:55-12:25 (break)
4/5	11:20-11:35 (lunch) 11:35-12:05 (break)
6	12:00-12:15 (lunch) 12:15-12:45 (break)
Junior High	11:48-12:02 (lunch) 12:02-12:33 (break)

### **Afternoon Break:**

All Grade Level	Varies - Crew Leader Duty
-----------------	---------------------------

### **School Dismissal:**

Kindergarten	11:30 am
Anser Arts for Young Children	3:10 pm
1, 2/3, 4/5, 6	3:10 pm
Junior High	2:55 (Some JH students may be dismissed early for after-school sports programs)

***All students must to be picked up by 3:30***

## **Our Vision**

Anser's vision is to educate the whole child in a collaborative learning community where individuals are inspired to achieve their academic potential, be self-motivated and feel a sense of connection and responsibility to the world.

## **Our Mission**

Anser's mission is to foster learning that imagines a better world and works toward realizing it; set high academic standards; promote creativity, discovery, reflection and balance; embrace diversity; and use developmentally appropriate practices and real-world experiences to educate within a climate of collaboration, community, character, and compassion.

# **Introduction to Anser Charter School**

## **Profile/History**

Anser is a **PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL** whose shared philosophical vision encompasses the whole child approach to education and the building of community within each classroom and the school itself. Anser's collaborative program considers students' academic, emotional, physical, and social needs in a cooperative and supportive environment.

The Independent School District of Boise city approved Anser's petition for a charter on September 28, 1998. Anser opened its doors to 112 students for the first time on September 7, 1999 in a former office building in downtown Boise. The school moved to a former athletic club, in December of the same year and housed 188 students K-8. September 2009, our eleventh year of operation, proved to be a very exciting time for us. We purchased a building at 202 E 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Garden City, our current location, and have increased our enrollment to over 350 students, grades K-8 allowing more families to experience Anser's unique approach to education.

Our name, **Anser**, is Latin for goose. Geese are birds with extraordinary learning capacity, social skills, individuality, stamina, and physical health. The name was selected to reflect the sense of community encompassed by those who are a part of the school. Geese fly in formation and use thrust to fly farther and faster than they ever could by themselves. They rotate positions while flying to increase endurance; and their honking is encouragement to continue the community effort. Finally, geese will stay with an injured bird until it dies or recovers before joining another formation and continuing the journey. These characteristics of a supportive and collaborative community are embodied in the name Anser.

## **Crews**

Crew is the term used to identify classes, staff, or any group working together on a project. The concept places the responsibility on everyone to function as part of the crew carrying their own weight in all endeavors. Reference to 'crew' will be found throughout the school culture. As an Expeditionary Learning School our motto is, "We are crew, not passengers."

## **Inquiry-based, Reflective Learning**

The primary instructional method used at Anser Charter School is inquiry based, encompassing consistent reflection. "Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand." It is the latter part of this statement that defines the foundation of inquiry-based learning.

Inquiry begins with the desire to discover and to find out through questioning. However, effective inquiry is much more than just asking questions. It is the process of finding information and converting it into useful knowledge. It involves developing skills and attitudes that permit the learner to seek answers to questions while forming a new knowledge.

The old paradigm of transmitting information from teacher to students, who were often regarded as empty vessels needing to be filled with the wisdom of the teacher, has often proven to be inadequate. In a world where information is readily available, inquiry is important in the generation and transmission of knowledge. It is also essential for education, because the fund of knowledge is continuously increasing and facts are constantly changing. The schools must therefore, change their focus from "*what we know*" to an emphasis on "*how we get to know*."

An important missing piece in many modern schools is a simplified and coherent process for constructing knowledge of a specific subject from lower grades to upper grades. It is often difficult for the students to understand how various areas within a particular subject relate to each other. This difficulty becomes more apparent when the students try to find out the relationships between the various subjects that they learn at school.

One of the main differences of the inquiry-based method from traditional teaching methods is that the emphasis is not only put on the transmission of subject-related knowledge or curriculum material, but rather on setting this knowledge into a wider conceptual framework. It also places emphasis on the development of skills that are required for the processing of information. This enables students to see relationships and reach conclusions that might not necessarily be readily apparent. These students are also more likely to process this newly constructed knowledge into a more accessible, transferable and applicable form to be used in a variety of situations.

Having reached this stage, it becomes easier for students to learn new information, because the new knowledge can be more easily integrated and inter-related within the existing knowledge base. Inquiry-based learning is often described as a cycle or spiral, including the formulation of a question initiated by curiosity, investigation, creation of an appropriate solution or answer, discussion and reflection on the outcome. Students, who actively go through this cycle in part or whole, are developing useful problem-solving skills. These skills can be applied to "need to know" situations that students will encounter in the future both at school and at work ([http://www.aforel.com/inquiry\\_based\\_learning.htm](http://www.aforel.com/inquiry_based_learning.htm)).

Through inquiry, a "thinking disposition" is developed. A thinking disposition is characterized by motivation and the inclination to actively think while engaged in learning. Inquiry-based learning and reflection provide opportunities for students to develop and use thinking behaviors and habits such as:

- ✓ asking questions
- ✓ setting goals
- ✓ persevering with inquiry
- ✓ planning and following a course of action
- ✓ generating constructive and creative solutions
- ✓ showing awareness of strategies that improve thinking

## **Whole School Community**

Each Wednesday morning, shortly after attendance is taken (8:15am), the entire student body gathers for Whole School Community (WSC). This weekly ritual allows other classes to share and celebrate their learning with the entire school community. Each class is scheduled several times throughout the year to present to the community. The schedule for WSC is created in the fall and placed on the Anser Running Calendar. A consistent routine is followed during Whole School Community.

Whole School Community is also reserved for rituals such as Introduction of the Staff as well as new students, Talent Wednesday, Eighth Grade Graduation, and Goal Setting Ceremony.

### **School Governance**

The Anser Board of Directors of the nonprofit corporation, Anser of Idaho, Inc., is the legal entity responsible for all school operations. Meetings are open and scheduled every third Tuesday of the month. Crew Anser, which comprises the contracted teaching and administrative staff, is responsible for the daily functions of the school. Family Council and its sub-committees are considered part of Anser's governance structure to ensure parental involvement in school activities.

### **Lines of Communications**

The *Lines of Communication* functions with the Anser Governance Structure to clarify the communication channels for various situations. Anser's goal is to promote open lines of communication. It is understood that every individual may choose to take an issue to the party where they feel their needs will best be met. We will always be working to help communication flow smoothly.

If you are looking for information about an upcoming meeting, community activity, school performance, etc. check these sources:

- Anser Weekly Flight Plan and Monthly Calendar
- School bulletin boards and notes home
- Classroom Newsletters
- The Anser School Website ([www.ansercharterschool.org](http://www.ansercharterschool.org))
- School e-mails

**Office number: 426-9840**

**Places to share ideas and innovations:** If you have an idea for education program, or a possible grant opportunity, the Anser community wants to know about it. If you are not sure where to direct your information, check with another parent, a Family Council member, a teacher, office personnel, or the Education Director/Principal and/or Organization Director.

**Concerns or issues that need addressing:** This could be about a school policy, a question about curriculum or a behavior issue. Anser would like to deal with these issues in a timely and efficient manner. Communication is encouraged to take place between the concerned party and the classroom teachers, Education Director/Principal and/or Organization Director or other staff member in which a concerned needs to be addressed.

### **Anser Committees**

Committee work is how business is done at Anser Charter School. There are numerous committees to involve our families either in their area/s of expertise or tapping into personal passions. We invite you to get involved in any of the following committees.

**Budget/Finance Committee** meets one time each month to review accounting procedures and monitor cash flow projections prior to presentation to the ANSER Board.

**Family Council** meets on the first Wednesday of each month and provides parent input into school policies and development, conducts activities for parent education and school involvement and links families to activities and volunteer opportunities within the Anser community. Additionally, Family Council provides an impartial voice to staff and the ANSER Board on issues or concerns parents bring to them. Family Council is a great vehicle to become involved in your child's school.

**Education Committee** Oversees education staffing and curricula related matters.

**Nominating Committee** receives and recommends candidates to the Anser Board.

## UNIQUE FEATURES OF ANSER CHARTER SCHOOL

### Expeditionary Learning

Learning is an expedition into the unknown. Expeditions draw together personal experience and intellectual growth to promote self-discovery and construct knowledge. Adults provide guidance for students along this journey modeling care, compassion, and respect for their diverse learning styles, backgrounds, and needs. Addressing individual differences profoundly increases the potential for learning and creativity for each student.

Given fundamental levels of health, safety, and love, all people can and want to learn. Expeditionary learning harnesses the natural passion to learn and is a powerful method for developing the curiosity, skills, knowledge, and courage needed to imagine a better world and work toward realizing it.

Anser is one of just one hundred=seventy plus Expeditionary Learning schools in the nation and in the spring of 2011 became one of 17 schools throughout the nation to be named an Expeditionary Learning Mentor School. We continue that honor for the fifth year. A New American Schools design for comprehensive school improvement, Expeditionary Learning challenges students to meet rigorous academic and character standards and to provide service to others. Students learn to take responsibility for achieving their personal best. They participate in learning expeditions – purposeful, extensive studies of a single topic. Harnessing the power of adventure and discovery, expeditions lead students to become more motivated in their academic work while developing perseverance and self-discipline.

Expeditionary Learning is a specific learning approach. It is designed to challenge teachers to get students out into their communities to investigate real-life issues or problems, and in the process, develop solid academic and character skills. The underlying values and design principles of the Expeditionary Learning program are consistent with other areas of Anser's philosophy (e.g. multi-age, community connections, service). All honor key values that include: self-discovery, individual responsibility, teamwork, learning from failure, respect for the natural world, a competitive spirit with oneself, and the importance of serving others. If you would like to learn more about this important part of ANSER's learning environment, you can explore Expeditionary Learning through the Anser website at: [www.ansercharterschool.org](http://www.ansercharterschool.org).

### Multiage Classroom Structure

“...the practice of teaching children of different ages and ability levels together, without dividing them (or the curriculum) into steps labeled by grade designations (Guastad, 1992, p. 2). The multiage model is further characterized as one that favors an integrated curriculum, practices that are developmentally appropriate, and instruction that is individualized. Flexible groupings are a common strategy used within the model in order to accommodate differing levels of maturity and achievement (Mason & Stimson, 1996).

The multiage classroom might be compared to that of a family unit; one that lives and learns together over an extended period of time. In a multiage setting students stay with the same teacher for more than one year allowing time to foster trusting relationships with teachers and peers. Like a family, the multiage classroom is comprised of differing age groups who work and play together, as well as learn from and with one another. Both settings represent a multitude of abilities, gifts and talents, as well as different ways of coming to know something. In healthy settings, this diversity is recognized and celebrated with both groupings.

Multiage classroom structures are utilized at specific grade levels to enhance community. *The Anser grade level structure is K, 1, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade stand alone classrooms. 2/3, 4/5, and 7/8 are multiage classrooms.* This configuration gives students more time with the same teacher, as well as fellow students, allowing for longer-term relationships so critical to the learning process.

## Student Achievement at Anser

### Evaluating Student Progress

Anser believes that all children can learn and achieve high standards as long as they have equal access to the curriculum. The student assessment process at Anser facilitates the achievement of this goal by making explicit the criteria by which successful performance may be judged.

### Dimensions of Student Achievement in EL Schools

Increasing student achievement and closing the achievement gap are critical goals for schools across the United States. However, too often the complex terrain of “student achievement” is reduced to the set of indicators that is easiest to assess with standardized tools. Expeditionary Learning schools pursue an expanded view of student achievement that takes into account three distinct dimensions of achievement. Successful EL schools achieve exemplary results in each of these dimensions and build systems and structures that treat the dimensions as an interconnected whole.

### Three Dimensions to Student Achievement at Anser Charter School



Anser Charter School’s project-centered, experiential and inquiry approach to learning requires a comprehensive way to monitor children’s academic, social, emotional, and physical progress. Expeditionary Learning schools use the “Work Sampling System” to evaluate student progress.

The Work Sampling System at Anser consists of the following interrelated elements:

- Student Portfolios / Student Led Conferences
- Expedition Projects/Products (an integrated approach to curriculum that includes science, social studies, health and art)
- Exhibition Night presentations
- Student Work Samples
- Elements of Problem Solving Through Critical Thinking

In addition to the above criteria, Anser Charter School uses embedded assessment practices (see below), standardized testing and public exhibition nights (no fewer than 1 per year) to evaluate student progress.

### ✓ *Portfolios*

**Anser** student portfolios contain a collection of work that:

- is valuable and accessible to multiple audiences;
- shows growth and best work;
- addresses the Idaho Core Standards;
- represents the uniqueness of the individual student; and
- shows evidence of revision and reflection.

Students develop portfolios that document their learning in the areas of academic disciplines, character, service and adventure. Students must demonstrate in their portfolios that they have accomplished what the community believes important for a student to know and be able to do.

Teachers, students and their parent/s, or guardian/s use portfolios in curricular decisions as they compile, review, and reflect upon its content. Students and teachers also develop new learning strategies based on their joint assessment of the child's progress and interests. ANSER student portfolios serve several purposes: 1) provide teachers and students a medium for ongoing assessment, 2) demonstrate how far students have progressed toward meeting standards, and 3) document a student's history at Anser.

### ✓ *Embedded Assessment Practices*

Specific classroom practices support portfolio-centered assessment:

- **Models and exemplars.** Students frequently study and discuss exemplars of quality work, from both professional and student sources as well as reflect on the elements of exemplary projects. From these discussions, students generate, along with their teacher's guidance, standards of excellence against which they measure their own work as well as the work of their peers.
- **Criteria and rubrics.** Criteria established during class discussions are combined with the Idaho Core Standards to define high expectations for student work of all types. Rubrics or scoring guides developed by the teacher or the students make those expectations explicit for specific projects.
- **Expectations for reflection, revision and quality.** Each classroom nurtures a culture of reflection, revision and quality. This journey toward continuous improvement expects that students will work hard until they have achieved high quality work products, no matter how much time and effort this may require.



### **✓ Standardized Testing**

As one means to monitor student progress, to comply with state regulations, and to compile data for broad-based comparison to other programs and schools, Anser administers a range of standardized tests: the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT as known as SBAC) in the spring (grades 3-8); the Idaho Reading Indicator at grades K-3 in fall, winter, and spring; the MAP assessment K-8 in fall, winter, and spring.

### **✓ Report Cards**

Formal achievement reports are distributed three times per year for K-6 students and four times for grades 7 & 8. All students' reports include expectations that align with the Idaho Core Standards as well as expectations Anser Charter School has for each child to achieve at certain points in their educational career. These expectations include character expectations as well as an academic record of progress. Junior High students receive both graded expectations and traditional letter grades.

### **✓ Public Exhibitions and Performances**

Presentations, demonstrations, performances, and exhibitions of final products culminate learning expeditions. Public displays of student work allow families, and members of the broader community, opportunities to review and assess student work as well as to provide valuable feedback to Anser students and teachers for continued growth.

### **✓ Expedition Projects**

Students participate in project-based investigations within each grade level's topic of study. The final product encompasses an array of disciplines and is evaluated using a scoring guide, or rubric, created by the students and teacher. The assessment is generated using exemplary model work samples.

## **Conferences**

Teachers hold Goal Setting conferences, in October, with students and parents (with the exception of Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade being scheduled in December). Student-Led Parent Conferences are held in December for K-8 students and again the last month of school. Both the teacher and the parents may schedule a conference at any other time. As staff we encourage families to initiate a conference anytime throughout the year making this process very interactive. Our goal is to make sure families realize they have the right and the responsibility to set up a time to meet with their child's teacher each time they deem it is necessary.

## **Fieldwork**

Students collect data outside the school walls that move them to deeper levels of understanding in their area of study. Data is brought back into the classroom and analyzed and reflected upon. Field specialists are brought into the classroom to make connections to the curriculum.

## **Collaborative Teacher Accountability and Professional Growth**

In keeping with Anser's commitment to continuous improvement and shared accountability for student growth, development, and achievement, Anser Charter School looks to what crew leaders (teachers) believe to be important, know, and able to do. Our school culture values constant analysis, reflection, and refinement of instructional quality in order to create a powerful teaching and learning community.

The design of our Professional Growth and Accountability System recognizes the complexity of teaching to the whole child. We stress the significance of recognizing and honoring children's developmental milestones along with the academic and character growth of each individual student. We are

committed to providing crew leaders with a comprehensive and focused accountability system; one that includes professional development, opportunities for continuous learning, and spans the instructional leader's entire career with Anser.

The main goal of Anser's accountability system is to ensure success for every child as we provide effective teaching and learning opportunities for our crew leaders.

## HOW WE TREAT ONE ANOTHER

- **We work to continuously improve achievements of staff and students alike. We value, above all else, the nurturing of human dignity and growth. We recognize that we are the primary keepers of our school's vision and mission.**
- **In all our actions, we demonstrate that we are continuous learners, sometimes vulnerable, yet skilled in and committed to critical self-appraisal and improvement of individual and community performance.**
- **We behave, and expect our community to behave with integrity in our relationships with one another, students, parents, and the greater community.**

### Anser Charter School Community Understandings

#### Role of Administrator/s:

- *To be a positive and passionate spokespersons for Anser and stay true to the school's vision and mission;*
- *insure an effective instructional program for all students;*
- *implement policies, rules, and regulations that facilitate a safe environment conducive to learning;*
- *to do our best in solving school-related problems and/or conflicts of students, staff, families, and community;*
- *ensure that the rights of students are protected;*
- *encourage and facilitate family communications with the school;*
- *implement, evaluate, and revise, when needed, the discipline management plan;*
- *serve as appropriate role models for students; and*
- *comply with school policies, rules, regulations, and directive.*

#### Role of Crew Leaders (teachers):

- *To be positive and passionate spokespersons for Anser and true to the school's vision and mission;*
- *recognize and respect the rights of students;*
- *provide fair and equal opportunities for all students;*
- *maintain an orderly classroom;*
- *align curriculum planning, instruction, and assessment with standards deemed important by the state of Idaho and our school;*
- *follow through with discipline situations reasonably, fairly, patiently, and without provocation;*
- *communicate with families about their child's progress and any significant changes in achievement and/or behavior;*

- *participate in helping to identify and resolve school-related concerns;*
- *serve as positive role models for students; and comply with school policies, rules, regulations, and directives.*

**Role of the Student:**

- *Take responsibility for learning (e.g. homework, projects, timelines, organization, cooperation);*
- *attend school on time and use class time in an effective and efficient manner;*
- *model behaviors that reflect safety, responsibility, compassion, respect, discipline, courage, and integrity;*
- *follow school and classroom expectations;*
- *speak directly to individuals involved if there is a concern/disagreement;*
- *actively participate in the life of the classroom, school activities, and community work.*

**Role of the Family:**

- *Support child/teacher in attainment of student academic and character expectations;*
- *ensure child's regular and prompt daily attendance;*
- *attend Goal Setting Conferences during scheduled time frame; support child's follow through on goals at home;*
- *attend Student Led Conferences twice per year; compose a letter to your child after the first, speaking to strengths, challenges and ways in which you will provide support;*
- *write a letter to your child's teacher at the end of his/her grade level year providing feedback to the teacher;*
- *attend unscheduled conferences throughout the year when set up by individual teacher/s;*
- *initiate a conference with your child's teacher, or the Education Director when there is a concern;*
- *support your child in homework and project activities, helping to adhere to timelines;*
- *read Classroom Newsletters and Flight Plans and be responsive to its contents and requests; and*
- *volunteer as appropriate to your family needs to the school or crew, either at home, at school, or in the community.*

**Parent Commitment**

Research indicates that parental involvement has a profound effect on student achievement and attitude. Parent/teacher/child partnerships are essential to Anser's continued success, and participation can take many forms. An interdependent relationship between family, community and school is essential in helping every child reach his full potential. Family participation is one of the most vital components of Anser's program.

Given the great diversity existing among families, Anser recognizes:

- 1) Volunteering is a choice that is internally motivated.
- 2) The best way to get families involved is to offer a wide variety of opportunities, which allow them to participate.

**Attendance/Tardies**

Regular attendance is essential if the student is to **maximize** the educational opportunities at Anser Charter School. Unnecessary absences and tardiness should be avoided. Expectations are for students to be in their classrooms on time each morning. *Attendance is also linked to state funding for all schools.* Parents/guardians are to notify the office (426-9840) if a student is absent or will arrive late at school.

- If the school has not been notified of an absence parents will be notified.
- Any student leaving school must first check out at the office.
- Students returning to school are to check into the office. A note signed by the parent/guardian or the presence of the parent/guardian is necessary to release the student from school.
- Parents/guardians need to contact the school if someone other than a parent will be picking up their child during the school day.
- In the case of lengthy absences, some assignments may be sent home in advance or obtained during the absence. However, most of the work will be held until the child's return to school. Appropriate time will be given to allow the child to complete the work.
- Students arriving after school start times will be considered tardy and will need to pick up a pass from the office to enter class. Crew Leaders will have any student arriving late go to the office for a pass.

### **Student Dress**

Anser does not have a formal dress code. Our first responsibility is the education of our students. Clothing displaying inappropriate/offensive writing or graphics is unacceptable. Anser follows the Boise School District dress code. Prohibited clothing includes the use of obscene, sexual, drug/alcohol/tobacco related messages. Low hanging pants, short-shorts, and spaghetti strapped tops are not allowed. **If the student's clothing is inappropriate for school activities or disruptive to the educational process, parent/s will be called to bring appropriate attire.**

Sneakers are recommended and are preferred footwear on days the student has physical education or fieldwork. Children should wear or have available comfortable clothing suitable for both our air-conditioned and heated building, and the outdoors. Because children will go outdoors for play every day, except for inclement weather, they should arrive on days of cooler weather with coat, hat, gloves, and, if necessary, boots so they can fully participate in outdoor play.

### **Enrollment & Records**

Student records are confidential and will only be released to non-school personnel with parental consent. Parents are asked to give Anser permission to obtain records from former schools upon enrollment.

### **Student Records**

As a result of federal legislation guaranteeing an individual's right to privacy, attention has been focused on school records and the content of those records. The following is a summary of the basic provisions contained in the laws and regulations, which the school is obliged to follow:

- 1) Parents of children under the age of 18 (including the non-custodial parent in the case of divorced parents) must be granted access to all official records maintained in any form by the school pertaining to their children. Students under the age of 18 (with Parental consent) shall also have access to their records. Students and parents who wish to review records shall contact the office and make an appointment.
- 2) The student's records or information contained in those records, shall not be released to anyone other than school or educational officials without the informed written consent of the student's parents.

- 3) The parent or student shall be provided an opportunity to challenge or rebut information contained in the student's records.
- 4) The school shall provide appropriately trained educational personnel to assist the parent or student in understanding the school records.

### **Confidential Records**

Student records are privileged and confidential and shall not be disclosed except under the following circumstances:

- 1) Threat of harm to self or others
- 2) Reported or suspected child abuse/neglect
- 3) Court order

### **Student's Personal Belongings**

Students are responsible for their personal belongings. The school is not responsible for theft of any student's personal belongings.

### **Care of School Property**

Students are responsible for the proper care of assigned materials and all books, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school. Students who deface property or equipment will be required to pay for damage done or replace the item and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students, parents, and staff have contributed many hours to the landscape of the school play area. All members of our community are expected to be stewards of this space.

### **Emergency Drills**

Emergency drills are required by law and constitute an important safety precaution. An evacuation plan is posted in each room. Students **will be apprised** of the plan and **are expected** to respond immediately to drills in an orderly fashion. Students not cooperating during an emergency drill may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Lunch/Snacks**

Anser does provide a hot lunch program. Applications for free or reduced lunch can be obtained in the school office. Individual classrooms will coordinate snack times if it is a group snack. Students may bring their own snacks to eat during break times. Anser is a peanut-free school. Any group snack should not contain peanuts.

### **Health and Safety**

Anser does not have a nurse on staff. The first-aid care the school can provide is very limited. If a child is hurt or complains of illness, the teacher will send the child to the office. Simple cuts or bruises will be treated by applying a bandage or ice to the injury. We are unable to administer more serious medical treatment. The office will call the parent in the event of a more serious injury or illness. In the event of an injury deemed major, 911 will be contacted first, then the parent. The child will be kept in the office until the parent arrives to get the child. It is essential that the school have up-to-date contact information at all times for each parent. In the event of an emergency, the office will call an ambulance before calling the parents.

Emergency medical forms for each student are on file in the office to guide school officials in the event of an emergency. Parents should ask to review their child's medical forms if they have questions or need to make changes. Student's medical needs, including those that may arise on school grounds, must be covered by parent's insurance. Parents should notify the office if they do not have insurance for their child.

## **Medications**

No medications, including over-the-counter medications, should be sent to school with your child. All medications must be brought in by a parent or guardian and kept in the office. Medication cannot be administered without the parent or guardian's consent and a physician's written order. We strongly encourage short-term medications, such as antibiotics, to be taken by children at home if possible. If your child needs to receive medication at any time, please bring a written notice to the office.

## **Homework**

Homework is designed to reinforce the day's lesson or provide practice. Homework is assigned almost every night for most classes. Parents need to encourage and monitor their child's completion of homework. Children should be taught a routine for where and when to do their homework and how to pack up their backpack before school the next day. Parents should check that homework is completed and offer assistance when needed, but should not complete their child's homework. Homework assignments are designed to be developmentally appropriate for the student.

Situations may occur that homework cannot be completed on time. If the student cannot complete homework for any reason, the parent should write a note or contact the teacher explaining the situation. Children will not be punished for missed homework assignments, but they will be expected to make up or complete unfinished work. Communication regarding home and school is vital. If you have any questions about homework, or if your child is regularly having difficulty completing homework, please discuss it with your child's teacher.

## **Recess and Playground Expectations**

*Treat others as you would like them to treat you.*

Time on the playground at recess is meant to be fun for every student. Remembering that each of us is an important member of our community, every student has an important part to play in respecting all recess and playground behavior expectations. The goal for all students at Anser Charter School is for everyone to play together fairly, and respectfully solve any differences. Adults and other students are also available at recess to help supervise and resolve difficulties.

**Every student needs to know, understand, and abide by the recess and playground expectations:**

- ✓ Eat snacks and lunch in the designated areas. Clean up after yourself.
- ✓ Walk in the hallways and in the building; run and play on the playground.
- ✓ Hold on to balls and other recess equipment until you get out to the play area.
- ✓ Throw balls on the field, not snowballs, rocks, bark, dirt or sticks.
- ✓ Speak kindly to one another and respect each other's needs.
- ✓ Stay within the designated playground area. If something goes over the fence, ask an adult to get it.
- ✓ Everyone is welcome to become involved in playground games.

- ✓ If you are not certain you are playing safely, ask yourself this question, “Will my play hurt me or others?” If you are still not sure, ask an adult.
- ✓ Play carefully with equipment and return to proper place when recess ends.
- ✓ Recess play stops when the whistle is blown; everyone helps clean up; everyone returns to class.
- ✓ The bathrooms are available during recess, but not as a play and gathering place.
- ✓ On bad weather days, children will have recess in the gymnasium
- ✓ Once students have been released for recess they are to stay on the playground unless they have permission to work in the classrooms.

### **Transportation**

Anser Charter School does not provide transportation to school or to children’s homes at this time. Parents are asked to sign a fieldwork permission form that permits their children to participate in fieldwork the entire year. Special events such as overnight adventures will require additional notification and acknowledgement from families.

### **Physical Education**

Students participate in physical education activities one time per week. Anser staff also provides other activities at school regularly through classroom initiatives, fieldwork and adventure. One complete Community Based Curriculum module is dedicated to physical activity. Check with your child’s teacher to find out the day and time for your child’s PE time.

### **Innovation Lab**

STEM is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — in an interdisciplinary and applied approach. Rather than teach the four disciplines as separate and discrete subjects, STEM integrates them into a cohesive learning paradigm based on real-world applications. According to [livescience.com](http://livescience.com), the United States has historically been a leader in these fields, however fewer students have been focusing on these topics recently. Anser is dedicated to being a leader in education, so we are providing STEM education opportunities for all grades K-8, starting this year! Anser 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in Innovation Lab once a week. Anser K-1<sup>st</sup> grade students will participate in a STEAM class once a week, which will add an art piece to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Check with your child’s teacher to find out the day and time your child’s class is scheduled for Innovation Lab.

### **Foreign Language**

Anser 6<sup>th</sup> grade students receive Spanish two times per week; Jr. High (7-8) students four times per week. Some students will take a Study Skills class rather than foreign language. Check with your child’s teacher to find out the day and time your child’s class is scheduled for Spanish.

### **Visual Arts**

We value the arts! Providing experiences and formal instruction in the disciplines of visual arts, dance, music and theatre is integral to development. Sensory, attentional, cognitive, emotional, and motor capacities are all systems that are nourished by the arts. It promotes self-esteem, motivation, aesthetic awareness, cultural exposure, creativity, and improved emotional expression, as well as social harmony and appreciation of diversity. We are working hard to create a unique program that works towards building a foundation in students for success. Anser 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade receive Visual Arts instruction once a week. Check with your child’s teacher to find out the day and time your child’s class is scheduled for Visual Arts.

## **Technology**

Application of technology is integrated with classroom curriculum as much as possible. Students learn technology standards by making connections to classroom projects. They are also taught basic technology skills. Student use of the Internet will be an important component of classroom research and learning. Staff supervises student Internet use and students will abide by Internet safety protocols. At the very least, failure to abide by the rules will result in the suspension of privileges for the student.

### ➤ **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

Learning is enhanced through technology's endless possibilities. Students and teachers have opportunities to gather information, communicate with people all over the world, and create their own products. Anser provides students and staff with technology services. These services include the use of computers, servers, other technology equipment, and the Internet.

Some sites on the Internet may contain offensive material. Even though it is impossible to have control over all of the information on the Internet, Anser has in place several ways to prevent access to inappropriate materials and to provide for a positive, productive educational experience. Communications on the Internet are public in nature and files stored on the Internet should not be assumed to be private. Anser

- Filters out most of the inappropriate material.
- Supervises and monitors students.
- Provides students with the understanding and skills needed to use technology in an appropriate manner.

The use of Anser's technology is a privilege and not a right. Technology is designed to be used as a tool to assist with the instructional objectives of the school. Students and staff shall use technology efficiently to minimize interference with others.

### ➤ **Prohibited uses of the Technology include, but are not limited to:**

- Sending, receiving, displaying, or accessing defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal materials.
- Encouraging the use of or promoting the sale of controlled substances or drugs.
- Any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the network, any technology equipment, or any of the agencies or other computer network services that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
- Any attempt to sell or offer for sale any goods or services that could be construed as a commercial enterprise, unless approved by the Board or their designee.
- Redistributing a copyrighted program or copyrighted material without the express written permission of the owner or authorized person or as provided by the fair use exception. This includes uploading and downloading of materials.
- Invading the privacy of individuals, revealing personal information of others or themselves, such as home address, or phone number.
- Logging in to the system using another user's account or password.
- Leaving an account open or unattended.
- Violating any local, state, or federal regulation or statute.



- Altering computer equipment as set up by the system administrator.

*Anser reserves the right to monitor all activity on the Internet.*

*Anser reserves the right to block any material on the Internet.*

*Anser reserves the right to deny access to technology to any individual.*

Security on the network is a high priority. The Administrator or designee has established procedures that will maximize system security. No warranties are made or given with respect to any service, any information, or any software contained within the Internet. Opinions, advice, services and all other information expressed by students, staff, information providers, service providers, or other third party personnel on the Internet provided by Anser are those of the individual and do not represent the position of Anser. Anser may remove accounts that are inactive for more than 30 days along with the user's files without prior notice. Anser staff is responsible for supervising student use of technology.

Student discipline for violation of any part of these rules and procedures shall be based on the student's age and the severity of the infraction. Student discipline may involve actions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Discipline of staff may involve actions up to and including termination. Perpetrators or their parents/guardians may be billed for damages to equipment. Illegal activities will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

### **Special Education**

Anser Charter School is a public school. Two certified special education instructors plus one certified Reading Interventionist are employed by Anser, as well as several full and part-time paraprofessionals and they make of the Exceptional Child Services (ECS) team at Anser. All students' needs must be addressed under the same guidelines and laws as any public school. Federal and state statutes identify the Boise Independent School District as the Local Education Area (LEA) responsible for serving students with special needs. Anser, as part of the LEA, shares responsibility with the district for special education. Therefore, procedures for identifying and serving students with needs will be coordinated with the Boise School District. Any evaluations or services offered to students must have parental consent. The Anser Board has adopted the State Department of Education's manual for Special Education. This manual is available for review in the school office. Anser does have speech and language and occupational therapy services on site. These services are provided by the Boise School District.

### **Gifted and Talented Program**

Anser works with the district in identifying students who may qualify for the Gifted and Talented Program. Anser does not offer a formal program but does provide many of the structures found in a gifted and talented classroom.

### **Tuition Based Programs**

Anser offers a tuition-based program for Kindergarten students.

The **Anser Arts for Young Children (AAYC)** is a program for children who attend Kindergarten in the morning sessions either at Anser or another school and any child who turns five before December of that year. Children who are not five before September 3 may not enter the program until their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. The program focuses on the visual and performing arts on a daily basis as well as visiting artist in areas such as dance, pottery, storytelling, etc. one time per week. If this program interests your family, please contact the Education and/or Organization Director.

**CARING COMMUNITY PLAN AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Anser Charter School focuses on developing a caring, supportive school environment in which students participate fully in solving problems, including problems of behavior. We believe students’ growth toward kindness, respect and critical problem solving depends on becoming active members of a caring community. We further believe it is the experience with decision making and problem solving that enables students to handle conflicts that arise.

When students become engaged in rigorous learning expeditions; behavior disruptions decrease. When they are stimulated, challenged, and held to what is expected, students are less likely to engage in disciplinary issues. Our dual focus on character and academics and our use of the Responsive Classroom approach to classroom management prevents and addresses most discipline issues.

Teaching and modeling positive behaviors are the primary approaches to discipline at Anser. As a result, children seldom engage in serious, negative behavior. One unique aspect of Anser is that the entire school has adopted and promotes a particular culture of values. In turn this provides the foundation for individual classrooms to develop their own set of behavioral expectations. This self-governing model teaches the EL Design Principles and Anser Character Traits (see below) on a consistent basis through countless interactions between children, children and teachers, and other adults.

**Design Principles:**

1. The Primacy of Self Discovery
2. The Having of Wonderful Ideas
3. Responsibility for Learning
4. Empathy and Caring
5. Success and Failure
6. Collaboration and Competition
7. Diversity and Inclusion
8. The Natural World
9. Solitude and Reflection
10. Service and Compassion

Students are immersed in learning about, and expected to practice, strong **character**. The following traits are ones adults at Anser model in order to help students grow and interact with personal responsibility for their behavior and learning.

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Integrity</b>	<b>Courage</b>	<b>Compassion</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Respect</b>
*On time *Completes individual	*Listens to others *Consistent in action-	*Tries something new. *Lives by convictions,	*Listens to and speaks kindly to others	*Completes work *Cleans up	*Responds sensitively to the ideas and needs of

<p>and group tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Pitches in without measuring contribution against that of others</li> <li>*Respects space and belongings of him/herself and others</li> <li>*Is where s/he is supposed to be</li> <li>*Takes care of environment</li> <li>*Conscientious in everyday affairs, and in tasks with which s/he is personally entrusted</li> <li>*Completes individual and group tasks</li> <li>*Accepts consequences for actions</li> </ul>	<p>lives by convictions, not circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Respects the learning environment</li> <li>*Does not talk while others are talking</li> <li>*Good audience member</li> <li>*Does the right thing whether supervised or not</li> <li>*Honest and trustworthy</li> <li>*Supports everyone's efforts</li> <li>*Completes own work</li> <li>*Refrains from talking when others are talking</li> </ul>	<p>not by circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Shares a personal challenge with a group</li> <li>*Works toward personal best</li> <li>*Takes risks but does not endanger self and others</li> <li>*Follows what s/he believes to be the right course even when things are tough</li> <li>*Deals with the unexpected</li> <li>*Tries different approaches and solutions, before giving up</li> <li>*Stands up for beliefs</li> <li>*Accepts constructive criticism as well as praise</li> <li>*Is honest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Calls people by name.</li> <li>*Uses good manners</li> <li>Helps others</li> <li>*Does not talk while others are talking</li> <li>*Includes those who are different</li> <li>Wants to make a positive influence</li> <li>*Is respectful and appreciates own and other's the struggles, achievements, feelings, points of view, safety, and property of others</li> <li>*Appreciates own and other's ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural ways.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Is on time</li> <li>*Maintains a healthy diet</li> <li>*Exercises regularly</li> <li>*Maintains an organizational plan</li> <li>*Works at an appropriate rate for the task</li> <li>*Maintains safety</li> <li>*Does best work</li> <li>*Revises work often</li> <li>*Balances work and play</li> <li>*Plans ahead</li> <li>*Attends to detail</li> <li>*Adapts to change</li> <li>*Meets deadlines</li> <li>*Keeps at a task, even if it's hard</li> </ul>	<p>others without dismissing or degrading them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Differences are celebrated</li> <li>*Able to accept praise and constructive suggestions</li> <li>*Affirms individual freedoms while honoring the rights of the group</li> </ul>
--	--	---	--	---	--

### Developing Positive Behavior in the Anser Community and Curriculum

As we all know, conflicts arise within any community. Conflict resolution is an area of the school environment that is crucial to the on-going positive nature of our program. We have spent considerable time and energy on synchronizing our values and methods for handling conflicts. As a general rule, children and adult members of our community attempt to use conflicts to teach new and/or better behaviors through a belief that restitution (making things right) is a way to help all students get to the next level of “doing the right thing.”

Aggressive or disruptive behavior may happen for a variety of reasons and in a variety of school settings. In line with our educational philosophy, these behaviors are handled in a variety of ways that integrate the needs of the child or children and teach and model the desired outcome. Whenever possible, those involved are invited to actively participate in ways to make the situation right and learn from their actions. Our goals are to protect each person's rights, and to help each person learn to make wise choices, caring for themselves and others.

Proactive strategies used in classrooms and throughout the school to achieve these goals are as follows:

- 1) **Crew Meetings** are utilized as a forum for discussing and problem-solving specific issues. Here, both children and teachers teach, practice and model appropriate ways of resolving conflict.

- 2) **Behavior is viewed within the context of the student's life at school**, in a particular classroom's expectations, and Anser's collaborative, respectful methods. Throughout the year/s teachers and staff are called upon to get to know and understand the children at Anser. Personal knowledge about the child's, or family's, "story" can be respectfully useful in working with the children.
- 3) **Violent or hurtful behavior will be stopped immediately**, intervening verbally if possible, physically if necessary. Physically intervening might include temporarily isolating children, restraining violent acts by holding a hand, or placing one's self between angry children. Children must never be treated roughly or violently by adults-physically or verbally.
- 4) Be certain that any **"injured" person's rights and needs** are addressed and reinforced as soon as possible. This not only informs the offending child that they have interfered with another child's rights but also begins to make the environment safe again for the "injured" child.
- 5) Encourage students involved to **resolve the conflict** by including the following:
  - i. clearly state the problem
  - ii. generate options for correcting the problem
  - iii. select the solution
  - iv. follow up to be sure that the solution is working
- 6) **Go to another staff member** when a student's behavior is beyond the resources of staff or parents involved.
- 7) Repeated, irresolvable conflict means something's wrong and it's our job to **find out** what it is. It may be a mismatch of child to school or classroom or task: it may be family problems; it may be physical illness; etc. As a collaborative, respectful program, the staff and parents of Anser are responsible for seeking advice from one another and, in some cases, outside resources (e.g., nurse, counselor, etc.). This information is always gathered in a caring and confidential manner.

Policies and procedures for handling student discipline issues with all students are designed to achieve these goals.

### **When Discipline Crosses Boundaries and Becomes a Major Offense**

All students have the right to learn in an atmosphere that is safe, conducive to learning, and free from disruptions. The school shall enforce provisions of the code of conduct and discipline so that students demonstrating major disciplinary behaviors and their parents understand that such behavior shall not be tolerated and shall be dealt with according to the code and requirements of law.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity and development, acting with due regard for teachers and others acting in a supervisory role, the educational purposes underlying all school activities, the widely shared use of school property, and the rights and welfare of other students. Conduct which disrupts or threatens to disrupt the operation of the school, which interferes in any way with the public or private rights of other students or citizens, which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person, or which damages property will not be tolerated and will result in immediate disciplinary action and consequences.

Students are entitled to the proper recognition and preservation of their constitutional rights, and allowance for such rights, including freedom of expression, personal appearance, and the right to petition, personal property, due process, and involvement in school and community affairs. These rights are not unlimited, and must be balanced against the rights of others and the overarching purposes of the school.

### Disciplinary Action Procedures

Disciplinary action is warranted when a child’s choices do not comply with Anser’s Caring Community Plan, Design Principles, and Character Traits, is disruptive to the educational process, or infringes on the rights, property, and safety of others.

The following explains Level I through Level 4 infractions and the actions to be taken.

<b>Level 1 – Incidental Violations</b> (Non-referred/Non-recorded <b>unless happens on a consistent and disruptive manner</b> )	<b>Level 2 – Minor Violations</b> (Non-referred but recorded – may or may not contact parent, possible in-school detention)	<b>Level 3 – Major Violations</b> (Referred/Recorded – Contact parent – possible detention or suspension)	<b>Level 4 – Illegal Violations</b> (Referred/Recorded – Contact parent – possible suspension or expulsion)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Running</li> <li>➤ Loud voices/yelling</li> <li>➤ Off-task behavior</li> <li>➤ Name calling</li> <li>➤ Noise making</li> <li>➤ Out of seat</li> <li>➤ Missing homework</li> <li>➤ Disruptive</li> <li>➤ Breaking cafeteria rules</li> <li>➤ Breaking minor playground rules</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate (minor) behavior in the bathrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lying</li> <li>➤ Indirect, inappropriate language/gestures</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate dress</li> <li>➤ Spitting</li> <li>➤ Insubordination</li> <li>➤ Missing homework over a two week period of time</li> <li>➤ Disrespect/rude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Direct, inappropriate language/gestures</li> <li>➤ Fighting/physical aggression</li> <li>➤ Harassment/bullying</li> <li>➤ Overt defiance</li> <li>➤ Property</li> <li>➤ Destruction/misuse</li> <li>➤ Theft</li> <li>➤ Forgery</li> <li>➤ Internet misuse and/or cyber bullying</li> <li>➤ Skipping class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Drug use/possession</li> <li>➤ Weapon use/possession</li> <li>➤ Truancy</li> <li>➤ Arson</li> <li>➤ Bomb threat</li> <li>➤ Extreme property damage/vandalism</li> <li>➤ Combustibles</li> <li>➤ Assault/threats</li> <li>➤ Sexual aggression</li> <li>➤ Exposure</li> </ul>

➤ Chewing gum or eating candy except by teacher permission		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ De-panting</li> <li>➤ Reference in conversation, writing or pictures to weapons or acts of violence</li> <li>➤ Taking pictures/video without consent</li> <li>➤ Cheating</li> <li>➤ Consistently not turning in homework</li> <li>➤ Leaving designated school area</li> </ul>	
--	--	--	--

**\*Moving from one level to another level on any of the above infractions will depend on the specifics of the violation as well as the age of**

	<b>Level 1- Incidental Violations</b>	<b>Level 2- Minor Violations</b>	<b>Level 3- Major Violations</b>	<b>Level 4- Illegal Violations</b>
<b>Addressing the Behavior</b>	<b>Teacher-handled</b> The teacher addresses the behavior using classroom management strategies.	<b>Teacher-handled</b> The teacher addresses the behavior using logical consequences that are respectful and appropriate to the situation,	<b>Office-managed</b> Send the student to the office where the Education Director or designee will address the behavior.	<b>Office-managed</b> Send the student to the office where the Education Director or designee will address the behavior.
<b>Forms</b>	<b>Recording</b> May record for records if so desire. May inform the office of the violation.	<b>Student Action Report</b> Complete the document, send home with student to explain to parent/s, If student does not bring back document on due date, he/she does not go to class but rather, completes work in the office until slip is signed. Office is informed.	<b>Office-managed</b> Education Director or designee will manage the situation with student and families. Teachers are kept apprised.	<b>Office-managed</b> Education Director or designee will manage the situation with student and families. Teachers are kept apprised.

**the student.**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recess/ Lunch Plan</b></p>	<p>Supervisors will address the behavior using strategies from the playground handbook Supervisors may connect with the teacher later in the day to follow-up when necessary</p>	<p>Supervisors will address the behavior using logical consequences that are respectful and appropriate to the situation. Supervisors may notify the office by radio regarding the situation, and facilitate completing a Student Action Report. Supervisors may connect with the teacher later in the day to follow-up when necessary</p>	<p>Supervisors will notify the office by radio regarding the situation, and facilitate completing a Student Action Report. The student will remain in the office until the Education Director or designee addresses the behavior. Education Director or designee will manage the situation with student and parents.</p>	<p>Supervisors will notify the office by radio regarding the situation, and facilitate completing a Student Action Report. The student will remain in the office until the Education Director or designee addresses the behavior. Education Director or designee will manage the situation with student and parents.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

**In-school Detention:**

In school detentions may last as short as a recess time or as long as several days. In-school detention may occur in any Level 1-3 violation, depending on the violation and age of the student. Any time an in-school detention occurs, parents will be notified.

**Suspension:**

Suspensions may be short term (five or fewer days) or long term (more than five days). Suspensions may occur for any Level 2-4 violations.

**Disciplinary Hearings and Expulsion:**

Students who receive a long-term suspension or who receive three or more suspensions within a school year are subject to a disciplinary hearing by a Hearing Panel that shall consist of two to three staff members (not involved in the disciplinary action in question, and two to three members from the Education Committee to the Board of Trustees. The Education Director shall be present during the hearing as the hearing officer, but shall not vote on any decision.

Hearings are conducted in two parts. During the first part, the Hearing Panel determines if the student is guilty of the charge. If the panel does find the student guilty, during the second part the panel reviews the student’s previous record and determines the recommended consequence for his or her actions, up to and including expulsion. The Hearing Panel shall put their decision in writing within one school week (5 school days) of making a decision to expel as well as inform the Board of Trustees of this decision within the same five day period.

If parent/s so desire, they may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees at the next scheduled board meeting.

Depending on the violation, the Education Director may determine at a Level 3 or 4 to go directly to expulsion.

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

The Anser School Board is committed to maintaining an educational environment that protects and promotes dignity, individual worth, and mutual respect for each individual and is free from harassment. Each student, employee, visitor or member of the Anser community deserves the opportunity to participate or work in a safe, supportive atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities, free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee, visitor or Anser community member to bully, haze or harass another individual through any means, including technology, while on any school premise or at any school sponsored activity, regardless of location. Violation of this policy may be subject to school disciplinary action even if the threat is not substantial, direct, or specific enough to constitute a violation of state or federal law.

### **Other Policies for Federal Requirements:**

If the bullying, hazing, or harassment allegations fall within the areas protected by federal law, one or more of the following policies may apply: Boise School District Civil Rights Grievance #3211, #5212, Section 504 Hearing #3212, or Sexual Harassment #3232, #5211, #4418.

### **Reporting:**

It is everyone's responsibility to eliminate behavior prohibited by this policy. Anyone who believes he/she has knowledge of a person or persons affected by a violation of this policy should immediately report it to a school official.

Anser school personnel receiving a report of a violation of this policy shall report the matter to the Education Director, Organization Director or designee immediately. If the complaint involves the Education Director or Organization Director or designee, school personnel must immediately report the matter to the President of the Board. School personnel who fail to report or fail to take action to stop violations of this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### **Investigation:**

The Education Director or designee shall conduct a thorough investigation of any allegation of bullying, hazing, or harassment within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the allegation, except in extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the individual assigned to investigate.

All investigations will be documented and those with sufficient evidence to support allegations require a written report.

### **Confidentiality:**

Because of the possible sensitive nature of the allegations, any investigation for violations of this policy shall be conducted, to the extent possible and within the legal constraints, to protect the privacy of the complainant, victim and the accused. In instances where the allegation involves suspected child abuse, harm to self or harm to others, the School official must report the case to the proper authorities as required by law.

Procedures for implementation of this policy are outlined in the Anser Parent Handbook.

### **Discipline for Violations of this Policy may include:**

- For an employee, actions up to and including dismissal.



- For a visitor or Anser community member, actions up to and including future prohibition from entering any school premises or attending any school sponsored activity, regardless of location.
- For a student, actions up to and including suspension, and/or expulsion.

Discipline shall be appropriate to the offense, age and status of the individual.

The School official or designee shall submit the case to the appropriate law enforcement agency when the charges warrant such action.

**Insufficient Evidence:**

Upon investigation, if there is insufficient evidence to support the allegations, no report of the allegation shall be placed in an accused or complainant employee’s personnel record or in the accused or complainant student’s permanent record.

**False Accusations:**

If the investigation discloses that the complainant knowingly or in a malicious manner falsely accused another of bullying, hazing, or harassment, the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action as stated above.

**Retaliation:**

Students, employees, visitors or Anser community members shall not retaliate against an individual who in good faith reports, associates with the individual reporting, participates in the investigation, or investigates a violation of this policy. Any person engaged in retaliatory actions may be subject to disciplinary action as stated above.

**Prevention:**

The Education Director or designee shall develop procedures to:

- Implement or review actions taken to prevent bullying, hazing, or harassment.
- Follow up with victims of violations of this policy to ensure preventative actions are effective.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Bullying:

The repeated aggressive behaviors of frightening of others with an apparent intent to dominate. Bullying may include, but not be limited to the physical (hitting, pushing, or attacks on property); verbal (name-calling, obscene gestures, malicious teasing, or electronic threats); or indirect attacks (intentional exclusion from groups, anonymous hurtful notes, or spreading false rumors). Bullying often occurs without apparent provocation. Bullying is **not** playful teasing between relatively equal individuals.

Hazing:

1. To subject a person to bodily danger, physical harm, severe emotional harm, extreme embarrassment or personal degradation; or
2. To subject a person to the likelihood of any of the above; or
3. To require, encourage, authorize or permit that the person be subjected to any of the following:
  - a. Total or substantial nudity on the part of the person;
  - b. Compelled ingestion of any substance by the person;
  - c. Wearing or carrying of any obscene or physically burdensome article by the person;
  - d. Physical assaults upon or offensive physical contact with the person;

- e. Participation by the person in boxing matches, excessive number of calisthenics, or other physical contests;
- f. Transportation and abandonment of the person;
- g. Confinement of the person to an unreasonable and uncomfortable environment, including, but not limited to small, unventilated, unsanitary or unlighted areas;
- h. Sleep deprivation; or
- i. Assignment of pranks to be performed by the person.

The term hazing, as defined in this section does not include customary athletic event/activity or similar contests or competitions, and is limited to those actions taken and situations created in connection with initiation into or affiliation with any group or organization. For the purposes of this definition, any activity described in this definition shall be presumed to be “forced” activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding.

Harassment:

Any verbal, written, graphic, digital or physical conduct by an individual or group which is sufficiently severe, persistent, pervasive and offensive to:

1. Substantially and systemically undermine, disrupt, detract from, interfere with or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the Anser Charter School’s programs, activities or resources;
2. Create an intimidating, hostile, threatening or abusive educational/work environment;
3. Substantially or unreasonably interfere with a person’s performance, or;
4. Adversely affect a person’s educational/work opportunities.

Actions that may constitute harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical acts (i.e. aggression or assault, battery, damage to property, intimidation, vandalism, implied overt threats or violence);
- Verbal or digital/electronic acts (i.e. demeaning jokes, bullying, taunting, hazing, intimidation, hate speech, slurs, derogatory nicknaming, innuendoes, or other negative remarks);
- Visual acts (i.e. graffiti, slogans or visual displays such as cartoons or posters depicting derogatory sentiments); or
- Criminal acts (acts in violation of Idaho Criminal Codes or Idaho Human Rights Commission Code).

On School premises or at any School sponsored activity, regardless of location:

Shall include, but not be limited to buildings, facilities, and grounds on the school campus, school buses, school parking areas; and the location of any Anser Charter School sponsored activity. This includes instances in which the conduct occurs off the school premises but impacts a school related activity.

School Official: includes, but is not limited to, teacher, school counselor, exceptional child services staff, coach, Education Director or Organization Director.

## **Attendance Policy**

To fulfill Anser's goal of educating the whole child in a collaborative learning environment, regular and punctual attendance is vital. Students must be present in order to maximize their experiences and success, as well as the successes of their classmates. Punctuality and attendance are important skills designed to prepare students for the workplace. Further, because Anser's funding is dependent upon student attendance, frequent absences can damage the school's fiscal stability.

***Attendance Requirements:*** Students may not have more than nine (9) absences per semester, or the number of absences permitted by the Boise School District, whichever is fewer. For purposes of this policy, semester dates will be established in the Anser annual school calendar. Absence from class for any reason, including family convenience, shall be counted in this total. If a student misses more than nine school days during a semester, the Education Director/Principal may deny promotion for the student or drop him/her from Anser's enrollment. This is in accordance with Anser's Attendance Policy.

***Excused Absences:*** Absences from school with the knowledge and approval of a student's parents/guardian are excused absences, but such absences are counted toward the maximum allowed per semester. In order for an absence to be excused, oral or written communication from the student's parents/guardian must be received within 48 hours of the last day of the absence.

***Notification of Absences:*** Parents/guardians will be notified of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> absences during a semester. Notice of the 6<sup>th</sup> absence may include an invitation for the parents/guardian to meet with the Education Director/Principal to discuss ways to address the student's attendance problem. Notice of the 10<sup>th</sup> absence may inform the parent/guardian of the denial of promotion or loss of enrollment at Anser and will outline the appeals process. The Education Director may deny promotion to the next grade, drop the student from Anser enrollment, or develop an attendance contract with the parents/guardian.

***Grounds for Appeal:*** Students, parents, and/or guardians who believe that all, or part of the absences, are the result of extraordinary circumstances may appeal the Education Director's decision. Extraordinary circumstances may include, but are not limited to, verified illness or medical treatment, death in the family or death of close friends, and medical or dental professional appointments.

***Attendance Appeal Process:*** If a parent/guardian wishes to appeal the decision of the Education Director in regard to a student's attendance, the following policy applies:

1. The parent/guardian has five (5) school days from the date shown on the notification to appeal the denial of promotion or removal from Anser's enrollment.
2. The appeal process begins with the Education Director. If the Education Director denies the appeal, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Anser Board. The decision of the Anser Board is final.
3. In each step of the appeals process, the Education Director, Anser Board, and the parent/guardian have five (5) schools days in which to respond to the appeal or the decision. All appeals and responses shall be in writing.

***Re-enrollment:*** Any student who is dropped from Anser's enrollment because of excessive absences may re-enroll for the next school year; however, he/she will be required to undergo the same initial enrollment procedure as any other potential student, in accordance with Anser's adopted enrollment policy.

## **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES at Anser Charter School**

Below you will find the procedures for Anser pick up and drop off of students. Please be aware that our primary concern is for the safety of our students. The practices we have implemented are meant to reduce the contact between students and cars, as well as decrease emissions, and wait times. We ask that you follow these procedures to help us insure the safety of our students. If you have any questions about the procedures please contact the main office.

### **Drop off and pick up along the playground fence line**

Vehicles enter through North Entrance. **No left turns from 42<sup>nd</sup> St. into the drop off line are allowed.** Those wishing to load/unload students should move as far forward into the “Drop-off/Pick –up lane as possible. **Students should exit only from the right side of their vehicle** and use the pedestrian walkway to travel to the playground. After loading/unloading drivers may pull out of the “Drop-off/Pick-up” lane, proceed forward and exit the property at the South exit. No cars may be left unattended in the Drop-off/Pick up” lane.

Parents may also choose to park in the parking spaces adjacent to the Drop-off/Pick up lane and walk in with their students. Please use the **sidewalk** after exiting your car, and walk to the South exit, where you may cross the exit lane and walk behind the red painted curbing to proceed to the playground.

#### **Courtesy reminders:**

- Please do not park for more than **2-3 minutes** in the Drop-off/Pick-up lane. This will impede traffic. If you remain longer, a staff person may ask you to leave the pickup line.
- If you plan to use the Drop-off/Pick up Lane, please instruct your students to wait for you on the blacktop area, so that you do not delay other families.
- Please do not allow your students to walk through the traffic lanes to get to the sidewalk or crosswalk.

### **How to Drop off ONLY at the Front Entrance**

*Please note that the traffic lane that leads behind the school to the playground has been permanently closed.*

If you plan to drop off in the morning at the front entrance you will need to **park your car and walk in with your student**. No children may enter the building un-accompanied by an adult before 8:10am. Please note that you will not be able to pull around the back of the building to exit the parking lot.

There is no afternoon pick up from the front of the building. **Please do not ask your students to wait for you in the front parking lot as this creates a hazardous situation for drivers.**

### **Street Parking and Crosswalk**

A crosswalk is located directly south of the exit to the drop off/ pick up lane. An Anser crossing guard will be on duty from 7:40 am-8:15am and from 2:55pm-3:35pm. We ask that you please cross 42<sup>nd</sup> st only at the cross walk. This will increase safety and teach our students safe habits.

### **CBC/Electives Drop off**

Please drop students off along the playground fence line, using the procedures listed above. Please direct CBC students to enter the building through the gym door. Electives students may enter through the JH doors. No drop off of CBC/Electives students at the main entrance unless an adult parks their vehicle and escorts their students into the building.

- During **inclement weather** students will be allowed to come into the building and go directly to the mezzanine area where they may play quiet board games, visit, or read.

### **Early Drop off**

Special circumstances occasionally require that children be dropped off prior to 7:45a.m. **Arrangements need to be made with the office.** Children should then be dropped off at the office door. Children will be expected to sit outside of the office area until the playground volunteer arrives at 7:45. At this time they will go directly to the playground.



Anser Charter School

---

AN EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING SCHOOL

# Anser Student Handbook