



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Updated September 2026

Welcome Letter

Dear Candeo Families,

Welcome to Candeo Schools. Whether you are returning or joining us for the first time, we are grateful for your partnership and honored to walk alongside your family in this noble educational journey.

At Candeo, we do more than educate—we cultivate. As a classical charter school, we are committed to forming hearts and minds through the time-honored tradition of liberal arts education. Here, students engage in the rich study of literature, history, science, mathematics, and the arts; they develop strength of character through practice in virtue; and they grow in wisdom through guided discovery of truth, beauty, and goodness. Since our founding in 2008, we have remained faithful to our mission: *to grow wisdom and virtue for a life well lived through rigorous, knowledge-based schooling in the classical liberal arts.*

Candeo is a place where excellence is expected and joy is cultivated. Our students are both challenged and cherished. They are known by name, held to high standards, and supported by a faculty who care deeply and lead with purpose. We are proud of the culture that has taken root here—one of respect, diligence, and delight in learning—and we are thrilled to welcome your family into it.

To join Candeo is to join a mission. Our Family Handbook outlines the shared commitments, policies, and procedures that uphold the integrity of our program. We ask that you read and review it carefully with your family. Alignment with these expectations ensures a consistent, supportive, and mission-driven environment for all. A signed acknowledgment of this handbook is required as part of our enrollment process.

Please know that from time to time, updates to policies may occur. We will notify you of any changes, and the most current version of the handbook will always be available on our website for your reference.

Thank you for choosing Candeo. We look forward to a year of partnership, growth, and joyful learning together.

Warmly,
The Candeo Schools Team

I. Foundational Statements

Our Philosophy

At Candeo, we believe education is not a product to consume but a formative journey to undertake. We exist to cultivate *wisdom and virtue for a life well lived*, beginning in the earliest years of formal learning.

We believe that true education—like good character—takes root early. We make full use of the rich, formative years of childhood to build a strong foundation of knowledge, ordered thinking, and moral clarity. In the classical liberal arts tradition, we lead students to wonder at the world, to study the great ideas and stories of history, and to contemplate what is good, true, and beautiful.

Education at Candeo is not merely preparation for the next stage of schooling—it is preparation for a meaningful life. We pursue academic excellence and moral formation side by side, guiding students to become articulate, thoughtful, and responsible citizens—young people who know how to think well, choose well, and live well.

Our Mission:

To grow wisdom and virtue for a life well lived through rigorous, knowledge-based schooling in the classical liberal arts.

Our Vision

Candeo Schools envisions being a leading example of school excellence—where every student is known and formed, where scholarship and character flourish together, and where families and educators partner in the noble work of cultivating wise, virtuous, and courageous young people.

Our Classical Model of Education

What is Classical Education?*

Teachers lead students toward moral and intellectual virtue by means of a rich and robust course of study in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue.

A Well-Rounded Course of Study

Students receive a well-rounded education in the liberal arts and sciences. All students study literature and mathematics, history and the sciences, the fine arts, Latin, and physical education because the K-12 years are the years in which we are still coming to know ourselves and the world around us. The successful development of literacy and numeracy and a solid foundation in the core subjects is necessary before advanced or specialized training and study.

Rooted in Human Nature

But the study of the liberal arts does more than prepare the way for specialized training. A classical education teaches us to seek knowledge of the nature of things, especially the nature of

man and of the universe as a whole. Human beings are that part of the universe who seek to know where we stand within it, and who wonder about its ultimate origins and character. We are also driven by a desire to know ourselves—to understand our nature and purpose in life.

The Humanities and the Sciences

The surest guides for this quest are the great works of literature, philosophy, politics, and art that mankind has produced, which teach us about human nature and the human good, along with the serious study of mathematics and the sciences, which teach us about the natural order. Together with the study of history, which teaches us to know ourselves by understanding our place in the unfolding of the human story, the serious pursuit of knowledge across all subjects equips us for fully human lives.

Classical education liberates us in the true sense. It frees us from ignorance and confusion, from prejudice and delusion, and from the wild passions and fanciful hopes that can degrade and destroy us. It liberates by making us rational, allowing us to see the world clearly and honestly. In revealing our nature, it necessarily reveals what we need by nature—what is right and good for us.

Moral Formation

For these reasons, classical education provides, in part, moral education. Rather than do violence to human nature in a vain attempt to remake it, a classical education cultivates human nature so it can grow properly and flourish. By teaching students to cultivate moral virtue, it guides us into freedom by making us self-reliant and responsible, capable of governing ourselves and taking part in the self-government of our communities.

Civic Education and Thoughtful Patriotism

The serious pursuit of a classical education shows us that the life of the mind and the existence of education itself depend on the existence of civilization—not to mention political order, security, and freedom of thought. A thoughtful study of history shows us how difficult these goods are to achieve, gives us an appreciation for how rare and precious our own American circumstances are—and shows us how important it is to preserve them.

In studying the origins of our country and its history, in all of its triumphs and tragedies, students acquire a mature love for America, one which appreciates our unprecedented founding, a product of reflection and choice, and measures the health of our republic in light of the standards set forth in our founding documents. From that knowledge, we become citizens capable of judging rightly what ought to be preserved and what changed, and in making this judgment we fulfill a central part of our human nature, becoming free citizens.

**Taken from <https://k12.hilldale.edu/About/Classical-Education>*

Core Beliefs

We believe:

- That every child is capable of deep thought and moral growth.
- That the most effective education occurs when families and schools work together in a shared commitment to the intellectual, moral, and character formation of each child.
- That timeless knowledge, taught with purpose and joy, cultivates both the intellect and the heart.
- That high standards and loving support go hand in hand.
- That education should lead students to pursue what is true, do what is right, and love what is good.

Core Values / Pillars of Culture

At Candeo, we are united by shared values that shape our decisions, relationships, and daily work. These include:

- **Pursuit of Excellence:** We hold high academic and moral standards, cultivating both competence and character.
- **Love of Learning:** We foster intellectual curiosity and joyful discovery across the disciplines.
- **Order and Respect:** We promote a structured, calm, and respectful environment where all are known and valued.
- **Moral Formation:** We support the development of virtuous habits and thoughtful citizenship.
- **Partnership with Families:** We cultivate relationships of trust, communication, and shared purpose with parents in the formation and education of each child.

Statement of Educational Partnership with Families

At Candeo Schools, we view education as a shared endeavor between families and educators. Through a classical education, we intentionally cultivate knowledge, wisdom, virtue, and a love of learning, partnering with families in the important work of preparing students to lead meaningful and responsible lives.

By choosing Candeo, families are choosing a school with a distinct mission, philosophy, curriculum, and culture. Enrollment reflects a commitment to support and uphold these elements and to partner with the school in fostering the intellectual, moral, and character formation of each child.

This partnership is grounded in mutual trust, clear communication, shared expectations, and a common commitment to the flourishing of each child. In this spirit, we encourage active involvement, open dialogue, and a unified effort to nurture each student's growth in wisdom, virtue, and knowledge.

II. School Culture and Expectations

Schoolwide Code of Conduct

Candeo Schools expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds our mission, values, and culture. This includes respect for self and others, integrity, attentiveness, and responsibility in both behavior and academic work. Teachers model and teach appropriate conduct through consistent reinforcement and clear expectations.

Virtue Formation & Student Discipline Philosophy

Discipline at Candeo is formative, not punitive. Rooted in the classical tradition, it aims to cultivate habits of self-government and moral responsibility. We believe that correction is an opportunity for growth and redirection, not shame. Discipline is carried out with consistency, clarity, and care.

Dress Code / Uniform Policy

As of October 2026, Candeo will partner with Lands' End Uniforms to ensure consistency and alignment with our school's culture of order and respect. Uniforms must be clean, properly fitting, and worn with pride. Detailed guidelines, including acceptable items and appearance expectations, are found in [Appendix A](#).

Attendance & Tardy Policy

Consistent attendance is essential for student success. Students are expected to arrive on time and attend daily. Parents must report absences. Excessive absences or tardiness may impact academic progress. Refer to Appendix E for reporting procedures.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate attentiveness, participation, and respectful behavior in class. Teachers use clear expectations and direct instruction to cultivate habits of focus and self-discipline. Disruptions interfere with learning and will be addressed in partnership with families.

Playground and Hallway Expectations

Students are to move calmly and respectfully in hallways, speak quietly, and follow adult directions. On the playground, students must play safely, include others, and use equipment appropriately.

Technology and Device Use Policy

Technology use at Candeo is limited and purposeful. Students do not bring personal devices to school unless explicitly authorized. All use of school-owned devices is monitored and subject to Acceptable Use Policy guidelines outlined in Section VI.

Bullying Prevention & Reporting Policy

Candeo maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward bullying. Any form of harassment, intimidation, or exclusion is contrary to our mission. Reports are investigated promptly and addressed in alignment with our discipline policy. See Appendix D for definitions and reporting procedures.

Academic Integrity / Cheating and Plagiarism Policy

Students are expected to complete their work honestly and to the best of their ability. Cheating, copying, or submitting others' work as one's own is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary consequences. Academic integrity is part of moral formation.

III. Academics

Classical Curriculum Overview

Candeo Schools delivers a robust and content-rich curriculum grounded in the classical liberal arts tradition. Students engage deeply in literature, history, science, mathematics, and the fine arts, all guided by the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness. Our curriculum aligns with both the Hillsdale College K–12 model and Core Knowledge, integrating timeless content with developmental appropriateness.

Grade-Level Structure

Our academic program spans kindergarten through eighth grade, organized into:

- **Lower Grammar School (K–3):** Emphasizes literacy, numeracy, recitation, music, and fine motor skills through rich, joyful learning across all subject domains.
- **Upper Grammar School (4–6):** Builds on core knowledge with deeper content, logic, writing, and Latin introduction.
- **Middle School (7–8):** Engages students in formal logic, rhetoric, advanced literature, composition, lab science, and pre-algebra/algebra.

Core Subjects

Each student studies:

- **Language Arts (explicit grammar and writing instruction; comprehensive phonics & spelling curriculum)**

- **Mathematics (Singapore-based through middle school algebra)**
- **Science (Earth and Life Science, Chemistry, Physical Science)**
- **History and Geography (Ancient & Modern World History, Western Civilization, U.S. History, Civics)**
- **Languages (Latin and French)**
- **Fine Arts (Music, Theatre, Visual Arts)**
- **Physical Education**
- **Virtue and Character Instruction**

Academic Standards and Expectations

Students are expected to work hard, think deeply, and take responsibility for their learning. Teachers maintain high expectations while providing the support and structure necessary for students to thrive.

Homework Guidelines

Homework is assigned to reinforce learning and develop habits of responsibility. It is purposeful and age-appropriate.

Every student will have some homework most days. Students in the elementary grades should spend 15 to 30 minutes every evening reading, whether or not reading homework is assigned.

Additionally, you can expect the following:

- **K-1st:** 10-15 mins of homework (generally math, word reading lists, poem)
- **2nd-3rd:** 20-25 mins of homework (generally math, word reading lists, poem. Occasional subject specific assignments)
- **4th-5th:** 30-35 mins of homework (generally math, word reading lists, poem. Occasional subject specific assignments)
- **Middle school:** no more than 1 hour combined between all classes of homework that is sent home. *(This assumes that students are studying efficiently, and it may take a few months for students to build the study skills required to do that. For tips on helping students study efficiently, look at Study is Hard Work by William Armstrong.)*

Grading and Reporting

Candeo uses a letter- based grading system for core subjects in grades K–8. Report cards are issued quarterly, and progress is communicated regularly with families through conferences and updates. Parents may also access all student grades and assignment feedback through PowerSchool at any time.

Promotion and Retention

Student progress is evaluated holistically. Promotion to the next grade is based on content and skills mastery and readiness. Retention decisions are made in consultation with parents and school leadership, with the final decision resting with the Head of School.

Assessments

Candeo students engage in a variety of assessments, including regular classroom evaluations and state-mandated tests. In addition, the school uses norm-referenced tools to measure and track academic growth over time. The resulting data is used to guide instruction, support student learning, and inform school-wide improvement efforts.

Candeo’s assessment program incorporates multiple types of measures:

- **Diagnostic** – Pre-lesson or unit checks that identify students’ prior knowledge and readiness.
- **Formative** – Ongoing feedback during learning to monitor progress and adjust instruction.
- **Interim/Benchmark** – Periodic checks of key skills and standards to ensure students remain on track.
- **Summative** – Comprehensive evaluations at the end of a unit, course, or year to determine mastery.

Results from these assessments are translated into progress indicators on student report cards.

Academic Support and Enrichment

Candeo provides intervention, acceleration, and enrichment opportunities as needed and in a manner that honors the vigor and integrity of the curriculum. Teachers provide whole-group instruction daily for every student in all subject areas to allow full access to the essential knowledge and skills prescribed by our curriculum sequence.

IV. School Operations and Logistics

School Calendar

Candeo Schools publishes a school calendar annually, which includes the start and end dates of school, holidays, early release days, and teacher in-service days. A copy is provided at the beginning of each school year and is available on our website.

Daily Schedule, Arrival, and Dismissal

School Hours

The school day begins at **8:00 for 6 - 8 grades and 8:15 for grades K-5. Families should plan to arrive with enough time for students to be in their classrooms and ready to begin the day promptly.**

Dismissal occurs in staggered grade-level windows to support a safe and orderly release of students.

Arrival Procedures

Arrival begins at **7:45 a.m. for middle school students and their younger siblings.** Arrival for students in **kindergarten through grade 5 begins at 8:00 a.m.**

Students may **not** be dropped off before their designated arrival time.

During arrival:

- Drivers must follow the posted traffic pattern and staff directions.
- Students should be ready to exit the vehicle promptly from the designated side.
- Drivers must remain in their vehicles unless directed otherwise by a staff member.
- Cell phone use is prohibited while driving through the active arrival area.
- Vehicles may stop only in designated loading and unloading zones.

Staff members supervise arrival and carline to promote student safety and maintain an efficient traffic flow.

CurbSmart Dismissal Procedures

CurbSmart is Candeo's official dismissal management system. All families must use CurbSmart to identify each student's approved dismissal method.

Families should select one consistent dismissal method whenever possible:

- **Walk-Up Gate/Park and Walk**
- **Carline**
- **Innovation Learning (Aftercare)**
- **Student Walker (walk home)**

Parents are responsible for making sure their child understands the established dismissal method. Changes should be reserved for genuine needs rather than made routinely based on daily preference.

Students will be released according to the dismissal method displayed in CurbSmart. Staff members cannot accept dismissal changes communicated through a student, personal text message, phone call to a classroom or office, or informal verbal request during dismissal.

The dismissal schedule and process will be communicated by the Head of School. Please watch for all communications and announcements and follow the process with exactness, as doing so will create the most efficient, effective, and safe experience for all.

Carline vehicles may not enter the pickup line before the designated carline start time.

Students are released from their classroom or supervised area only after the parent has checked in and the student's assigned pickup location appears in CurbSmart.

Late Pickup

Students who have not been picked up by the close of their assigned dismissal window will be transferred to **Innovation Learning Aftercare**.

This applies to any student on campus after 3:30pm Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday or 12:15pm on Wednesdays.

Families must pick up their student directly from Innovation Learning and are responsible for all applicable aftercare charges.

Drop-Off, Pickup, and Traffic Safety

To protect students, staff members, and other families:

- Follow all posted traffic patterns, signs, cones, and staff directions.
- Remain in your vehicle while in the active carline unless directed otherwise.
- Do not use a cell phone while driving through the arrival or dismissal area.
- Do not stop, park, or load students in an unauthorized area.
- Do not ask students to cross traffic or meet a vehicle outside an approved pickup location.
- Do not bypass the CurbSmart process.
- Use only designated pedestrian routes, crosswalks, parking areas, and walk-up gates.
- Keep the loading area clear by helping students enter or exit the vehicle promptly.
- Display any school-issued placard or identification requested by the school.

Consistent use of CurbSmart and compliance with campus traffic procedures are essential to a safe, calm, and efficient arrival and dismissal for the entire Candeo community.

Healthy Food and Nutrition

At Candeo, we believe that caring for the body is part of cultivating wisdom, virtue, and readiness to learn. The foods children eat during the school day can influence their energy, concentration, and ability to participate fully in the life of the classroom.

We therefore encourage meals and snacks centered on whole, nourishing, and minimally processed foods—foods that are as close to their natural form as practical and made with simple, recognizable ingredients. A balanced meal may include fresh fruits or vegetables, quality sources of protein, whole grains or other nourishing carbohydrates, and healthy fats such as avocados, olives, olive oil, nuts, seeds, eggs, and natural cheeses.

Families should avoid sending foods that are primarily composed of added sugars, refined starches, artificial colors or flavors, syrups, or other highly processed ingredients with little nutritional value.

Our policy is not “fat-free,” “low-fat,” or “sugar-free.” Healthy fats and the naturally occurring sugars found in whole fruits and dairy products can be part of a nourishing diet. Our emphasis is on the quality of the food rather than diet labels.

Simply put, Candeo chooses real food over junk food.

School Lunches

Candeo partners with **Ordo** to provide an optional school lunch program that more closely reflects the principles of the school’s wellness policy.

Ordo works with local kitchens to prepare fresh meals using thoughtfully selected ingredients. Through this partnership, Candeo seeks to offer students an alternative to heavily processed, fast-food-style school meals and to provide greater variety in wholesome, appealing lunch choices. Ordo provides online ordering and menu information directly to participating families.

Participation in the school lunch program is optional. Families may order meals through the Ordo system or send a packed lunch from home. Ordering instructions, menus, pricing, deadlines, and other program details will be communicated separately and may change during the school year.

Candeo no longer offers emergency lunches.

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Ordering meals by the applicable deadlines;
- Reviewing current menus, ingredients, and available dietary information;
- Selecting meals appropriate for their child’s individual needs; and
- Informing the school of any diagnosed food allergy or medically required dietary accommodation in accordance with school procedures.

The school lunch program is intended to support, rather than replace, the family’s primary role in making dietary decisions for its children. Although every offered meal may not reflect every family’s preferences, Candeo selects its food-service partners and menu options with the goal of providing balanced, thoughtfully prepared meals that support student health and learning.

Examples of Foods We Encourage

- Fresh fruit and berries
- Raw vegetables, such as carrots, celery, cucumbers, peppers, broccoli, and grape tomatoes
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Cheese sticks, cheese cubes, and other natural cheeses
- Plain or lightly sweetened yogurt without artificial colors or flavors
- Nuts and seeds, where permitted under classroom allergy precautions
- Whole-grain or simple-ingredient crackers
- Hummus, guacamole, and bean-based dips
- Unsweetened applesauce or fruit packed in water or 100% juice
- Sandwiches or wraps made with quality proteins and simple ingredients
- Wholesome leftovers from home, such as chicken, rice, soup, pasta, or vegetables
- Water or plain milk

Foods We Do Not Permit as Regular School Meals or Snacks

- Candy
- Soda, energy drinks, and sugar-sweetened beverages
- Artificially colored or heavily sweetened sports drinks
- Doritos®, Cheetos®, and similar highly processed snack chips
- Snack cakes, donuts, pastries, and other dessert foods
- Cookies, cupcakes, brownies, and cakes, except when specifically permitted for a school or classroom occasion
- Rice Krispies Treats® and similar marshmallow-based snacks
- Gummy fruit snacks, fruit roll-ups, and similar products made primarily with syrups or added sugars
- Highly processed, prepackaged cheese-and-cracker or lunch kits
- Fruit packed in heavy syrup
- Foods marketed primarily as “diet” products or artificially sweetened snacks

Health and Medication Policy

Parents must notify the front office of any medical conditions. Medication may only be administered by authorized staff with a completed medication authorization form. Students may not carry medicine unless specifically authorized.

Sick students must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Communicable illnesses must be reported to the office.

Weather and Emergency Closure Procedures

In the event of inclement weather or emergencies, Candeo will notify families through ParentSquare, our website, and local media. School closures or delays will be announced as early as possible.

Emergency Response Plan Summary

Candeo has a comprehensive emergency plan that includes procedures for fire, lockdown, shelter-in-place, and evacuation. Drills are conducted regularly. Staff are trained annually.

Lost and Found

Lost items are placed in the school's Lost and Found area. Unclaimed items are donated at the end of each quarter. Labeling items with your child's name helps with prompt return.

V. Communication and Family Engagement

School-Parent Partnership Philosophy

Candeo believes in strong, collaborative relationships between school and home. Our partnership is based on mutual trust, shared purpose, and clear communication. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in supporting their child's academic progress and the school's mission.

Communication Platforms and Tools

Candeo uses ParentSquare for schoolwide announcements, classroom updates, and emergency alerts. Families should check regularly for messages. Report cards, newsletters, and teacher communication may also be shared via email or hard copy.

Conferences and Parent Meetings

Parent-teacher conferences are held once per year. These provide structured opportunities to discuss student progress and goals. Families are also invited to curriculum nights, presentations of learning, and other community forums throughout the year.

Family Involvement Opportunities

Families are invited to volunteer in the classroom, chaperone field trips, support events, and serve on school committees. Volunteer roles are aligned with the school's needs and culture. See Appendix F for the Parent Involvement Pledge.

Events and Celebrations

Annual events include student showcases, patriotic celebrations, Great Book Nights, and classical arts performances. These events reflect our values and create a joyful and connected school culture.

School Spirit and Community Culture

At Candeo, we celebrate not just achievement, but community. From Morning Assembly to schoolwide virtue initiatives, we intentionally cultivate a shared sense of purpose and belonging. Students and families are integral members of the Candeo community.

VI. Policies and Legal Notices

Student Records, Privacy, and Parental Rights. Candeo Schools protects the privacy of student education records and complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), and applicable Arizona law.

Access to Student Records. Parents and legal guardians have the right to inspect and review their child's education records, request correction of records they believe are inaccurate or misleading, and exercise other rights provided by law. Arizona law also provides parents access to written and electronic school records and school-maintained electronic accounts concerning their child. Requests to inspect or obtain records should be submitted in writing to the school registrar or other designated records custodian.

Confidentiality and Disclosure. Candeo generally obtains written consent before disclosing personally identifiable information from a student's education records. Records may be disclosed without consent when permitted or required by federal or state law, including to school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information.

Directory Information. Candeo may designate limited categories of student information as directory information for appropriate school-related purposes, such as yearbooks, programs, student recognition, school publications, and community communications. Parents may prohibit disclosure of their child's directory information by submitting a written opt-out request within the period stated in Candeo's annual directory information notice. Standard directory information includes the following:

Grade level

Date and place of birth

Dates of attendance

Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

Weight and height of members of athletic teams

Degrees, honors, and awards received

Most recent previous school attended

Surveys, Instructional Materials, and Certain Activities. Parents have rights under PPRA and Arizona law regarding protected student surveys, inspection of certain survey and instructional materials, collection of personal information for marketing, and certain physical examinations or screenings. When required, Candeo will provide advance notice, access to the applicable materials, an opportunity to opt

out, or a written informed-consent form. Arizona law may require written informed parental consent before a student participates in a survey seeking protected personal information.

Annual Notice. Candeo provides parents and eligible students annual notice of their rights and applicable procedures. Questions or requests may be directed to the school administration or designated records custodian.

Title IX and Non-Discrimination. Candeo Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. Inquiries about Title IX and non-discrimination policies should be directed to the school's Title IX Coordinator.

ChildFind. In compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the School is required to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for all students who enroll in the School.

45-day Screenings. All new students are screened within 45 days of their initial enrollment. The classroom teacher is required by the state to complete a comprehensive screening of a student's abilities in the areas of vision and hearing; cognitive or academic; communication; motor; social or behavioral; and adaptive development. If any concerns are noted, the school will communicate with parents via email regarding any noted concerns within 10 days of the screening and the student **may** be referred for additional screenings and/or our internal intervention process.

Intervention. Candeo Schools utilizes a tiered process to address academic or behavioral concerns or challenges that may be present in students. The instructional team will write a goal and intervention plan using school data to address the area(s) of concern. Parents play a key role at the start of the intervention, partnering with the school to address needs from the domain of the home. Progress monitoring will be ongoing as interventions are implemented. If the interventions are unsuccessful and sufficient progress is not made, the team will meet to determine the success of the intervention plan and make appropriate recommendations for next steps.

SPED Referral & Evaluation. A special education evaluation will be considered after the team has made a referral and suspects that the student may have a disability. Before any testing is scheduled, written parental consent will be obtained. Candeo Schools contracts with private specialists to conduct formal assessments and to provide services for students requiring related services. Services include but are not limited to school psychologist, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. Results from the evaluation will then be shared with the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET), which consists of the student's parents, school administration, classroom teacher, school psychologist, special education teacher, and any other needed personnel (i.e., speech therapist, occupational therapist, etc.). The results of the evaluation determine a student's eligibility for special education services, but do not automatically qualify a student for these services. The federal IDEA sets out the rules and regulations regarding eligibility and the determination of whether a student qualifies for special education services. By law, Candeo Schools must follow these rules and regulations.

Procedural Safeguards. Parents of a student with a disability (or suspected of having a disability) are

entitled to a Procedural Safeguards Notice, which explains the rights of the parent and student to ensure they are protected through the special education process. A copy of the procedural safeguards notice is offered to parents annually and in specific instances; however, copies are always available by contacting the School Office.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP). If it is determined by the MET that the student qualifies for special education services under the definition and guidelines of the IDEA, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be written for the student, setting out specific goals, accommodations, services, and placement. The IEP is reviewed at least annually or at the request of an IEP team member.

Mandatory Reporting

All Candeo employees are mandatory reporters and are legally required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Arizona Department of Child Safety.

Acceptable Use Policy

All use of school technology must be for educational purposes and comply with the Acceptable Use Policy. Students must:

- Use devices and the internet only for assigned learning activities.
- Avoid inappropriate content or communication.
- Respect school-owned property and report technical issues immediately.

Consequences for violations range from loss of privileges to disciplinary action.

Asbestos Management Plan

As required by AHERA, Candeo maintains an Asbestos Management Plan that is available for inspection by parents, staff, and the public during regular business hours.

Policy Review and Handbook Revisions

This handbook is reviewed annually. Updates may be made during the school year if necessary. Families will be notified of all substantive changes. The most current version is always available online.

VII. Appendices

Appendix A: Uniform and General Appearance Guidelines

Candeo students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects our values of order, respect, and academic seriousness. Uniforms must be purchased from Lands' End or approved vendors.

Uniform Requirements

School uniforms contribute to a safe and orderly environment and reduce competitive tendencies in students and relieve pressure to dress in expensive or trendy clothing. Consistency is important to make this policy work. Consistent adherence to the policy is expected and enforced, subject to applicable religious, cultural, medical, or other legally required accommodations. Please do not allow your student to modify the intended appearance of the uniform. Students may wear an approved Candeo Spirit Shirt on Fridays. Please look for communication from the Head of School regarding this exception, as it is regularly changed and updated.

Dress Code Violations. If a child is deemed to be wearing inappropriate attire, the parent will be notified and a change of clothing may be required for attendance that day. If in doubt about the appropriateness of an article of clothing, check with the school office before purchasing. Good judgment exercised at home will be a learning experience for the child and will help to avoid embarrassment or wasted time at school. Uniform violations will be written and communicated via email. Any school-issued clothing (in the event of a change-out) must be returned to the school freshly laundered.

Where to Buy Uniform Items. Uniform apparel is available through Lands' End Outfitters, Candeo's official school uniform provider. All uniform shirts, sweaters, tops, and jumpers must be purchased through Lands' End with the required Candeo Schools embroidered logo. While it is encouraged that navy and khaki pants, shorts, skirts, and skorts are purchased at Lands' End, it is not required. Any item purchased outside of Lands' End must match the style and color description for that item on the Lands' End website. To order, please visit the [Lands' End website](#).

General Uniform Guidelines

- Baggy or tight-fitting clothing is not acceptable.
- Belts (black or brown) are required in the middle school with pants or shorts and recommended for Grade 3 and above.
- Clothing items with insignia or slogans will not be permitted.
- Undergarments may not show at any time.
- Midribs may not show at any time.
- Modifications of the uniform are not accepted.
- Clothing must be clean and in good condition.
- Scrunchies and other hair accessories may not be worn on the wrist.
- Jewelry should be simple and non-distracting (simple gold or silver necklaces, stud earrings. Hoop or dangling earrings are not permitted for any reason). Any piece of jewelry that would be deemed distracting will need to be removed.
- Skirts must fall at or near the knee (measured as 2 inches above the floor when kneeling).
- Tights (in the color Navy) are permitted for girls only and should be worn

under skirts and jumpers in lieu of bike shorts.

- All logo- bearing and plaid uniform pieces must be purchased through Lands' End.
- Accessories such as backpacks, lunch boxes, water bottles, and face masks must follow uniform guidelines including:
 - o Colors: any desired color
 - o solid or simple geometric patterns only (plaid, polka dot) only
 - o no pop culture (Pokemon, Bratz, Star Wars etc...)
 - o no slogans, or sayings
 - o wheeled backpacks are permitted but not recommended
- Shoes must be closed toe and free from designs, distracting patterns, embellishments, or neon colored accents. Shoes must follow the uniform guidelines including:
 - o Colors (solid): white, black, gray, brown, tan or navy, or simple geometric patterns in uniform colors
 - o Permitted styles: athletic, deck, loafers, or ballet flats
 - o Boots of any kind are not permitted
 - o All shoes must be worn with socks that are solid in color without insignia or slogans. Sock colors are navy, white, gray, brown, tan, or black.
- Outwear must be removed inside the classrooms, with the exception of Lands End jackets with school logos.
- Uniforms are required for Back to School Night, Orientation, Conferences, and other formal school sponsored events. Uniforms are not required for family-fun activities or events.

Specific Uniform Guidelines: Please refer to the [Lands' End website](#) or our [Uniform Reference Guide](#).

Religious and Cultural Accommodations. Candeo Schools recognizes that religious and cultural practices may require exceptions to certain uniform, grooming, or appearance requirements. Reasonable accommodations will be made for sincerely held religious beliefs and cultural practices in accordance with applicable law. Families seeking an accommodation should contact school administration.

General Appearance

Proper hygiene is expected. Children must come to school clean and bathed. Nails must be groomed and hands clean.

Hair must be clean, neat, and out of the face. For boys, hair must not be long enough to be able to pull into a ponytail. In addition, hair for boys must be above the collar and out of the face. For all students, hair must not be a distraction and remain out of the face.

- only natural hair colors permitted
- makeup on any student is not permitted
- no tattoos, temporary or permanent, are permitted; this includes ink drawings on the skin
- perfume and cologne not permitted

- deodorant encouraged in grades 4 and above
- no extreme hairstyles such as a mohawk or faux-hawk
- only clear nail polish is permitted (for girls only); artificial nails are not permitted

Special Education and Child Find

Candeo Schools makes available special education and related services to all eligible students. For more information about our special education programs, please contact the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

ChildFind. In compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the School is required to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for all students who enroll in the School.

All new students are screened within 45 days of their initial enrollment. The classroom teacher is required by the state to complete a comprehensive screening of a student's abilities in the areas of vision and hearing; cognitive or academic; communication; motor; social or behavioral; and adaptive development. If any concerns are noted, the school will communicate with parents via email regarding any noted concerns within 10 days of the screening and the student **may** be referred for additional screenings and/or our internal intervention process.

Intervention. Candeo Schools utilizes a tiered process to address academic or behavioral concerns or challenges that may be present in students. The instructional team will write a goal and intervention plan using school data to address the area(s) of concern. Parents play a key role at the start of the intervention, partnering with the school to address needs from the domain of the home. Progress monitoring will be ongoing as interventions are implemented. If the interventions are unsuccessful and sufficient progress is not made, the team will meet to determine the success of the intervention plan and make appropriate recommendations for next steps.

SPED Referral & Evaluation. A special education evaluation will be considered after the team has made a referral and suspects that the student may have a disability. Before any testing is scheduled, written parental consent will be obtained. Candeo Schools contracts with private specialists to conduct formal assessments and to provide services for students requiring related services. Services include but are not limited to school psychologist, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. Results from the evaluation will then be shared with the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET), which consists of the student's parents, school administration, classroom teacher, school psychologist, special education teacher, and any other needed personnel (i.e., speech therapist, occupational therapist, etc.). The results of the evaluation determine a student's eligibility for special education services, but do not automatically qualify a student for these services. The federal IDEA sets out the rules and regulations regarding eligibility and the determination of whether a student qualifies for special education services. By law, Candeo Schools must follow these rules and regulations.

Procedural Safeguards. Parents of a student with a disability (or suspected of having a disability) are entitled to a Procedural Safeguards Notice, which explains the rights of the parent and student to

ensure they are protected through the special education process. A copy of the procedural safeguards notice is offered to parents annually and in specific instances; however, copies are always available by contacting the School Office.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP). If it is determined by the MET that the student qualifies for special education services under the definition and guidelines of the IDEA, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be written for the student, setting out specific goals, accommodations, services, and placement. The IEP is reviewed at least annually or at the request of an IEP team member.

Appendix D: Bullying Prevention and Reporting Policies

Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation

Bullying: Use of language or conduct that is threatening and/or intimidating that involves an imbalance of power or strength, and that is repeated over time.

Candeo is committed to providing all students with a safe school environment where everyone is treated with respect. Students have a right to be free from any form of bullying. Students, parents, and school employees have a right and a responsibility to report incidents of bullying.

Confidential Reporting. Students and parents/guardians have the right to confidential reporting in writing to school administrators, teachers, or other staff members in instances of bullying, harassment, and intimidation, under A.R.S. § 15-341(A)(37). These reports will be shared with appropriate school officials so that appropriate steps can be taken to ensure that all students have a learning environment that is safe emotionally, mentally, and physically. Reports must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the last incident.

Definitions

Bullying: Bullying of an individual or group can occur through written, verbal, physical, emotional, or psychological methods. Bullying may occur when an individual or group engages in any form of behavior or aggression that includes such acts as intimidation and/or harassment that:

- has the effect of physically harming an individual, damaging an individual's property, or placing an individual in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property;
- is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the action, behavior, aggression, or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile or abusive environment in the form of physical or emotional or psychological harm or distress;
- behavior, aggression or threat occurs repeatedly over time;
- occurs when there is a real or perceived imbalance of physical, emotional or psychological power or strength; or
- may constitute a violation of law.

Harassment: Harassment is behavior by an individual or group that consists of systematic and/or

continued unwanted and annoying actions, including threats and demands. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling (e.g., bullying); graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones, social media or the Internet (e.g., cyberbullying); or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. Harassment based on race, disability, sex, religious orientation, sexual orientation, cultural background, economic status, size or personal appearance may violate an individual's civil rights when such harassment is sufficiently serious that it creates a hostile environment and such harassment is encouraged, tolerated, not adequately addressed or ignored.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is, but not limited to, any act of bullying or harassment committed by use of electronic technology or electronic communication devices, including telephonic devices, social networking, and other internet communications, on school computers, networks, forums and mailing lists, or other district-owned property, and by means of an individual's personal electronic media and equipment.

Intimidation: Intimidation is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that place another student or group of students in fear of harm to person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

Reporting Incidents of Bullying or Harassment. Students and others should report any incidents of bullying to a teacher, school administrator or any other school employee (i.e., educational assistant, receptionist, etc.). It is mandatory that school employees report any incidents of bullying in writing to the Head of School. Students who cannot immediately file a report must do so within thirty (30) calendar days of the last incident.

The school employee receiving the report/complaint who believes a student has been subjected to bullying or personally witnesses bullying shall:

- Check to see if an outside agency needs to be contacted (i.e., Department of Child Safety or law enforcement).
- Have the student make a report. An adult may assist the student in making the report, if necessary.
- At a minimum, the report shall be put in writing containing the identifying information on the complainant and such specificity of names, places and times as to permit an investigation.
- At a minimum, the school employee shall put the report in writing containing the identifying information on the complainant and such specificity of names, places, and times as to permit an investigation.
- When a school employee receives the information, the employee will give the information to the school administrator no later than the next school day following the day of the report/complaint.

All violations of the policy shall be treated in accordance with the appropriate procedures and penalties

provided for under A.R.S. § 15-341(37). Any student who has committed the act of bullying/harassment/intimidation, intentionally files a false report or has retaliated against another who has participated in any manner in an investigation, proceedings or hearing conducted in response to an investigation of bullying, will be subject to consequences.

Procedures for Investigation of the Report/Complaint. A school administrator shall investigate the incident or the activity with a threat assessment team of at least three staff members within ten (10) instructional school days upon receipt of the report. Extension of the timeline may only be by necessity as determined by the Head of School. A school administrator shall check to see if an outside agency needs to be contacted (i.e., Department of Child Safety or local law enforcement authorities). A school administrator shall complete a Behavior Incident Referral (in PowerSchool) if the student is found to have violated the policy.

All violations of this policy shall be treated in accordance with the appropriate procedures and penalties provided for in school policies related to the conduct and discipline of students, staff, and others.

A complaint may be withdrawn at any time. If the person chooses to re-file the complaint, it must be re-filed within 30 calendar days of the original incident. Knowingly submitting a false report under this policy shall subject the student to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion. Where disciplinary action is necessary pursuant to any part of this policy, relevant district policies shall be followed.

Appendix E: Attendance and Tardy Policy

Consistent attendance is important to keep learning on track, especially at Candeo, where our program is designed to focus on intensive classroom study and dialogue. Each day, a new bedrock of knowledge is laid, becoming a foundation for the next. Lessons build upon lessons and years build upon years before. Simply stated, if a student misses a day at Candeo, he or she misses critical classroom learning experiences necessary for success and advancement in our program.

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) require the parent or legal guardian of the student to “enroll the child in and ensure the child attends a public, private, or charter school for the full time of the school.” Candeo Schools aligns with these requirements. We honor the full day and do not dismiss students in the last 30 minutes of the day. If quick dismissal and pick up is necessary for you, please utilize the “park and walk” option at our schools, which releases your child immediately to a designated gate for pick up. Meeting the child immediately in person, outside of the car line, is by far the fastest way to retrieve your child and exit the school.

Reporting an Absence. In accordance with A.R.S. 15-807, it is the parent's or other custody holding person's responsibility to authorize any absence of the pupil from school and to notify the school in advance or at the time of any absence. The parent or other person who has custody must provide at least one telephone number, if available, for purposes of this section. Candeo Schools shall require that the telephone number be given at the time of enrollment of the pupil in school and that the school of enrollment be promptly notified of any change in the telephone number.

All absences must be reported by calling the attendance line at your respective campus.

To report an absence: Call 623-979-6500, press 1, and follow the prompts to report the reason for the absence and your child's name and grade.

If your student must miss part of a day, it is required that you sign in and out at the front office. Only authorized adults may pick up your student. Students may not go home with a friend or anyone else without prior written authorization. Students should not be checked out at the office after 2:30 pm as it disrupts the dismissal process.

Excused and Unexcused Absences. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-901(A)(1), excused absences are identified by the Department of Education. The Department of Education defines an excused absence as an absence due to illness, doctor appointment, mental or behavioral health, bereavement, family emergencies, time necessary to process for the armed forces, and out-of-school suspensions. Excused absences due to out-of-school suspensions must not exceed 10% of the instructional days scheduled for the school year.

If an absence occurs relating to any other term or condition that is not specifically designated herein, or if an attendance is unreported, the absence shall be counted as unexcused. Students absent for ten (10) consecutive school days, except for excused absences identified herein, shall be withdrawn from the school, pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-901(A)(1). Additionally, if a student accumulates absences according to any of the following, the parent/guardian will receive an attendance deficiency letter from the school via email:

- **5 absences in a quarter**
- **10 absences in the first semester**
- **14 absences prior to Quarter 4**

Additionally, the parent/guardian will be required to meet with the Head of School to discuss the reasons for the absences and create an attendance improvement plan.

The letter will state the truancy laws and a day and time to meet with the Head of School. This meeting will be scheduled approximately 5 business days from the date the letter is sent. Parents/Guardians must call if they would like the meeting time changed and can reschedule for no more than 5 business days after the initial meeting time.

The Head of School will emphasize the importance of consistent attendance for our academic program, as well as applicable legal requirements. The parent/guardian will have an opportunity to discuss the circumstances surrounding the absences. Together, the school and family will create an attendance improvement plan.

If more than 17 days are missed in a year, the child is deemed by the State as chronically absent and may be considered for retention in the following year as a result.

Truancy and Truancy Protocol. A child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) failing to attend school during the hours school is in session is truant unless excused pursuant to State law. Truant means an unexcused absence for at least one (1) class period during the day. This includes absence from any

class, study hall, or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. Unexcused absences of at least five (5) school days within a school year constitutes habitual truancy and may result in a truancy citation being issued to the student, parent, or both.

Tardy Policy. Tardiness is taken very seriously by Candeo, as it is considered a disruption to the learning environment. We begin instruction within the first minute of school. For us to perform our job of educating your child, we need to make use of every available instructional minute with minimum disruptions to the schedule. We expect students to arrive at least 5 minutes before their start time to be comfortably ready for the morning greeting. If a student arrives at his or her start time, a tardy pass from the front office must be in hand for entry into the classroom. No pass will be issued without a parent signature. If you have questions about the number of tardies your child may have, please contact the office.

Candeo handles student tardiness under the following guidelines:

- 6th tardy in a quarter - parent letter sent home
- 9th tardy in a quarter - parent conference and remediation plan
- All tardies are documented and recorded by the front office staff and reflected on quarterly report cards

Appendix F

Candeo Parent Involvement Pledge

At Candeo, we believe that parents bear the primary responsibility for the education and formation of their children. The school exists to partner with families by extending and reinforcing the habits of learning, character, and virtue cultivated at home.

Strong schools are built upon strong partnerships. We ask every Candeo family to join us in the following commitments:

As a Candeo Parent, I Will:

Support the Mission

- Uphold and support the mission, vision, and values of Candeo Schools.
- Speak positively about the school, its faculty, students, and families, especially in the presence of my child.
- Help my child understand that school and home are working together for his or her success.

Prioritize Learning

- Ensure my child arrives at school on time, prepared, well-rested, and ready to learn.
- Encourage consistent attendance and limit avoidable absences.
- Foster habits of reading, curiosity, responsibility, and perseverance at home.

Partner with Teachers

- Read school and classroom communications in a timely manner.
- Communicate respectfully and professionally with teachers and staff.
- Address concerns directly with the appropriate person, seeking understanding and resolution before involving others.

Model Virtue

- Demonstrate respect, honesty, civility, gratitude, and self-control in my interactions with students, staff, and other families.
- Help my child accept responsibility for his or her choices and grow through both successes and setbacks.
- Support school expectations regarding behavior, dress, technology, and healthy habits.

Be Engaged

- Participate in conferences and important school meetings.
- Attend school events whenever possible.
- Volunteer my time and talents as I am reasonably able, recognizing that meaningful involvement may look different for every family.

Support a Strong Community

- Respect the privacy and dignity of students, families, and staff.
- Contribute to a welcoming, encouraging, and unified school culture.
- Assume goodwill, seek clarification before forming conclusions, and work collaboratively to strengthen our community.

Our Commitment to Families

In return, Candeo commits to:

- Provide a safe, orderly, and joyful learning environment.
- Deliver a rigorous classical education rooted in wisdom, virtue, and the liberal arts.
- Communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully.
- Treat every child with dignity, care, and high expectations.
- Partner with parents in supporting each student's academic, moral, and personal growth.

Together, we recognize that the greatest educational outcomes occur when school and home work in genuine partnership. By embracing these shared commitments, we strengthen not only the education of each child but also the character and culture of the entire Candeo community.