



# Candeo Schools HANDBOOK

*2025 - 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

## About Us: What Is Classical Education?

*(Adapted and expanded from Classical Academic Press and the Hillsdale K–12 model)*

Classical education is rooted in the time-tested tradition of the liberal arts and sciences, aimed at forming the hearts and minds of students in the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty. It is not merely a method, but a philosophy of education—one that regards learning as an intrinsically worthy endeavor and human beings as moral and rational creatures, capable of growth in wisdom and virtue.

This education unfolds through the three stages of the *trivium*: grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

- In the **grammar stage**, students acquire foundational knowledge through memorization, recitation, and joyful repetition.
- In the **logic stage**, students develop reasoning skills, learning to analyze, ask good questions, and understand cause and effect.
- In the **rhetoric stage**, students learn to express ideas with clarity, persuasion, and beauty—developing independence of thought and character.

Classical education is language-rich, content-rich, and formational. It draws deeply from Western civilization's greatest works in literature, history, science, mathematics, and philosophy. Through its emphasis on order, moral character, and academic rigor, classical education prepares students not only for college, but for a thoughtful and virtuous life.

## 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.

## **Mission**

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

## **Vision**

Candeo Schools will be a national model of classical excellence—where students are known and formed, where scholarship and character flourish, and where families and educators partner in the noble work of raising a generation of thoughtful, virtuous, and courageous people.

## **Core Beliefs**

We believe:

- That every child is capable of deep thought and moral growth.
- That parents are the primary educators, and our school is a partner in that work.
- 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 work hand-in-hand with parents to support the growth and flourishing of each child.

## Statement of Educational Partnership with Parents

Candeo Schools believes that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our school exists to assist families in the noble task of forming the mind and character of the child through a classical education. We seek to partner with parents through shared expectations, clear communication, and mutual respect.

By choosing Candeo, families affirm their support for our mission, curriculum, and culture. This partnership relies on a shared commitment to uphold the values of the school at home and on campus. In this spirit, we encourage frequent dialogue, active involvement, and a unified front in cultivating each child's growth in both wisdom and virtue.

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## **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**

Candeo partners with Anton 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 H 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 G 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.

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# **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 School (K–3):** Emphasizes literacy, numeracy, recitation, music, and fine motor skills through rich, joyful learning across all subject domains.
- **Upper Elementary (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 and Literature**
- **Mathematics (Singapore-based through middle school algebra)**
- **Science (Earth and Life Science, Chemistry, Physical Science)**
- **History and Geography (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. Generally, you can expect the following:

- K–2: 10–30 minutes per night
- 3–5: 30–60 minutes per night
- 6–8: 60–90 minutes per night

Reading at home is expected for all students daily.

## **Grading and Reporting**

Candeo uses a standards-based grading system in K– 2 and letter grades in 3–8. Report cards are issued quarterly, and progress is communicated regularly with families through conferences and updates.

## **Promotion and Retention**

Student progress is evaluated holistically. Promotion to the next grade is based on academic mastery, behavior, 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 standards-based 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. Whole group instruction is delivered to every child with the Teachers provide whole-group instruction to every student honoring the vigor and integrity of the

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# 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 / Bell Times

The school day begins at **8:00 AM** and ends at **3:15 PM**.

## Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Arrival begins at 7:45 AM for middle school students and their younger siblings. Arrival for grades K-5 begins at 8:00am. Students may not be dropped off before that time. Staff members supervise the carline and arrival to ensure student safety.

Dismissal begins promptly at 3:00 PM for grades K-3, and 3:15 for grades 4-8. Families must follow posted carline procedures. Students not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal will be checked into aftercare if available.

## Drop-off, Pick-up, and Carline Safety

To ensure safety and efficiency:

- Drivers must remain in their vehicles during carline
- Display school-issued placards for student pickup
- Avoid cell phone use while in carline
- Follow staff instructions and posted signage

Walk-ups are permitted only in designated areas.

## School Meals and Snack Guidelines

Candeo students may bring lunch from home or participate in the school's meal program if available. We promote a wellness-aligned approach to eating:

- Foods should be nutrient-dense and low in sugar
- Junk food (soda, candy, chips, etc.) is strongly discouraged

- Reusable water bottles are encouraged daily

See Appendix D for lunch and snack guidance.

## **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.

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# **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 at least twice 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 I 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.

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# VI. Policies and Legal Notices

## FERPA and Student Privacy

Candeo Schools complies fully with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Parents have the right to inspect and review their child's education records, request amendments to inaccurate records, and provide or withhold consent for disclosures of personally identifiable information, except under permitted exceptions.

More information is available on our website and in Appendix E.

## PPRA (Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment)

Under PPRA, parents have the right to:

- Provide consent before students participate in surveys funded by the U.S. Department of Education that include sensitive information.
- Opt their child out of certain school activities.
- Inspect materials used in surveys, instructional content, or physical exams.

See Appendix E for details.

## 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.

## Special Education and Child Find

Candeo Schools is committed to identifying, locating, and evaluating all children with disabilities within the school. Parents may request evaluations and services in accordance with federal and state law. See Appendix F for more details.

## **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.

## **Student Records and Directory Information**

Candeo may release “directory information” (such as name, grade level, and awards) unless parents opt out in writing. Requests for records must be submitted in writing. See Appendix E for FERPA opt-out procedures.

## **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.

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# 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 Anton Uniforms 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. Strict adherence to the policy is expected and enforced. Please do not allow your student to modify the intended appearance of the uniform.

**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 Anton Uniforms, Candeo's official school uniform provider. All uniform shirts, sweaters, and tops must be purchased through [Anton Uniforms](#) with the required Candeo Schools embroidered logo. While it is encouraged that pants, shorts, skirts, and all other uniform items are purchased at Anton Uniforms, it is not required. Any item purchased outside of Anton Uniforms must match the style and color description for that item on the Anton Uniforms website. To order, please visit the Anton's Uniforms website ([Anton Uniforms](#)).

#### 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).
- Leggings and tights are permitted for girls only and should be worn under skirts or skorts.
- All logo-bearing and plaid uniform pieces must be purchased through Anton uniforms.
- Accessories such as backpacks, lunch boxes, water bottles, and face masks must follow uniform guidelines including:
  - Colors: any desired color
  - solid or simple geometric patterns only (plaid, polka dot) only
  - no pop culture (Pokemon, Bratz, Star Wars etc...)
  - no slogans, or sayings
  - 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:
  - Colors (solid): white, black, gray, brown, tan or navy, or simple geometric patterns in uniform colors
  - Permitted styles: athletic, deck, loafers, or ballet flats
  - Boots of any kind are not permitted
  - 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 Anton 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 visit Anton Uniforms at (<https://antonuniforms.com/>) and the following: [Peoria Campus Anton Uniforms Reference Guide](#).

## 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

## Appendix D. School Meals and Snacks

**From School.** Candeo Schools partners with Myhotlunchbox.com to provide healthful lunch options through a secure, fast, and easy-to-use online ordering system that allows parents to view the lunch menu, order, prepay, and manage student lunches on the web.

To register and order, please do the following:

1. Go to myhotlunchbox.com
2. Click on “Log In/Create Account” at the top
3. Click “Sign up”
4. Click “Order Now” for customer
5. Fill out sign up information
6. Add a profile for your child
7. Select school and add school name Candeo Schools Peoria
8. Order and Check out

For questions or technical problems, please email [info@myhotlunchbox.com](mailto:info@myhotlunchbox.com) or call 888.894.8295

The school will provide a forgotten lunch for students who do not have lunch at their scheduled lunch time. The fee for a forgotten lunch is \$4.00.

Parents will be notified of any disruptions to our wellness policy via email. Corrections will be expected. At times, we may send an item home with your child for consumption after school. There are unlimited ideas for packing lunches that meet our guidelines. Search “healthy school lunch ideas” on the internet as a resource for not only lunches but snacks as well.

**Snacks.** Sending ONE small snack item (held in the palm of the hand) from home is an OPTION for K-1 parents. These snacks, if provided, must also follow the guidelines of our wellness policy. A list of recommended snacks is provided below:

## **Suggested Snacks**

In short, we promote whole, healthful foods that are nutrient dense and leave out preservatives, artificial colors, artificial flavors, and processed sugars and syrups. Every student at our school should have a balanced mix of fresh veggies, fruits, proteins, grains, and healthy fats like avocados, olive oil, nuts, and quality cheeses. Our policy is not “fat-free, “low fat” or “sugar-free.” We are JUNK free.

### **SAMPLE ITEMS - RECOMMENDED**

Raw fruit

Raw vegetables (example: carrots, red/green peppers, celery, grape tomatoes)

All natural nuts/soybeans/seeds

All natural yogurts (no artificial ingredients)

Baggie of whole grain, unsweetened cereal

All-natural cereal bar (Trader Joe’s sells all-natural bars with different fruit fillings)

String cheese, cheese sticks, cheese cubes

Crackers (Trader Joe’s sells several varieties of crackers made without hydrogenated oils)

### **SAMPLE ITEMS - ALLOWABLE**

Pretzels Granola bars without chocolate chips (look for ones made with whole grain and low sugar)

All natural fruit leather (100% fruit is best)

Fig newtons (Paul Newman makes an organic version, available at Fry’s.)

Chex Mix (unsweetened)

Trail mix without candy

100% fruit juice (no added sugar, colors, or flavors)

### **SAMPLE ITEMS - NOT ALLOWED**

Candy

Chips (Doritos, Cheetos, etc.)

Snack cakes (Twinkies, Ding Dongs, etc)

Cookies/cakes

Rice Krispy treats

Artificial “fruit” snacks, including gummy fruits, or “fruit” roll up (100% fruit or all-natural is acceptable)

Soda, Gatorade, chocolate milk

“Cheese-n-crackers” packaged cheese kits or similar

“Diet” foods

**Classroom Celebrations and Birthdays.** All classroom celebrations and events are governed by our wellness policy, which means junk food-laden celebrations are not permitted. Food items brought for curriculum celebrations may be purchased or homemade; however, parents should check with the teacher regarding any students in the class who may have food allergies.

Birthdays are recognized in a way that does not disrupt the regular schedule. Please do not bring birthday accouterments to the school from home, including birthday invitations or treats.

## **Appendix F. 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 Head of School or Director of Services.

**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 will be 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 will be referred for additional screenings and/or the Response to Intervention (RTI) process.

**RTI.** Candeo utilizes Response to Intervention (RTI), a tiered process set forth by the State used 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. The RTI process is enacted prior to referrals for Special Education assessment.

**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 G. 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 the Behavior Standards and Expectations section of this student handbook and 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 H. 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 2pm as it disrupts the dismissal process. If you have a scheduled appointment, please check out your child prior to 2:30.

**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 document the reasons for absences where he or she will show documentation for the reasons for the absences and create an attendance 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 seriousness of consistent attendance for our academic program, as well as the legal requirements, and give parents/guardians an opportunity to present documentation that supports their reasons for absences. Together, you will create an attendance improvement plan that will assist you in meeting the requirements of the law.

**If more than 17 days are missed in a year (or 9 in a semester), the child may be considered for retention in the following year.**

**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. Classes begin promptly at 8 am for middle school students and 8:15 am for elementary students. The gates close at 8:15 am. If the gate is closed, parents must escort their child to the front office to sign in and receive a tardy pass. A tardy pass must be in hand for entry into the classroom, and no pass will be issued without 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:

- 6<sup>th</sup> tardy in a quarter - parent letter sent home
- 9<sup>th</sup> 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 I Parent Involvement Policy

**The Role of the Parent.** The role of the parent is to actively and intentionally support the school's mission in the domain of the home. This includes supporting the work of the teacher in the home with your student, ensuring daily work and study is performed, positive, and productive; fostering positive attitudes toward the school, the classroom, and learning; establishing systems that promote your student's success in daily homework; establishing fruitful habits of learning and study; building virtues in the home that correspond to the learning at school; exercising civility when dealing with problems or concerns, directing all questions straight to the staff member responsible for the question or area of concern. Please refer to teacher communications for clarification on any classwork, student academic performance, or student behavior. For clarification on school and its operations, please refer to school communications (handbook, weekly newsletters) or contact the front office manager.

We provide multiple opportunities to be informed and engaged with the school. These opportunities include, but are not limited to the following:

- **School and community-wide events.** A variety of fun and highly-anticipated events, designed to bring families together, are offered throughout the year on our campus.
- **Volunteering.** Candeo approaches volunteer work in an organized, purposeful fashion to create the best possible experience for all. A school support specialist will reach out to parents throughout the year to assist with various opportunities at hand. Some volunteer work is performed in the home and not on site. Some volunteer commitments may require a fingerprint clearance card or food handler's permit, but we encourage all to obtain them.

The best way to get information on volunteering is to contact our Front Office Manager. When volunteering on site, younger siblings are not able to accompany parents. For more information on volunteer opportunities, please contact the school via our general email account: Candeo Peoria- [peoria.info@candeoschools.com](mailto:peoria.info@candeoschools.com)