

6245 King Road  
Loomis,  
California 95650  
(916) 259-2790



# Student and Parent Handbook

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**Sierra Foothills Academy** is a non-public school that offers a year-round program for students with moderate to severe disabilities. Our program provides educational and related services to students between the ages of 5 to 22 in grades K through 12. The disabling conditions of the students served at Sierra Foothills Academy include: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Multiple Disability, Intellectual Disability, Emotional Disturbance, Other Health Impairment, and Specific Learning Disability.

### School Hours:

Regular Day 8:15 am to 2:00 pm  
Minimum Day 8:15 am to 12:45 pm

Office Hours 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Calendar A school calendar is updated and distributed to students each year.

### Attendance:

At Sierra Foothills Academy, we believe that students need to be in school to make progress toward meeting their goals. Attendance every school day is mandatory. Medical, dental and other appointments should not be scheduled during school hours unless previous arrangements have been made. The parent or guardian is responsible for calling the school office at 916-259-2790 before 8:30am anytime a student will be absent. Transportation difficulties are not valid excuses for an absence. Prolonged or repeated absences seriously impact a student's academic and behavioral performance. In addition, excessive absences may jeopardize their placement and may be detrimental to successful graduation from this program. Parents/ guardians of students who have excessive absences or who are habitually truant will be referred back to their responsible school district and possible referred to the School Attendance Review Board.

### Medication:

Sierra Foothills has an onsite staff to dispense medication to any student. In order for staff to dispense medication, doctor's orders must be on file. Tylenol or other over-the-counter medications cannot be administered without parent permission. If you need further information regarding medical assistance, please call Ayanna Williams at 916-259-2790.

### Immunizations:

It is the parent's responsibility to submit, upon enrolling into Sierra Foothills Academy, a copy of their child's immunization record. If immunizations are not current or the immunization record cannot be found, our staff will discuss further options with the parent.

### Lunches & Snacks:

At no cost to the student, Sierra Foothills Academy provides a free lunch and breakfast snack to students in attendance. Students with any food allergies should notify the front office right away and bring a packed lunch from home. Every month we offer a lunch

calendar to our students. This calendar is passed out the last day of each month. Lunches are prepared by the Loomis Unified School District.

### Curriculum Overview:

Program components include highly structured and individualized programming, core academic instruction, intensive communication and language training, social skills training, utilization of natural environments for instruction, functional life skills training, community based instruction, vocational skills training, positive behavioral programming, educationally based sensory activities, technology literacy, culinary arts, dance instruction, music appreciation, and vocational training.

### Grading Policy

Grading and promotion within Sierra Foothills Academy will be based upon the degree of success an individual student has achieved in completing the educational program designed to meet his/her unique needs as outlined in the IEP for Diploma or Certificate track students. Every student will have the opportunity to earn grades or progress reports that reflect his/her ability to demonstrate learning outcomes. Each student will be graded only in accordance with his or her achievement on material or information based on specified learning outcomes and approved curricula as identified in each student's IEP. The bell curve will not be used as a basis for determining student grades.

Grades will be based on summative assessments and the completion of formative and practice assignments and or tasks. Grades will also be based on skill acquisition as measured by teacher observation and assessment.

The school maintains a grading policy that is available for review upon request.

### The Web of Life Program:

A unique program called, "The Web of Life" promotes positive interaction between the student and the environment. This innovative approach to education assists students with developing patterns of interaction and communication that can be generalized to multiple settings. Specific emphasis is placed on facilitating the personal growth of individuals through understanding the relationship and interconnectedness of various living systems. Students participate in the full cycle of life, from growing and planting seeds to raising, harvesting, cooking and selling the vegetable. The program provides students with ample opportunities to practice functional skills, earn academic credit, gain vocational experience and practice skills learned in therapies. Activities are aligned with IEPs and student-centered plans. A sample of farming tasks includes sorting, weighing, and learning marketing strategies.

### Technology:

Keeping up with our fast-paced, technology driven world, all classrooms at Sierra Foothills Academy are equipped with electronic devices used for the delivery of instruction. This includes flat screen televisions, iPads, AAC devices, computers and mobi devices. A Technology Usage

Agreement must be signed by all parents and students in order to access computers and related software applications at Sierra Foothills Academy.

## High School Graduation from Sierra Foothills Academy NPS:

Students, who complete the graduation requirements of their referring home district, and pass the high school exit exam (CAHSEE), are able to receive a diploma from their district of residence. Course requirements for graduation would be the same as the referring district. Students who are unable to pass the CAHSEE currently have three pathways to achieve a diploma:

1. **Pass the CAHSEE** - The student scores 350 or higher on the mathematics and English-language arts (ELA) portions of the CAHSEE with the use of accommodations but without the use of modifications.
2. **Request a local waiver** - The student scores 350 or higher on the mathematics and/or ELA portion of the CAHSEE with the use of modifications.
3. **Exemption** - The student has a current and valid IEP or Section 504 plan that indicates the student is scheduled to receive a high school diploma, has satisfied or will satisfy all other state and local graduation requirements on or after July 1, 2009. Students using this pathway to meet the CAHSEE requirement shall take the CAHSEE in grade ten for the purpose of meeting the federal requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

**The CAHSEE requirement was suspended for the 2015–16, 2016–17, and 2017–18 school years. However, all other applicable graduation requirements must be satisfied before a student receives a high school diploma.**

Students are also eligible to earn a certificate of completion. Sierra Foothills Academy has a written course of study for students on a “certificate track.” This course of study is subject to revision by each student’s individualized education program team. Once the student has satisfactorily met his or her individualized education program goals and objectives during high school, the IEP team may finalize a graduation date. The student must also satisfactorily attend high school, participate in instruction as prescribed by his or her individualized education program, and meet the objectives of his or her statement of transition services.

An individual with exceptional needs who meets the criteria for a certificate or document described in the above paragraph shall be eligible to participate in any graduation ceremony and any school activity related to graduation in which a pupil of similar age without disabilities would be eligible to participate. The right to participate in graduation ceremonies does not equate to a certificate or document described in Section 56390 of the California Education Code with a regular high school diploma.

Students 18 or over are able to prepare for and take the GED.

## Transition Planning for Adult Life

At Sierra Foothills Academy, The IEP team, with student input, will create a transition plan beginning with the IEP before a student turns sixteen. This plan will develop transitional goals, and determine and/or provide necessary services to facilitate the student's needs as they look to transition to adult life. Transitional goals may include goals for: independent living, training, education and employment. High school students are given assessments to help them explore possible careers as well as instruction in skills aimed towards obtaining and retaining employment. Qualified high school students are often able to be employed by Serra Foothills Academy in part-time, after school positions. Many students also enroll in the Regional Occupation Program or community college in addition to attending classes at Sierra Foothills Academy.

## Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parent/Guardian involvement in the program at SFA is a critical component. Whenever possible, family involvement is strongly encouraged, and parents and families are viewed as an essential part of each child's overall treatment program. In addition to encouraging attendance of IEP's and treatment team meetings, SFA provides family support services, including frequent "family nights," parent training," "school events," and family therapy and parent/sibling support groups.

## Student Dress Code:

APPROPRIATE DRESS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT HELPS ENSURE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING AND PROMOTES A POSITIVE CLIMATE FOR ALL STUDENTS TO SUCCEED.

While we recognize individual freedoms and rights, our policy on student attire is focused on minimizing disruptions and creating a safe, respectful, responsible and positive environment. We abide by any recommendations from local law enforcement and prohibit attire with known gang affiliation or offensive racial attire.

All student dress should be respectful, responsible and safe to both the individual student and the Sierra Foothills Academy community. SFA staff will work with students to minimize issues related to dress. In the event that a student's clothing, or lack of, is disruptive or violating our policies on respect, responsibility and/or safety, staff will collaboratively problem solve with a student through the situation. This could include changing, having a family member bring appropriate clothing, turning shirts inside out, wearing a jacket/sweatshirt or possibly other suggestions generated by the team.

Examples of appropriate dress include:

- Covered midsections
- Sunglasses worn outdoors
- Clothing with positive or no messages

- Clothing that supports school expectations of respect, responsibility and safety
- Shoes
- Pants that cover a student's underwear

## Discipline Procedure, Philosophy and Overview:

Sierra Foothills Academy has developed a behavior management system which seeks to modify maladaptive behaviors by emphasizing the development of desirable and adaptive behaviors, as opposed to only eliminating or suppressing undesirable behaviors. Our system functions only with the understanding that all students are deserving of respect and an opportunity to succeed. Moreover, communication with parents, school districts, and proper documentation of all behavioral interventions, is a key component of our management system.

### **The general characteristics of our behavior management services are as follows:**

1. It is proactive and preventive by design.
2. It relies heavily on positive interpersonal relationships between the staff and the students.
3. Much effort is expended on manipulating antecedents.
4. It is dependent on the staff's constant interacting with students.
5. It is designed by a multi-disciplinary team.
6. The use of behavioral interventions is guided by the least intrusive/invasive concept.
7. Staff's responsibility is to teach, through interaction with the students, pro-social, internalized skills necessary for movement out of Sierra Foothills Academy.

Behavioral Management at Sierra Foothills Academy is classroom centered, the teacher being the central professional. And all teachers have behind them the training, education; experience and support of their teammates in helping students learn to manage their own behavior.

The Behavior Management System at Sierra Foothills Academy is classroom centered, supported by four program areas: Educational, Mental Health, Administration and Behavioral.

### ***I. Classroom Centered Behavior Management***

Since pre-referral behavior problems occurred for the most part in the classroom, Sierra Foothills Academy's focus and central arena for positive changes is the classroom. Most of the student's time is spent in this setting. Most of the interventions provided by support staff are purposely conducted and/or finalized in the classroom. Classroom teachers, educational assistants and support staff are trained in and utilize proven strategies, approaches and teaching techniques.

We offer the following services to further assist our students with maintaining desirable behaviors:

**Psychiatric Services:** Our consulting psychiatrist and developmental doctor provide diagnostic and prescriptive medication services for students in attendance at Sierra Foothills Academy. The parent, teacher, psychologist and developmental doctor are all involved in the total assessment and determination of treatment.

**Medication Management:** Our mental health staff is responsible for the distribution of the student's medication and for maintaining medication logs. The staff coordinates with parents, care providers and physicians regarding the distribution of medication at the school.

**Crisis Intervention Support:** Our Behavior Analyst creates and modifies support plans. Students demonstrating a higher need of care have immediate access to support staff.

### **SFA Sensory Room:**

Everyone experiences anxiety; however, children with ADHD, Autism and developmental disorders often experience high levels of anxiety because they need structure and predictable environments. The activities within our Sensory Room allow students to learn self-calming techniques and intentional relaxation. Within this inclusive space, students can engage and explore their senses. Our interactive equipment provides a multisensory experience with visual, auditory, tactile, vestibular, and gross motor activities.

### **In-School Suspension:**

An in-school suspension are those served at school. These may be used when sending a student home is reinforcing, or when staff feels the school environment may be more effective in changing behaviors. In-School suspensions are a SFA Staff decision and are not to be used when requested by parents/guardians due to inconveniences at home or other non-behavior related reasons. In-School suspension provides for a temporary classroom situation separate from the student's normal classroom for the purpose of disciplining the student, containing behavior and enabling the student to complete school work, get back on track and return to the classroom.

The following examples would qualify having a student placed on an in school suspension.

- A student who remains out of the classroom and refuses to return to class.
- A student who brings contraband to school
- A student who represents an immediate danger to themselves or others while in or out of the classroom and is directly affecting the safety of other students and staff.
- A student who is constantly disruptive to the classroom proceedings and who is not responding to staff direction or intervention
- A student who has returned from an AWOL and is not ready to return to class or has not processed back into the classroom

The student serving the suspension will be informed of the amount of time to be served and the expectations required when returning to class. The suspension can take place at a designated area of the campus. The student will be supervised at all times. Lunch and or snack will be brought to the student in the designated area.

## In-Home Suspension:

The belief at Sierra Foothills Academy is that students need to remain in school and will use the intervention resources described in the previous pages to ensure that this occurs. Sierra Foothills Academy also recognizes that there are times when a brief removal from school is necessary. An in-home suspension provides for a situation in which the student would remain at home and therefore separated from other students and the academic campus for the purpose of either discipline or safety. These types of incidents may also require law enforcement intervention.

An in-home suspension will be utilized under the following conditions:

- A student who brings dangerous contraband to school as defined by the Zero Tolerance Weapons Policy.
- Possession or sale of mind altering substance.
- Hate crimes.
- A student who represents an immediate danger to themselves or others while in or outside of the classroom and is directly affecting the safety of other students and staff.
- A student who has made a terrorist threat to another student, staff or campus.
- An In-Home Suspension may be used following a violent incident in which for safety reasons the student needs to be separated from the campus.

A student who is placed on in-home suspension must be approved by the principal/assistant principal or their designee. An incident requiring an in-home suspension is grounds to call for an IEP to determine if current placement at SFA is still appropriate and acceptable. Sierra Foothills Academy reserves the right for a student's possible removal from program when behaviors are no longer manageable. Parent/guardian and district will be notified of suspensions.

## Zero Tolerance Weapons Policy:

Possession of weapons of any type or form will not be tolerated at Sierra Foothills Academy. A violation of this policy will result in law enforcement intervention, suspension and scheduling of an IEP review to discuss appropriate placement.

Inherently Dangerous Items: Deadly Weapons:

- Firearms, knives, explosives or other dangerous objects of no reasonable use to the pupil at a school activity
- Dangerous Items: Items (not inherently dangerous) used in such a way as to injure others or instill fear.
- Small pocketknives, small firecrackers, tools, laser pens and other objects used to threaten, frighten or harm others
- Potentially dangerous items: Replicas or other items inappropriate (not inherently dangerous) on school grounds that are used to injure others or instill fear.
- Unrealistic and realistic replicas, toys, or other inappropriate items at school or at a school activity without any intent to use them as weapons



## Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Sierra Foothills Academy to maintain a learning environment which is free from sexual harassment. Therefore, SFA prohibits sexual harassment and regards it as being improper, immoral, illegal, and will not be tolerated. Sierra Foothills Academy policy is implemented to inform students, staff and parents about what sexual harassment is and the procedures which will be followed upon receipt of the sexual harassment allegations.

The policy is intended to as a preventative measure to protect students against sexual harassment before it occurs. The term “sexual harassment” is intended to mean sexual harassment in the broadest meaning of that term in current legal usage. Sexual harassment is deliberate and/or repeated sexual or sex-based behavior that is not welcomed or requested.

Per California Education Code, Students may be suspended from school, or expelled, if it is determined that they committed sexual harassment. Therefore, Sierra Foothills Academy may suspend and/or refer students back to their local district for a violation of the school’s sexual harassment policy. This standard shall not apply to students enrolled in kindergarten and grades one to three.

For purposes of this policy, the conduct must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender or gender identity as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive as to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or to negatively impact a student's academic performance. Teachers and other SFA staff shall discuss this policy with students in age-appropriate ways and will assure students that they need not endure sexual harassment.

Any student who feels that he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment by an employee, student, or volunteer of Sierra Foothills Academy as defined by this policy and administrative regulations, shall immediately report the matter to any school official. The person receiving the complaint shall immediately report the matter to a school administrator, and an investigation into the complaint will begin.

Any staff member who has knowledge of conduct of Sierra Foothills’ employees, volunteers, students or other individuals in the campus community which may constitute sexual harassment, is expected to report immediately such conduct to an administrator of the school.

Each complaint of sexual harassment shall be promptly investigated in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned. All complaints will be taken seriously and will be maintained confidentially as appropriate. There shall not be retaliation in any form for reporting incidents of sexual harassment.

All employees and students shall be notified of this policy on a regular basis. To promote an environment free of sexual harassment, SFA supervisors shall provide staff training and ensure student notification.

Contact the school administration if you have any questions or would like additional information.

## Van Safety and Emergency Procedures

In the morning, the school van driver will wait no longer than 5 minutes for me to board the van. We will plan ahead so that when the van arrives, I will secure my seat belt upon entering the van and remain belted until the van route is complete. We understand that the school staff assigns the seating.

### We agree to obey the following rules:

- 1 There is no eating, drinking or smoking on the van.
- 2 I will keep my hands and feet to myself.
- 3 I will use appropriate language and voice level at all times.
- 4 I will not touch the radio or the steering wheel or any other vehicle control device
- 5 Windows will be rolled up at all times or as designated by driver to ensure safety.
- 6 Upon arriving at school, I will wait in the van until dismissed by the driver.
- 7 I will receive a behavior score on the van for each trip from 0 to 5 points, a score below 3 will be immediately discussed with my teacher and/or parents.
- 8 If I damage the van, my parent will be responsible for the damages to the van.
- 9 I will not argue about where I am assigned to sit on the van.
- 10 I will not remove my seat belt and will not leave my seat until we arrive at our destination.

During the afternoon van run home, I will cooperate by:

- 1 Staying in my classroom until I am called to my van.
- 2 Going directly to my van and assigned seating.
- 3 I will not act out alone or with others on my way to the van.
- 4 Not leaving the van at all until I arrive at my home.

In the event of any emergency in the van, I agree to follow the directions of the driver or any other staff on the van.

\_\_\_\_\_ (student's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## STUDENT MEMBER OF IEP TEAM

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (student's printed name), understand that I am an important member of the IEP team; I further understand that I have the right to speak confidentially about any aspect of my IEP to any member of my IEP team. "Confidential" means that my meeting is private and that my representative will inform the other team members of my input without revealing that the information came from me. The IEP team will then consider the information when making IEP decisions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (student's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

**PARENT/GUARDIAN RELEASE AUTHORIZATION  
FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, FILMS, SLIDES, VIDEO AND AUDIO TAPE  
RECORDINGS OF PUPILS ENROLLED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

***Section 1: To be completed by school staff:***

Student:		Date of Birth:	
School:	<b>Sierra Foothills Academy</b>	Date:	

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Sierra Foothills Academy requests permission to reproduce through audio or visual means activities related to this pupil's special education program. Your signature and initials on the appropriate lines will enable us to use specially prepared materials to (1) provide assistance to this pupil in his/her special education program and in training teachers and (2) increase public awareness and promote continuation and improvement of special education programs through mass media, displays, brochures, etc.

***Section 2: to be completed by parent or guardian:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Permission is hereby granted for use of audio or visual materials to  
(Initial) assist pupils and train teachers as listed in (1) and (2) above.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Permission is not granted.  
(Initial)

GRANTING OF PERMISSION IS VOLUNTARY AND SHALL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL REVOKED.

Signature of  
Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## FIELD TRIP/ACTIVITY PERMISSION FORM

I hereby give the staff of Sierra Foothills Academy permission to take my son/daughter on off-campus field trips and permit my child's participation in school programs sponsored by Sierra Foothills Academy. I understand that these trips involve transportation in Sierra Foothills Academy vans and may include travel outside of Placer County. I further understand that these activities may include participation in athletics, career exploration, cooking, picture taking (only for school use), and other activities.

In the event of an emergency, I give Sierra Foothills Academy staff my permission to administer first aid to, and seek medical attention for my son or daughter.

Student

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sexual Harassment

The sexual harassment of any student will not be tolerated at Sierra Foothills Academy. Any employee or management staff member who is found to have committed acts of sexual harassment against students will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment. Any student who is found to have committed any acts of sexual harassment against another will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

### PROCEDURES FOR FILING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT

Sierra Foothills Academy has adopted a school policy against harassment because of sex, age, race, religious creed, physical handicap, medical condition, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation. All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent harassment from occurring. However, if you believe that you have been unlawfully harassed we urge you to report the incident immediately and according to the following procedures so that your complaint can be resolved quickly and fairly.

1. If at all possible, confront the harasser and request that he or she stop.
2. If harassment continues, please report your situation to your teacher. Should your teacher be involved, please report to any member of the Administration Team.
3. All harassment complaints will be referred to the Administration Team, who will conduct an immediate, effective, thorough and objective investigation of the harassment allegation. Until the investigation is completed and resolved, any contact between the student and the alleged perpetrator will be monitored closely.
4. If the investigation team determines that unlawful harassment has occurred, it will take effective action in accordance with the circumstances. If it is determined that the student or staff member is guilty of one of the above mentioned offenses as determined by the investigation, he or she will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or termination.
5. Sierra Foothills Academy Staff will not permit any discussion of your complaint with other students. In an effort to handle this matter quickly and fairly, we ask that you do not discuss your complaint with anyone other than the staff assigned to handle your complaint.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT: RECEIPT AND UNDERSTANDING OF SIERRA FOOTHILLS ACADEMY'S SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

I acknowledge that I have read and understand what sexual harassment is and how I would report it here at Sierra Foothills Academy. (Note: Sierra Foothills Academy strives for a harassment-free environment; however, if you do not report any such harassment, it is impossible for us to handle your problem.)

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_