

AXL Academy
Scholar & Family
Handbook

2023-24 SY



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- Community Resources
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- Scholar Records

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mission

AXL Academy is a tuition-free PK-8 expeditionary charter school in Aurora that delivers academic achievement, character development and social equity through an active instructional model and a strong school culture.

Vision

Engage. Empower. Achieve.

Charter School

AXL Academy is a charter public school educating scholars from pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. As a public school, AXL is free and scholars are selected randomly through a public lottery for grades K-8.

Enrollment Policies

Enrollment is free. Anyone can apply online at www.axlacademy.org, by fax at 303-597-1547, or by mail at AXL Academy, 14100 E. Jewell Ave, Aurora, CO 80012. Receipt of your application will be confirmed via email or by phone within 48 hours of its arrival.

AXL selects its scholars by random lottery, held in public each Spring. Only those scholars whose applications are completed in full and received before the application deadline are included in the lottery. Scholars whose applications are received after the lottery will be added to the existing waiting list in the order they are received.

AXL is a public charter school authorized by Aurora Public Schools (APS) and an open enrollment school, like every other public school

in Colorado. Priority admissions are given to scholars who reside within the district. Admissions are offered to scholars residing outside APS as space permits. Scholars not selected in the lottery are placed on the waiting list and will be invited to enroll in the event that openings become available.

AXL supports whole families to create a passionate and sustainable school community. Siblings of enrolled scholars receive priority admissions if their applications are completed and received within the enrollment dates.

Children of AXL staff do not participate in the lottery for enrollment. These children may continue to be enrolled regardless of the parent's ongoing employment and will not exceed 20% of the school's population, as prescribed by Colorado's Charter School law.

Applications may be denied if:

- Scholar has received more than one out-of-school suspension in the year prior
- Scholar did not maintain a 95% attendance rate in the year prior

- Applications of admission may be denied if scholar was expelled in previous year.
- Scholar previously withdrew from AXL Academy

An application is not complete until AXL Academy receives the following:

- All student records, including discipline and attendance
- IEP, if applicable
- 504, if applicable

Academic Calendar

AXL's Academic Calendar for 2022-23 is [available either online](#) or in the front office.

Attendance

Scholars are expected to be at school from 7:45am-2:45pm (K-4th) and 7:45am-3:00pm (5th-8th). Consistent attendance is key to achievement and families are expected to ensure their children are in school every day.

Please do not allow your scholar to miss school except for serious illness and the most extreme extenuating circumstances. Please schedule appointments during breaks, scheduled professional development or in-service days. We take any

absences, regular tardies, and early pick-ups very seriously, as they can be detrimental to academic success. The most significant consequence of missing school is that your child will be behind in their learning.

AXL Academy is a very rigorous and fast-paced environment. We understand that at times a family may wish to travel for family or educational reasons. Families must communicate to the Dean any extended scholar trips (10+ consecutive days out). If a family does not communicate a trip of this length, the scholar may have to be un-enrolled from AXL.

General Absences

- When an absence is unavoidable, please call the school by 9:00am to leave a message on the attendance line. With advance notice, teachers can give the scholar appropriate materials and homework.
- AXL Academy follows APS policies and guidelines for attendance.

Doctor & Dentist Appointments

Please make every attempt to schedule appointments outside of normal school hours.

Suspensions

Suspensions are considered to be absences.

Tardies

Regular tardies can hinder success. It is very important that scholars are at school on time. As with absences, we take tardies very seriously.

Habitual Absences

Habitual absences are detrimental to learning and increases difficulty to help scholars achieve success.

AXL Academy will respond to habitual absences in the following ways:

- Letters home
- Phone call to families
- Meetings with crew leaders
- Meetings with administrators
- Truancy process

Arrival

- The school opens to scholars at 7:30 each morning and scholars must be in the classroom by 7:45

each morning. Scholars are not to arrive to school early unless they are part of the before-school care program (YMCA).

- Pre-K scholars are to be dropped off inside the school building by parents or guardians.
- Kindergarten will enter and go directly to class. Grades 1-4 will enter and go to the playground. Grades 5-8 will line up outside. A scholar may go to the cafeteria or District 12 for breakfast from 7:30-7:45 daily.
- If a scholar has not been dropped off by 7:50 am, that scholar is tardy and can enter through the main office.
- Due to inclement weather or if the 'feels like' temperature is below 20 degrees, we may have indoor arrival. In this case, scholars are expected to wait inside the building until the start of class.

Dismissal

- School is dismissed at 2:55pm (K-4th) or 3:10pm (5th-8th).
- K-4 Scholars are dismissed from their crew lines outside the front door of the school. 5-8 Scholars can dismiss in front or back of building. Parents driving to pick up their child should follow the

designated traffic flow pattern. Place your CAR TAG on the left side of your dashboard so that it is visible to staff who are calling children. Drivers must heed all crosswalks and safety patrols to ensure all children's safety.

- You may also park your car and walk to meet your scholar in his or her crew line and check out with the teacher in person.
- 5-8 Scholars with signed permission slips on file to walk home will be permitted to walk off campus and to their home. Walkers are expected to leave the property by 3:10 pm.
- Scholars will not be released to anyone other than those who are identified on the scholar's registration paperwork as an authorized party. If your child needs to be picked up by someone else, you must make arrangements ahead of time with AXL's Office Manager.
- Families are responsible for picking up scholars on time and will be called immediately after dismissal if their scholar has not been picked up. Note: if families are not reached in a timely

manner, Aurora Police may be called.

- Due to inclement weather, we may determine an Indoor Dismissal. Information will go out via ClassDojo. K-4 Scholars should be picked up inside of the building between 2:55 - 3:10pm. 5-8 Scholars will be released at 3:10pm. K-4 and 5-8 have different dismissal times. 5-8 scholars should not be picked up early or with K-4 scholars in the event of indoor arrival.

Dress Code

Scholars follow a simple dress code to demonstrate respect for themselves and others, and scholars must arrive at school in dress code every day.

AXL's dress code is designed to be modest and functional while adhering to the highest safety standards for all scholars. As such, scholars may not:

- Wear inappropriate logos or symbols.
- Wear gang-affiliated symbols of any kind.

All scholars must wear sneakers that are suitable for running, jumping,

hiking, and playing outside every day. Scholars may not wear "Heelies." During inclement weather, scholars are welcome to wear boots.

Meals & Snacks

Breakfast is available daily at 7:30am. Breakfast is free for all scholars.

In the 2022-23 school year, lunches will be provided by Aurora Public Schools Nutrition Services. We remain committed to serving healthy meals. Scholars who choose not to participate in the lunch program may bring their own lunches to school.

Scholars need to bring 1 healthy snack from home each day.

Keeping scholars well-hydrated and well-fueled helps maximize their readiness to learn and their ability to stay focused. Examples of healthy snacks include whole fruit, yogurt, cheese and whole grain crackers, carrots and hummus dip, or granola bars with dried fruit. *Chewing gum is not permitted.*

Closed Campus for Deliveries

To maximize time for instruction and to ensure the safety of scholars, no outside food will be permitted to be

delivered during school hours from a delivery service, barring a scholar accidentally forgetting to bring a meal to school, resulting in a parent needing to make any necessary arrangements. Microwaves are not available for scholar lunches. Time spent receiving food from the main office is a detriment to class instruction.

Holiday/Birthday Celebrations

AXL is a very diverse community, representing many cultural and religious traditions, and out of respect for each other, scholars do not celebrate holidays at school with parties, snacks, or gifts. We encourage scholars to talk about their family traditions with their crewmates, and scholars learn about many different kinds of celebrations through their regular instruction.

The timing of birthday celebrations are determined by crew leaders. If you are interested in celebrating your scholar's birthday with the crew, please contact your scholar's crew leader for a classroom celebration.

Communications

AXL publishes a variety of media to keep everyone in our community

up-to-date on what's going on at school. This includes but is not limited to: website, online calendar, social media sites, K-8 Thursday Folders, The Hoot (School Newsletter), Crew Newsletter, Monthly eBlasts, PEAK's Bulletin Board, Board of Directors' agenda and minutes, Mobile App, Class Dojo and more. Teachers use Class Dojo to send important information pertaining to class, expeditions and more. Please see your student's crew leader if you do not receive a sign-up link for Class Dojo. If you have questions or events to post, please send them to: info@axlacademy or (303-377-0758).

School Closings

AXL Academy follows all school closures and delayed openings with the Aurora Public Schools in addition to making our own decisions on closures/delays if necessary. If APS closes, AXL closes. If we make a call of a closure/delay outside of APS' decision, this will be communicated through robo-calls, emails, ClassDojo, the front office phone and local news stations.

Broadcasts are usually made by 6:00am and periodically thereafter until 9:00 am.

Safety & Security

All visitors to the school need to check in at the Reception Desk with a driver's license, state issued ID or passport (any country) and receive a visitor's badge. The driver's license, state issued ID or passport will be scanned for safety and security.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit their scholars' classrooms and to experience the program first hand throughout the year. **Please make arrangements with your child's crew teacher at least the day before you plan to visit.** This ensures our ability to monitor the number of visitors on any given day and make certain the visit will meet your needs.

AXL has created a safe space for students to engage, empower and achieve. We ask all visitors respect this safe space during school hours and during school events. Because of this, visitors should refrain from dialogue with other students or faculty to not impede the environment unless asked to do so by the teacher.

Volunteers

AXL depends on the generosity and talents of our entire community to create this special learning community.

We expect every family to try to contribute at least 12 hours of their time and talent to the school every year.

AXL's teacher-parent group, PEAK, coordinates parent volunteer opportunities. There are many, many ways to participate meaningfully in your child's learning and benefit AXL, including options you can do at home or outside regular school hours. For example, facilitate or co-facilitate an after-school club, clip school box tops, cut or fold or assemble craft projects, recruit new families to AXL, photocopy instructional materials, assist teachers updating their crew newsletters, even prepare food for staff during student-led conferences!

During school hours, parents can read aloud to scholars, help AXL maintain its plantings, gardens and indoor plants, sweep the playground, supervise lunch, perform administrative tasks for teachers or

staff members, level classroom book libraries, chaperone fieldwork, help teachers assemble documentation panels and displays of scholar work – the possibilities are endless!

Volunteers self-record all applicable hours through the AXL website.

PEAK

PEAK stands for Parents, Educators And Kids and everyone is a member by having a child at AXL. PEAK is actively seeking volunteer participation in supporting the school and enhancing the quality of the educational experience at AXL Academy. Your involvement is important, your time is appreciated and you will contribute greatly to your child's success. PEAK meets monthly to plan upcoming events, fundraisers and more. Dates are posted on our website and on the PEAK bulletin board in the main office.

Accident or Medical Emergency

AXL Academy has a full time Nurse Para and contracts with Children's Hospital for a nurse consultant.

If your child becomes ill or is injured for any reason during the day, he or

she will be taken to the office where the nurse para will decide if the child can return to class, needs a short rest or first aid of any kind, or needs to go home. The Front Office keeps all emergency forms and healthcare plans on file and will contact a parent or parent-designated emergency contact person should the need arise. It is imperative that you keep the emergency contact information for your child up-to-date. Parents should notify the AXL's Registrar with any changes.

If a medical emergency situation arises, first aid will be administered immediately and parents (or parent-designated emergency contact person) will be notified. If the situation warrants, as the the AXL Nurse Para or Children's Hospital nurse determines, the school will call Emergency Medical Services (911), and you will be notified immediately.

Medication

AXL Academy will not administer any medication without a note from the doctor. Any new prescriptions must be given to the Nurse Para immediately. No medication is permitted to be on school property

without notifying the nurse para of a doctor's prescription.

Emergencies

During an emergency situation, (fire, alarm, bomb threat, gas leak, unwelcome visitor, etc.), AXL follows very specific procedures established by the school district. These procedures may or may not involve notifying or explaining the nature of the emergency to scholars. These procedures may or may not involve evacuation; some cases may require a lockdown or secure perimeter that secures all entrances and exits, and keeps all scholars and staff inside the building. During a lockdown or secure perimeter, you will not be able to enter the building, nor will the school be allowed to release your child, until the lockdown/secure perimeter has been lifted.

All emergency situations and potential emergency situations are taken very seriously and are dictated by safety procedures articulated by the district, local police and law enforcement officials.

Evacuations are conducted in a timely and controlled manner. Staff and scholars remain in their crew's designated safe spot out of the way

of emergency vehicles. As required by law, we practice evacuating with scholars every month, with and without advance notice. We also conduct practice drills annually for tornado watches and lockdowns. A search team consisting of police, AXL administrator, and/or other district personnel and fire/emergency personnel will conduct a search of the premises and decide when the building is safe to re-enter.

School Property

AXL expects scholars to treat school property and equipment with care and responsibility. School property includes the building and grounds, equipment including all technology, lockers, books and any other material possession of AXL. Intentional actions to damage or harm school property will result in disciplinary action and the scholar's obligation to replace or repair the damaged property.

Seventh and Eighth Grade scholars may be assigned a locker. AXL will supply locks for lockers. Scholars may only use locks provided by AXL Academy. Middle school lockers are to be left in the same condition as received with no damage or

defacement of the school's property. Scholars may access their assigned locker before and after school and during lunch.

Personal Property

All property brought to school is brought at the owner's risk. AXL does not assume responsibility for any property belonging to scholars. Distracting or inappropriate objects will be taken from a scholar and returned at the end of the day. Repeated violations will require a parent conference. Scholars should not bring large sums of money to school.

The safety of scholars and staff is paramount. As permitted by law, AXL administrators can and will search scholars or staff members' property (including backpacks, computer bags, coats, cubbies or lockers, etc.) with or without prior consent if there is cause for concern. There is no expectation of privacy.

Lost & Found

The school's lost and found is located in the main office. Items not claimed at the end of each trimester are donated to charitable organizations.

Scholar Records

AXL maintains important information files on each scholar as required by law. Parent(s) or guardian(s) and scholars may review those records with reasonable advance notice given to the school. School officials may obtain access to your records for educational purposes only. All individually identifiable educational information is confidential except for "directory" information. Directory information includes the scholar's name, date of birth, dates of attendance, degrees and other honors awarded.

Media Release Opt-Out

AXL periodically creates publications to highlight scholar achievement, school life and school events and will maintain a regular website with this information. These publications and websites are developed for the purposes of admissions, public relations, fundraising, and other uses that promote the school. From time to time, the school may also get media requests to highlight the school and its scholars. The media release approval is processed during registration. The school honors these forms, such that scholar photographs

or video clips will be included in publications only if the parent/guardian has granted permission.

Distribution of Published Materials or Documents

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed to the greater community, with prior approval by the Principal or other administrator. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc.

Unless a scholar or parent or staff member obtains specific prior approval from the Principal, written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed at school or on campus. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

Commerce

Scholars may not sell any articles on school property without the permission of the Principal. They may not make a collection of money or materials for their own purposes or for an organization to which they belong outside of school without prior permission from the Principal.

AUTHENTIC LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Design Principles

AXL's educational program and organizational design are based on the following principles. Together with our mission and vision, these principles found the purpose of our school.

These principles are informed by the contributions of educators & researchers before us, including the work of EL Education:

- *All scholars can achieve.*
AXL Academy believes that all scholars can achieve regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion or gender.
- *We are crew, not passengers, in life.*
One of AXL Academy's primary functions is to help scholars realize their potential in the larger world. AXL believes that diverse and inclusive school communities increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others.

AXL's community members investigate and value their different histories and talents as well as those of other communities and cultures. Grouping is heterogeneous.

- *Engagement happens best through authentic experiences.*

AXL Academy engages scholars by designing authentic learning experiences that focus on important real-world issues, include opportunities for hands-on experimentation, and balance inquiry-based strategies with more traditional instructional methods. AXL builds a supportive community by advocating for social justice and intentionally developing character within each learning experience.

- *Empowerment happens best through both a demonstration of exceptional character and a commitment to our community.*

AXL Academy empowers each of its community members to become increasingly responsible for directing their own learning and supports the development of the whole individual. AXL's educational experience is designed to provide both individual and group

opportunities to engage within and meaningfully contribute to our community.

- *Significant achievement is integral to the success of each and every scholar.*

Each rigorous learning experience is designed to assess scholars' mastery of knowledge and skills through more traditional means, while providing a project-based opportunity for scholars to apply their knowledge and skills in solving a real-world issue for an authentic audience.

Family & Crew Leader Collaboration

Your child's crew leader is your primary contact for any school-related information and can help you answer questions or facilitate communication to other members of the staff. AXL's goal is for your child's crew leader to connect at least once a week to share updates about the discoveries, triumphs, and challenges of the crew. Weekly contact typically happens through Classroom Dojo. Other means of communication may include email, phone, or information sent home with scholars. If you have any questions or concerns, contact

your scholar's crew leader. Teachers are expected to respond to parent queries within 24 business hours.

At the end of each trimester, you will be expected to attend a conference with your child and his or her crew leader. These three conferences each year are mandatory, and the dates are posted on AXL's Academic Calendar. Crew leaders will coordinate conference scheduling for their crew.

Grading

At AXL, scholars are given grades for both academic tasks and character development. The school-wide grading system is:

4: EXEMPLARY

Scholar consistently exceeds the learning target.

3: ACCOMPLISHED

Scholar has consistently met the learning target.

2: DEVELOPING

Scholar demonstrates some progress toward the learning target.

1: BEGINNING

Scholar demonstrates little progress toward the learning target.

Report Cards

At the end of each trimester, every scholar receives a report card, including numerical grades in all subject areas, character development, iReady benchmark data, and attendance data.

Student-Led Conferences (SLCs)

At the end of the first and second trimester, scholars present their work to their family and crew leader. Each conference is twenty minutes in length, including both scholar-led presentations and parent-teacher conversation. These events are mandatory for both families and scholars. The days of these conferences are included in the Academic Calendar, and teachers do their very best to accommodate family translation and scheduling needs. For families with multiple siblings at AXL, we try to schedule all the conferences for one family consecutively. Parents receive their scholar's report card for each trimester at conferences.

We are Crew, Not Passengers, In Life

The structure of crew is designed explicitly to connect individual

scholars to smaller families within AXL Academy’s community. Each day, scholars will have the opportunity to meet within their crew.

Crew meetings are designed to help scholars build connections to our community while participating in a broad range of activities, from playing fun games to tackling serious social issues. At various points throughout the year, families will also be invited to participate and contribute to crew meetings. Crew is an amazing time of day for scholars and staff to really focus on connecting to the AXL community.

Expeditions

AXL’s staff design all curriculum directly from grade-level Common Core Standards. These learning experiences are organized under complex guiding questions, and provide the opportunity for scholars to dig deep into real-world issues. Learning experiences vary in length and aim to integrate most core subject areas. Each learning experience culminates with a project that may include the use of technology and/or fine and performing arts. Projects are designed to replicate real-world work

for an authentic audience. “Experts” from our community are encouraged to work alongside our scholars, including; community leaders and organizations, families, EL Education, local colleges and universities, Aurora Public Schools, Colorado Department of Education, city and government agencies, museums, libraries, and key industries.

Specifically, AXL Academy’s learning experiences contain:

- Rigorous Content based on national Common Core Standards
- Integrated Reading & Writing & Speaking
- Inquiry-based Science and Social Studies
- Integrated Art and Technology when appropriate
- Authentic products
- Fieldwork outside the classroom & local experts
- Service Learning
- Documentation & Reflection

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is the term AXL uses to describe leaving the classroom to conduct authentic research, and it is used to build scholars’ curiosity and

knowledge. Fieldwork is not a “field trip.” Unlike the traditional “field trip,” fieldwork has a clear academic purpose that extends the learning experience. For example, scholars may visit the South Platte River to collect and test water samples, attend a cultural center to conduct interviews with refugees, or collect observational data at the Denver Zoo while studying a chosen species. Procedures and skills for fieldwork are taught in the classroom beforehand and the data collected is analyzed back in the classroom.

Fieldwork is modeled as much as possible on the authentic research of professionals in the field (zoologists, historians, anthropologists, newspaper reporters, artists, etc.). Teachers select data collection tools to suit the fieldwork’s purpose, such as interviewing, mapping, sketching, sampling, or using observational protocols.

Fieldwork is structured so that it is safe. The outside experts with whom scholars conduct fieldwork reflect the community as much as possible and include professionals and families. Experts’ work may include, but goes beyond, lecture and presentation to

train scholars in professional skills and techniques of their field. Experts help scholars critique their work against real-world examples and are encouraged to maintain ongoing relationships with scholars and their teachers.

Transportation, when needed, will be arranged by teachers.

English Language Development (ELD)

AXL Academy provides a forty-minute language block to all scholars enrolled in Kindergarten through the 8th grade. AXL’s language block is dedicated time for English language instruction using content-enriched second language instructional methodology. Sheltered instruction may be used during this time to serve our scholar population that speaks very little, or no English at all.

Language blocks in Kindergarten to Eighth Grade are designed to support all scholars with English language instruction needed to support each learning experience. It is also designated time in the schedule to support scholars who are

identified as needing support with oral language fluency.

Homework

Scholars at AXL work hard and play hard every day. We believe that homework is a tool for enrichment, extension, and opportunities for scholars to make connections between their work at school with their daily lives at home, perhaps even share with their families what they are learning about.

AXL teachers use discretion and intention when assigning homework:

- K-2 scholars may have up to 20 minutes of homework on any given night.
- 3-4 scholars may have up to 45 minutes of homework on any given night.
- 5-8 scholars may have up to 90 minutes of homework on any given night.

Homework will be developmentally appropriate and should not depend on a parent or adult's assistance or participation. In other words, **scholars can be expected to complete their homework independently.** If your scholar

struggles to understand the homework assignment or struggles to complete the homework once you help clarify the instructions, please let the crew leader know. It is not helpful if you help your scholar do his or her own homework because then the homework will not reflect what the scholar can do independently and the teacher will not be able to assess what the scholar's actual instructional needs are.

In elementary grades, homework is typically assigned weekly, with new packets of homework sent home in Thursday folders and due before the following Wednesday.

Completing and returning homework is a significant responsibility every scholar has. Scholars who do not complete homework are often unable to participate or understand the next day's classroom fully because they are not prepared to learn. It is imperative that scholars and parents stay on top of homework assignments to ensure academic progress!

Assessment

Within each learning experience, scholars will be frequently assessed

to measure their knowledge and skill acquisition towards Common Core standards. Learning experiences will also include summative assessments that measure a scholar's ability to apply their knowledge and skill in solving real-world problems. In accordance with the Colorado Department of Education, scholars in grades 3-8 will also be assessed using CMAS. Throughout the year, AXL staff may determine to use other assessments to diagnose and intervene with individual scholars.

Scholar achievement data collected through all of these means drives our instruction and professional development.

Special Education

Like all public schools, AXL develops and serves Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for scholars who have been identified with special academic, social-emotional or medical needs.

The school district does not permit AXL to serve scholars with severe special needs. AXL's charter only permits us to enroll scholars with mild or moderate needs. If your child has

special needs, please contact their Principal.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

AXL Academy's MTSS system provides three tiers of academic and/or behavioral support to all scholars. Tier 1 instruction serves the general classroom, and is defined by the use of research-based instructional strategies embedded in whole-class instruction. Tier 1 supports are determined by the teacher, and families may be notified about specific strategies being implemented through Classroom Dojo, Email, or by Phone. When evidence is collected through classroom assessments, standardized assessments (i-Ready & CMAS), and/or behavior data shows that Tier 1 is not serving the scholar, individual scholars are moved onto the next level of support, Tier 2.

Tier 2 plans may increase the frequency of supports already being used in the classroom, may require small group support, may require individual instruction, or may require the use of technology. Tier 2 supports are designed with a team of

people (Grade-Cluster Teachers, Interventionists, and Administrators) based upon a diverse body of scholar data (standardized test scores, classroom assessments, grades, attendance data and/or behavior data, etc.). To begin a Tier 2 plan, the scholar and the scholar's family will be invited to attend a meeting with the appropriate staff members (classroom teachers, interventionists, and/or administrators). Tier 2 plans will include specific growth goals and be closely monitored by AXL's instructional staff members assigned to the plan. Scholars showing growth towards their goals will remain on the same Tier 2 plan or be moved to Tier 1. If evidence shows the plan is not meeting the needs of individual scholars, then these scholars will have their Tier 2 plan modified or be moved on to a Tier 3 plan.

Tier 3 plans may modify a scholar's schedule to include small group instruction and/or access to technology. Tier 3 plans are developed and refined by a team of people using a diverse body of evidence. To begin a Tier 3 plan, the scholar and the scholar's family will be required to attend a meeting with

appropriate staff members. Tier 3 plans will be directed by specific growth-based goals and be monitored, as determined by plan. Scholars showing growth on a Tier 3 plan may continue on the same plan or be moved to a Tier 2. If evidence shows the Tier 3 plan is not meeting the individual needs of the scholar, then the plan and systems of support will be analyzed, discussed and revised.

Grade Level Preparedness Standards

AXL Academy's educational program is designed for scholars to be independently successful on each grade level standard. AXL's instructional staff will utilize the MTSS process to best support scholars in preparation for the next grade level. If scholars are not meeting grade level standards, or a body of evidence indicates a scholar's growth will not be sufficient to meet the standards, AXL's instructional staff will communicate with families. Families and scholars will be provided with resources and strategies that will help prepare scholars for meeting grade level standards.

Category	Scholars on track for standards mastery to the next grade level...
i-Ready Level in Reading and Math	...will be within one level of their assigned grade level as determined by i-Ready
CMAS	... will have scored “Approaching Expectations”, “Met Expectations”, or “Exceeded Expectations”
Grade Point Average	...will maintain a 2.0 or higher
Attendance	...will have 9 or less absences

8th Grade & High School Selection

AXL believes strongly that scholars and their families should exercise their legal right to select a high school that meets their needs and expectations. Families will participate in a High School Fair in the Fall to learn about area high schools and make informed decisions about their priorities and which school best suits them. AXL staff will work closely with families to make those decisions and

help prepare applications for admissions, interviews, and financial aid forms.

8th Grade Passages

All 8th grade scholars shall participate in Passages to end the school year. Passages celebrates the passing from AXL to high school with a formal scholar presentation to members of the community. Passages include self analysis, future goals and the selection of a high school to achieve success.

School Performance Data

You can see AXL’s data specifically on CDE’s website, SchoolView (<http://www.schoolview.org/>).

AXL prepares an annual Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), as do all public schools. The plan is developed in the Fall of each year, based on an analysis of the school’s previous year of operations. AXL’s UIP is developed by its School Accountability Committee of the Board of Directors. Parents and community members are invited to participate in the development of the improvement plans through meetings in the Fall. UIPs are posted online on

CDE's website, SchoolView (<http://www.schoolview.org/>).

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT & DISCIPLINE

Code of Character

AXL expects all members of its community – scholars, staff, parents, and board members – to be aware and active participants in promoting a cooperative and respectful learning environment.

AXL expects that each scholar will conduct himself or herself in a responsible and constructive manner and the school will work with the family to help build those attitudes and foster behavior that will lead to positive participation in our school community.

These expectations are embodied in a formal Code of Character, which is evident in every classroom, the lunchroom, during recess, before and after school and whenever scholars represent AXL in the larger community.

AXL CODE OF CHARACTER

This is how we choose to learn and grow together:

RESPECT

I can listen actively and thoughtfully.

I can honor other people's contributions.

I can consider new ideas with an open mind.

I can notice the good in myself and in others.

RESPONSIBILITY

I can ask questions and I am actively engaged in class.

I can come to school prepared each day.

I can persevere when things are hard.

I can discover my strengths, values, passions, and responsibilities.

I can seek positive change.

COURAGE

I can have wonderful ideas and share them without fear.

I can risk trying my best.

I can face my weaknesses.

I can learn from my failures and mistakes.

I can learn and try new things.

I can trust my crew.

INTEGRITY

I can show commitment through my actions, not just words.

I can be honest.

I can know my purpose.
I can represent AXL and myself with dignity.
I can do my fair share.

STEWARDSHIP

I can be a good role model.
I can encourage others to participate positively.
I can help others and make sure my crew-mates and I feel safe and comfortable.
I can leave no trace by treating materials and space with care.
I can welcome guests into our school.

CRAFTSMANSHIP

I can reflect upon my best efforts.
I can collaborate.
I can use quality work habits.
I can revise my work multiple times to create a quality product.

Philosophy

AXL's Code of Character provides the basis for scholars to pursue our school's vision of personal empowerment and the ability to critically reflect on society as a whole. The Code of Character also provides a school-wide structure for making disciplinary decisions, such as establishing classroom routines

for preschoolers to share crayons or for responding to a teenager's disrespectful conduct toward a crew-mate.

AXL Academy implements a character development curriculum to develop the inner discipline and cooperative skills to succeed throughout their lives, not just at school. Facing ever-increasing academic and personal challenges, it is essential to build scholars' emotional literacy and self-control to better equip them to direct their own futures.

Rather than just reacting to problems, AXL proactively teaches scholars self-control, social participation, and conflict resolution. We do this through specific rituals and routines, through team-building activities, and even through daily instructional practices that emphasize respect and equity.

MISCONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

AXL's approach to classroom management and discipline reflects our belief that character development and scholars' emotional literacy are critical to long-term academic success and their ability to thrive in

life, long after school ends. Ultimately, we want scholars at AXL to be responsible, resourceful, and resilient at school, at home, and in the community.

Accordingly, when a scholar violates the Code of Character, we help the scholar recognize how his or her behavior affects their own learning or their crew-mates' learning. We help them look for other strategies that would be more effective and have positive rather than negative results. The emphasis is on education, not punishment. Consequences for behavior are natural and consistent. We want our scholars to learn how to act appropriately when they are on their own.

Positive Referrals

Scholars earn "Positive Referrals" when their behavior exemplifies AXL's Code of Character. Positive Referrals can be given by any staff member at any time to any scholar, not just by a scholar's own crew leader. Scholars who earn a Positive Referral receive recognition at his or her's grade-level Community Meeting.

SHARP System

Scholars can work together as a crew to earn SHARP Credits by demonstrating the following positive learning behaviors:

S = Sit up and Track the Speaker

H = Hands up, ready to be called on at any time

A = Active Learning (asking and answering questions, engaged)

R = Ready to Learn (prepared for class, materials organized, on time)

P = Persevere (staying positive, working through hard challenges, asking for help when you need it, not giving up)

Crews can redeem SHARP Credits for a variety of group-based incentives.

The SHARP Credit System is designed to reward and celebrate responsible, appropriate, and self-directed conduct at school as well as motivate entire classrooms of scholars to work together.

Scholar Discipline

AXL's approach to classroom management and discipline reflects our belief that character development and a scholar's emotional literacy are

critical to their long-term academic success and their ability to thrive in life, long after school ends. Ultimately, we want scholars at AXL to be responsible, resourceful, and resilient. As such, scholar behavior is addressed with an emphasis on education, rather than on punishment. Consequences for misbehavior are logical and consistent, developmentally appropriate, and they scaffold scholars' independent behavior management skills.

AXL's disciplinary plan is based on Colorado's (2002) disciplinary framework, the Triangle of Influence: encouragement, feedback, and discipline.

1. Encouraging a scholar means that one or more of life's critical messages (listed below) is coming through, by words or by actions:

- I believe in you.
- I trust you.
- I know you can handle this.
- You are listened to.
- You are cared for.
- You are very important to me.

Whether a teacher's encouragement comes before a child's attempt at a new activity, in the middle of struggling with a difficult skill, or after a costly mistake in judgment, the message is that, even in the face of adversity, scholars can do well and feel good about owning their learning.

2. Feedback enables scholars to examine their behavior and actions honestly and realistically. There are three kinds of feedback: compliments, comments, and constructive criticism. Each one is important to helping scholars become responsible, resourceful, and resilient.

3. Discipline is not something we do to scholars. Discipline is not punishment. It is a restorative process that instructs and helps scholars develop self-discipline, not just compliance with an outside imposition. The process of discipline does four things that punishment cannot do:

- Shows scholars what they have done wrong.
- Gives them ownership of the problem.

- Helps them find ways to solve the problem.
- Leaves their dignity intact.

Discipline involves real consequences. Real consequences teach children that they are accountable to the school community and that they have positive power in their lives. They can make decisions and solve problems.

1. The goal of discipline is to help the children learn to make good choices. Consequences are individualized with the question in mind, *“What will help the scholar learn from this situation?”* We therefore use natural consequences or remediations when possible. They are not punitive, but designed so that a scholar is able to recognize the impact of his or her choices and will learn to make better choices in the future. For example, throwing paper may mean the scholar’s consequence may pick up paper off the floor throughout AXL’s hallways. Not completing your assignment during work time means that you need to complete it tonight for homework and get Mom’s signature on it to let her

know that you did not use your time wisely during class. Repeatedly calling out and disrupting instruction means that you may be guided in preparing an apology and discuss your behavior with the rest of your crew during Crew Time, where your crewmates will have the opportunity to tell you how your behavior impacts them negatively.

2. Continued problems result in escalating interventions, parent and others’ involvement and/or consequences. If the same scholar repeats behaviors day after day that have already been talked about with steps (see next page in the Positive Culture section), an unhealthy pattern is emerging and needs more intensive intervention. That could be an informal parent meeting, a conversation and planning with your supervisor. Difficult patterns can lead to a behavior plan or an RTI plan.

3. AXL scholars take responsibility for solving problems with adult guidance. We ask scholars to remedy negative situations they have caused. We ask for parents’

support when a scholar needs to take responsibility for his or her role in a situation.

In fixing problems, **there is an emphasis on repairing the relationship** with the individual or community. We do not force apologies, but we do expect scholars to “revise and redeem” their behavior, make agreements, and set goals in order to emphasize the importance of restoring harm that may have been caused and rebuild trust. We emphasize too the importance of rebuilding trust with someone hurt by poor choices.

4. **Under no circumstance do children have the right to hurt others, create a real or perceived unsafe environment, or disrupt learning at AXL Academy.** The safety of scholars is paramount. If a scholar is actively hurting another scholar, or themselves, you are to immediately contact the front office and ask for administrative support.
5. **We honor scholars’ voices** at AXL Academy, and therefore scholars always have the right to discuss their viewpoint with their

teacher or Principal. Scholars will be asked to write down their viewpoints before a discussion will take place.

Suspension

Inappropriate scholar behavior not only impacts the scholar, but also compromises the larger school community. Scholars must understand that they are part of their larger crew and school community and are accountable to their peers for adhering to the values and expectations outlined in AXL’s Code of Character.

AXL is aware of the research and data on the use of suspension as a measure of discipline. There is little to suggest it changes behavior either in the student exhibiting the behavior or as a deterrent to other students. It is AXL’s belief that all proactive and restorative measures are exhausted prior to the use of suspension, excluding the items mentioned under Serious Discipline Matters. At AXL, out-of-school suspensions are typically used when the safety of the community is jeopardized and/or administration needs time to prepare for a scholars’ return to school. In school suspension is often used to

comprehensively address behavioral issues through educational instruction, restorative practices, and reflection.

Scholars may be suspended from AXL for up to 10 consecutive days for extreme violations of the school's Code of Character, including willful disobedience or defiance, violence or threats of violence, bullying, hateful slurs, weapons of any kind, theft, vandalism, or drug/alcohol/tobacco use. Suspension from school may also occur if a scholar's conduct fails to improve after repeated interventions and continues to disrupt learning at AXL. Formal written notification will be given to parents or guardians of any suspension.

Teachers will supply work for scholars during periods of suspension.

In certain circumstances, as determined by AXL administrators, a parent/scholar conference may be required before the scholar will be able to return to AXL. Suspensions from school are recorded in a scholar's cumulative record, as required by law.

Serious Discipline Matters

AXL abides by the Aurora Public Schools' *Safe Schools Policies & Procedures Guidebook*, when addressing serious discipline matters. Specifically, a scholar who engages in any of the following behaviors will be referred to an AXL administrator immediately.

- Confirmed carrying, bringing, using or possessing a dangerous weapon (as that term is defined in section 22-33-106[1][d], Colorado Revised Statutes) or bringing a firearm (as that term is defined in 18 United States Code Section 921(a)(3)) to school without the authorization of the school or the district;
- Confirmed sale of a "drug" or "controlled substance" (as those terms are defined in section 12-22-303, Colorado Revised Statutes);
- Confirmed commission of an act by a scholar at least 10 years of age which, if committed by an adult would be robbery pursuant to title 18, article 4, part 3 of the Colorado Revised Statutes; and
- Confirmed commission of an act by a scholar at least 10 years of age which, if committed by an adult

would be assault pursuant to title 18, article 3, part 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (other than third degree assault).

- Declaration as an "Habitually Disruptive Scholar";
- Repeated interference with a school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other scholars; and/or
- Bullying

Expulsion

AXL has the right by law to expel scholars under the following circumstances:

- Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of proper authority;
- Willful destruction or defacing of school property;
- Behavior on or off school property that is detrimental to the welfare or safety of other pupils or school personnel, including behavior which creates a threat of physical harm;
- Serious violations in school or on school property involving weapons, firearms, sale of drugs or controlled substances, assault, or robbery; and/or

- Bullying

In addition, after a proper investigation and hearing, AXL may recommend to its Board of Directors that a scholar be expelled if the scholar has been suspended three times from school and the school deems the third offense major or significant.

Formal written notification of a recommendation for expulsion will be given to parents or guardians. Expulsions from school are recorded in a scholar's cumulative record, as required by law, may last up to one calendar year, and may result in the denial of admissions at another school within the district.

AXL retains the discretion to modify disciplinary procedures or consequences, and/or take more severe and immediate action when deemed necessary based on its assessment of the individual circumstances. All final decisions regarding disciplinary action will be made by an AXL Principal.

Bullying

"Bullying" means any written, verbal or pictorial expression, physical or

electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof by a scholar that is intended to coerce, intimidate or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm to any scholar. This includes the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or significantly offensive environment that interferes with the learning or performance of school sanctioned activities of any scholar.

Responses to Bullying

When known bullying behaviors are present, the circumstances surrounding the behavior, the severity of the conduct, and whether the conduct represents a pattern will be considered. When a pattern of bullying is identified, or when a single behavior is determined to be an egregious act determined to be an act of bullying, referral to an administrator will take place. The processing of this referral will require involvement of the scholar's guardians and may result in a behavior contract, suspension or other disciplinary action, and/or expulsion of the scholar as prescribed by APS Safe Schools.

Threat Assessment/Suicide Risk

AXL takes all threats and risks very seriously. AXL will adhere to the Claire Davis Act and complete a threat assessment for every verified threat. Necessary information will be shared with involved parties and will be FERPA compliant. A full suicide risk assessment is made by the school social worker or mental health specialist when necessary. Necessary information will be shared with involved parties and will be FERPA compliant.

Annual Enrollment Requirements

As choice/open enrollment students, behavior and attendance requirements must be upheld:

- **no more than one out-of-school suspension**
- **a 95% or more attendance record.**

A student's enrollment application may be revoked at the end of the year if the requirements are not met.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICIES

Acceptable Use

Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, instruction, college exploration and career development. AXL offers Internet access to its scholars and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of AXL. We expect that scholars and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose.

While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. AXL makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of AXL's Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet. AXL has installed special filtering software in an effort to block access to material that is not appropriate for children.

The Internet also allows for easy communication between individuals

and groups, and therefore allows for quick and efficient communication between school and home. Families are encouraged to contact teachers via e-mail to set up appointments to discuss any scholar or school issues, or to ask brief questions, but should not use e-mail for extended conversations. All components of the Code of Character and any resulting disciplinary procedures are applicable to e-mail communication from a scholar to a teacher or any other school staff.

The school maintains a mobile computer lab to which scholars have access under adult supervision. Scholars are not allowed to bring discs or flash drives from home into school to print materials.

Unacceptable Use

The following is a list of prohibited behaviors. The list is not exhaustive but illustrates unacceptable uses of AXL's Internet Service:

- accessing personal e-mail correspondence;
- accessing websites during class other than those identified by the teacher as appropriate for class;

- disclosing, using or disseminating personal identification information about self or others;
- accessing, sending or forwarding materials or communications that are defamatory, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, threatening, harassing, or illegal (cyberbullying other scholars or staff is considered bullying by the Colorado Department of Education and Aurora Public Schools and punishable by statute);
- using the Internet service for any illegal activities such as gaining unauthorized access to other systems, arranging for the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, participating in criminal gang activity, threatening others, transferring obscene material, or attempting to do any of the above;
- using the Internet service to receive or send information relating to dangerous instruments such as bombs or other explosive devices, automatic weapons or other firearms, or other weaponry;
- vandalizing school computers by causing physical damage, reconfiguring the computer system, attempting to disrupt the computer system, or destroying data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means;
- copying or downloading of copyrighted material without authorization from the copyright holder, unless the copies are used for teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. Users shall not copy and forward or copy and upload any copyrighted material without prior approval of a member of the faculty;
- plagiarizing material obtained from the Internet. Any material obtained from the Internet and included in one's own work must be cited and credited by name or by electronic address or path on the Internet. Information obtained through email or news sources must also be credited as to sources;
- using the Internet service for commercial purposes;
- downloading or installing any commercial software, shareware, freeware or similar types of material onto network drives or disks without prior permission of the Computer Teacher; and
- overriding the Internet filtering software.

AXL Academy's Cell Phone and Electronic Devices Policy

Except for approved educational purposes, scholar's personal electronic devices shall not be seen, used, nor heard during the school day. Cell phones and electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, tablets, cameras, electronic games, etc.

Any cell phone heard or seen may be confiscated until the end of the day. Once a cell phone has been confiscated, parent(s) or guardian(s) may be required to meet with AXL Administration or Staff before the device will be returned.

AXL Academy does not assume any responsibility or liability for theft, loss, or damage of a cell phone or other electronic device in a scholar's possession.

Online Safety

The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications.

- Never reveal *any* identifying information such as last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers,

parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs.

- Use the "back" key whenever you encounter a site that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Immediately tell a staff member if you receive a message that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Never share your password or use another person's password. Internet passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password, you should change it immediately and notify a staff member.

Privacy

Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. AXL reserves the right to examine all data stored on CDs or flash drives, or any other form or method of electronic storage, utilized in or on AXL's Internet service.

Electronic messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network or school administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

Violations

Access to AXL's Internet service is a privilege, not a right. AXL reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including replacement of technology, payment for damaged devices, suspension, expulsion (scholars), or dismissal (staff) for violations of this policy. The school will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through AXL's Internet service. The school also will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

Non-Discrimination Policy

AXL recruits, hires, trains, educates, promotes, and administers all personnel and instructional actions without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual preference, age, national origin, disability, need for special education services, marital status, or use of public assistance. We will not tolerate any discrimination, and any such conduct is prohibited. The school also prohibits any form of discipline or retaliation for reporting such incidents.

Harassment

AXL is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, staff, scholars, vendors and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is strictly prohibited. AXL requires all employees and scholars to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, scholars and all members of the school community.

In general, harassment includes communications such as jokes,

comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, native language, socio-economic status or disability.

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden.

GOVERNANCE

Board of Directors

As a Colorado nonprofit organization, AXL Academy is governed by a Board of Directors who retains fiduciary and legal responsibility for the school. The Board employs the Principal to implement the school's vision. Board meetings are open to all, and agendas and minutes are posted on AXL's website and are available for viewing at AXL. To contact the board, email board@axlacademy.org.

Public Comment Policy

The AXL Academy Board of Directors recognizes the value of public comment on school issues and the importance of allowing members

of the public to express themselves on matters of community interest.

Section 1: Agenda Requests:

Any person or group wishing to place an item on the agenda shall register their intent with the Board Secretary no later than seven (7) days prior to the meeting and include name and address of the participant, group affiliation, if and when appropriate, and the topic to be addressed. Such requests to add topics to the Board agenda shall be subject to the approval of the Board Chairperson.

Section 2: Public Comment:

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at every regular meeting of the Board and publish rules to govern such participation in Board meetings. A period for public participation at the beginning of every regular meeting, or such other time during the meeting as the presiding officer deems appropriate, of the Board shall be for comments with regard to items on and not on the agenda for that regular meeting. The presiding officer of each Board meeting at which public participation is permitted shall administer the rules

of the Board for its conduct. The presiding officer and those wishing to make public statements shall be guided by the following rules:

- Public participation shall be permitted as indicated on the order of business and at the discretion of the presiding officer.
- Anyone having a legitimate interest in the actions of the Board may participate during the public portion of a meeting.
- Attendees must register their intention to participate in the public portion of the meeting upon their arrival at the meeting. There will be a sign in sheet with the Secretary.
- Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and will be requested to preface their comments by an announcement of their name and group affiliation, if and when appropriate.
- Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to five (5) minutes duration, unless extended by the presiding officer.
- No participant may speak more than once on the same topic.
- To ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak,

please be brief and limit your comments to one topic.

- All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no person may address or question Board members individually.
- The Board will not respond to comments made during the public participation periods unless it is necessary to ask a clarifying question, correct a factual error, or provide specific factual information in answer to a direct question.

The presiding officer may:

- interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
- request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum;
- call for a recess or an adjournment;
- waive these rules.

The Board of Directors shall respond, if applicable, in writing, to those making public comment, 10 days prior to the next scheduled Board meeting except in the event that a response cannot be formulated in

this timeframe. The presiding officer shall communicate the response timing expectation to the presenter within the 10-day timeframe as well. This allows a presenter the opportunity to submit an Agenda request within the 7 day notice and review required in Section 1 above, if he or she desires that the subject be discussed further, subject to the Agenda Request rules.

Grievance Policy

When an issue arises, parents and/or guardians are encouraged to first

seek the crew leader for a resolution discussion. If a resolution is not met, parents and/or guardians may seek the Principal. If a resolution is not met, parents and/or guardians may seek the Board of Directors of AXL Academy.

AXL FAMILY AGREEMENT

By enrolling your scholar to AXL Academy, you are responsible for the contents of the handbook.