

# Fusion Charter Parent/Student Handbook

## 2023-2024 Contents

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**Turlock, CA 95380**

**Phone (209) 667-9047**

**Fax (209) 667-9205**

**Mailing Address: PO Box 3459 Turlock, CA 95381**

Please see our website to contact individual Staff and Faculty via email.

**[www.fusioncharter.org](http://www.fusioncharter.org)**

**Administrative and Classified Staff:**

Susan Nisan, Principal

David Ashby, Assistant Principal

Mark Evanoff, Counselor, Homeless/Foster Youth Liaison

Alicia Mendes, Data Specialist/Registrar

Jose Briones, Campus Supervisor/Coach

Jesica Barragan, Administrative Assistant II

Cynthia Herrera-Sanchez, Student Support Advocate

Maria Garcia, Van Driver/Teacher Aide

Fernando Hernandez, Parareducator

Jasmine Washington, Paraeducator

Marco Cortez Alvarado, Paraeducator

Paana Zamani, Paraeducator/Math Tutor

Rebecca Zier, Math Tutor

**Community School Liaison To be determined**

**Custodian To be determined**

**Teaching Faculty:**

Lorraine Mello Jones, Teacher, Independent Study

**Room 1: Teacher, Grades 7-9, To be determined**

Room 2: David Ashby, Assistant Principal/Circles Coordinator

Room 3: Abraham Zuniga, Resource Specialist, Comic Con and Student Council

**Room 4: Teacher, Grades 9-10, To be determined**

Room 5: Bekah Remkiewicz, Teacher, Grades 10-12 and Technology

Room 6: Daniel Vera, Teacher, Grades 11-12 and Agriscience Coordinator

## School Schedule and Holidays

- Student activities are based on individualized schedules Monday through Friday.
- The Fusion Office is open from 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Thursday.
- The Fusion gate opens for students at 8:30 each day and closes at 5:00pm.
- On Fridays, the office opens at 8:30 and closes at 3:00 for staff meetings.
- The Fusion Office is closed on these holidays during the school year:

<b>September 4, 2023</b>	Labor Day
<b>November 10, 2023</b>	Veterans Day
<b>November 20-24, 2023</b>	Thanksgiving Break
<b>December 22, 2023-January 5, 2024</b>	Winter Break
<b>January 15, 2024</b>	Martin Luther King Day
<b>February 15-19, 2024</b>	Presidents Day
<b>March 29-April 5, 2024</b>	Spring Break
<b>May 27, 2024</b>	Memorial Day

Parents (including parents/legal guardians/caregivers) are invited to the following events throughout the year and to School Site Council and Community meetings to be announced.

## School Events

<b>August 14, 2023</b>	First Day of School
<b>September 28, 2023</b>	Back to School Night for Parents
<b>December 21, 2023</b>	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester
<b>January 21-27, 2024</b>	National School Choice Week Awards
<b>May 1-5, 2024</b>	Teacher Appreciation Week
<b>May 29, 2024</b>	Graduation
<b>May 31, 2024</b>	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester/8th Grade Promotion

## School Nutrition Program (Free Breakfast)

The school nutrition program is provided free of charge for all students.

Fusion serves breakfast daily. Meals are available between 8:45 am and 9:00 am, and between 12:00 pm and 12:30 pm. A student may also request a meal by contacting the school office at 209-667-9047.



Please place all food wrappers and litter in trash cans.

## About Fusion Charter School

Fusion Charter is a unique independent charter school for Grades 7-12, authorized by the Turlock Unified School District (TUSD) in 2014 and accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The California Department of Education (CDE) has identified Fusion with Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS) because our school meets the state criteria that at least 70 percent of the students who enroll at Fusion (upon first entry to the school) are identified as students at high risk of school dropout. Many have experienced trauma and multiple obstacles to success in school. Fusion offers the opportunity to make new choices in a non-punitive environment that offers hope to each one, regardless of past experiences.

### Fusion Charter's Founding by Aspiranet

Fusion is a program of Aspiranet, a private, nonprofit family services agency with a long history of addressing the social and emotional needs of students who lack a connection with school. Established in 1975, Aspiranet provides educational, positive behavioral health interventions, placement and support services to students and their families in multiple California locations. Aspiranet teachers, therapists, social workers, behavior specialists and drug and alcohol counselors have served Stanislaus County for more than 30 years in a family-centered approach. The family has a profound impact on the student's ability to succeed in their academic program.

### Aspiranet Core Values

*Respect*

*Integrity*

*Courage*

*Hope*

Aspiranet's distinguished programs in the Turlock area include the following:

- Family Resource Center
- Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinics
- Wraparound
- Therapeutic Behavioral Services
- Aspiranet Residential Services
- Stanislaus Academy Nonpublic School
- Fusion Charter



### Fusion's Reputation for Caring for Students

Fusion Charter has made an impact in Turlock as a caring school community. TUSD refers students to Fusion who would most benefit from a flexible schedule and a trauma-responsive program that considers the academic and social-emotional needs of students. Fusion also enrolls students from other districts, with an open door policy based on space available.

With 300 graduates since 2015, the graduation rate at Fusion continues to climb from 20% the first year to 80% in recent years. Fusion Charter supports students as they overcome past trauma and the ordinary challenges of adolescence and go out into the world ready to thrive as stable adults with productive careers and satisfying relationships in their personal lives and their roles as community members.

## Rights and Responsibilities

Fusion Charter is committed to a partnership for all learners whose goal it is to help make this the most rewarding of any educational experience. All members of our school community have a responsibility to ensure a positive learning environment. We know that attending Fusion Charter is a **choice** and we will do all within our power to ensure that this choice is one that will respect and empower learners.

## Vision, Mission and Expected Schoolwide Learning Results

### Mission Statement:

*“Fusion Charter will use a trauma-responsive approach and practical, high-interest, individualized learning to engage students and provide a pathway to college or career.”*

### Vision Statement:

*“We envision a loving, trauma-responsive school where all students prepare for a future in which they thrive.”*



# FUSION GOALS 2023-24

## Graduation Outcomes and Life Skills

- **L**ife Readiness (Career, College, Community)
- **I**ndependent Problem Solvers (Self-regulated, Resilient and Practical/Real)
- **F**ocused on Goals (Academic, Social and Emotional)
- **E**ffective Communicators (Written and Spoken, Clear and Emphatic)

### Expected Schoolwide Learning Results, ie. Fusion GOALS

Adopted by the Aspiranet Board of Directors, February 20, 2021

## Fusion Charter Local Goals

### Fusion Charter LCAP/SPSA/WASC Action Plan Local Goals 2023-2024

The following schoolwide goals have been developed by the Fusion Site Council, made up of parents, students, and school staff, and approved by the Aspiranet Board of Directors for the 2021-2024 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for a three-year period, and aligned with the Title I School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), and WASC Accreditation Action Plan.

#### 1. Long-term Assessment Plan

**Action #1 Assess students using the NWEA MAP test**--Assess students at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment during the school year. Reassess periodically for analysis of growth. Support with federal funds for paraeducator time to conduct assessments.

- *Student Support Advocate* to assess with the NWEA MAP upon enrollment.

**Action #2 Professional Development in Assessment**--Fusion will create a Collaborative Community of Practice assessment committee to monitor a practical alternative plan to present to TUSD in preparation for charter renewal. Professional Development to be supported by Title II funds and Educator Effectiveness Block Grant funds.

- Expand professional development activities in the assessment and application of data for academic, college/career, social-emotional and mental health indicators

#### 2. Applied Math Skills for College and Career Readiness

**Action #1 Full-time math paraeducator**--Fusion will add a full-time paraeducator to provide assessment and instruction for students in Grades 9-12. The positions will be funded by ESSER III funds through 2024 to include wages and benefits. All Fusion students will be assigned weekly instruction and/or targeted intervention for math improvement for a broad range of college/career readiness levels based on baseline assessments.

- Continue math tutoring on campus and online on an individual basis

**Action #2 Summer School**--Targeted math intervention with funding from both state and federal sources for Summer School extra duty and substitute teachers.

#### 3. Program Alignment with Trauma-Responsive Mission/Vision

**Action #1 Advisory Rubric aligned with GOaLS**--Create a rubric to measure the GOaLS that is used to evaluate student progress and award elective credit for the Fusion Advisory Course.

**Action #2 School personnel focus on high needs students**-- Fusion will continue to use LCFF funds for three key positions focused on Foster Youth, English Learners, Low Income students and Homeless Students. For detailed information about the Data Specialist/Registrar, Guidance Counselor, and half-time Assistant Principal positions and how they support Fusion's most vulnerable students, see the 2023-2024 Fusion LCAP.

<p><b>Action #3 Campus Supervisor/Behavior Interventionist</b>--Maintain level of supervision of students on campus and monitor safety and facility needs</p>
<p><b>Action #4 Facility/Operations for Summer School/Extracurriculars</b>--Maintain the campus operating expenses during Summer School and other activities outside the regular school year and day.</p>
<p><b>Action #5 Chromebook and wifi access</b>--Maintain, repair and replace Chromebooks and wifi on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p><b>Action #6 Agriscience and Career Technical Education activities</b>--Continue with implementation and expansion of <i>career education opportunities in Agriscience and other technical pathways</i></p>
<p><b>Action #7 Homeless Innovative Programs</b>--Disseminate outreach and support for Homeless students through Circles</p>
<p><b>Action #8 Community Schools planning</b>--Strengthen the Whole Child approach to serving students and families by planning with Aspiranet for the Community Schools grant</p>

**Fusion Special Education Goals**

Fusion Charter collaborates with Turlock Unified for Special Education compliance. A student with special education goals documented in an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** will have service and support to make progress on the goals as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Fusion adheres to all laws affecting individuals with exceptional needs, including all provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), its amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). All students are given equal access, regardless of disabilities, and Fusion will not discriminate against any student based on his or her disabilities.

“Independent study charter schools must enroll all students who meet the enrollment requirements set in their charter.” EC Section 47605(d)(2)(A)

For a student who has an IEP and wants to participate in independent study, a determination as to whether independent study is appropriate must be made within 30 days and written into the IEP. For more information visit [Independent Study Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.cde.ca.gov/indst/iepd/faq/) at cde.ca.gov or refer to the Aspiranet Board of Directors Independent Study Policy incorporating the most recent changes to independent study law.

## Admissions and Enrollment

**Fusion is a free public school of choice. All students who seek to attend Fusion shall be admitted, subject to capacity, age and residence, and protected from discrimination.** Fusion is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic, including immigration status, that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual with any of these characteristics).

### Admission Requirements and Procedures

**Age:** Any minor student under age eighteen (18) in Grades 7 through 12 may enroll, with parent permission. Adult students aged nineteen (19) to twenty-one (21) must have been continuously enrolled in school since their eighteenth birthday to be eligible for enrollment at Fusion.

**Residence:** Admission to Fusion shall not be determined by the place of residence of the student or parent, except as provided in Education Code section 47605(d)(2) and Education Code section 51747.3. A student must reside in the area served by Fusion Charter, which includes Stanislaus County and adjacent counties (Alameda, Calaveras, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Tuolumne). An interdistrict transfer agreement is not required to enroll.

**Transportation:** Students and families who choose charter schools are responsible for their own transportation. Fusion supports students and families by providing city bus passes.

**Records:** Fusion Charter shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit records before enrollment. The registration form is limited to contact information. Parents and students must provide accurate and complete enrollment information after the confirmation of space available at the student's grade level. **Enrollment may be temporarily restricted during the final grading period at the end of each semester.**

- Fusion enrollment packet
- Current transcript for course enrollment purposes
- Special education record, IEP/504 (if applicable in order to meet services)
- Birth certificate (or an alternative proof of birth)
- Immunization records
- Verification of residency and current utility bill
- Withdrawal form from the previous school as well as clearance of all fines
- National School Lunch Program or alternate paperwork

**Pre-enrollment Conference:** The counselor will evaluate the transcript and assign courses to meet the academic needs of the student. A teacher and session time will be scheduled based on space available. Prior to completing enrollment, each parent has the right to request a conference to include the teacher of record, student, parent (and a translator, if needed) to consult about the program before signing the Independent Study Master Agreement. Notice of this right will be posted on the Fusion website at [www.fusioncharter.org](http://www.fusioncharter.org).

The **Independent Study Master Agreement** is based on current laws for students in grades 7-12 with regard to **Synchronous Weekly Instruction** with a certificated teacher in person, via phone or online, **“Live Interaction”** with Fusion personnel and/or **Daily Asynchronous Instruction** on their own. Depending upon individual needs and available space, a student will be enrolled for group sessions of 90 minutes for up to five days per week or a weekly individual or group meeting with a credentialed teacher. Students must submit assignments in person or online and progress academically as indicated in the Master Agreement.

During the initial conference and subsequently upon request, the teacher will inform parents about the transferability of courses and the eligibility of courses to meet university entrance requirements. Fusion is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC); courses are considered transferable to other public high schools. Any courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the “a-g” admissions criteria are considered to meet entrance requirements for four-year colleges.

The teacher will establish regular parent communication and provide reports of student progress and support for daily engagement within five (5) school days of a parent’s request. Whenever possible, communication will be provided in the primary language for parents who speak a home language other than English.

**Enrollment Guidelines and Fines from Previous School:** Students may be enrolled in only one school at a time. Parents/legal guardians must be certain to withdraw the student from any other school prior to attending Fusion Charter and finalize all incurred fines from the previous school prior to enrollment. Unpaid fines may result in restricted activities or diplomas being held until all fines are paid at the previous school.

**Transfers to Another School:** Students must be notified that they have the continued option of returning to a classroom-based program. Students who opt not to attend Fusion Charter may attend a district school or pursue an interdistrict transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of their home district or county of residence. Fusion Charter will provide documentation for this transition within five (5) instructional days of a parent’s request to do so. Cumulative records will be sent by mail when a written request is received from the new school.

### **Lottery--If Required**

**The open application period for Fusion Charter starts February 1 and concludes June 1.**

If the number of students who wish to attend exceeds Fusion’s capacity, admission, except for existing students of Fusion, shall be determined by a public random drawing held the first week of June, with the following students given preference for admission to the Fusion:

1. Existing students enrolled in Fusion
2. Siblings of existing students enrolled in Fusion
3. Students enrolled in Turlock Unified School District
4. Students who reside in Stanislaus County

All applications drawn after reaching capacity will be waitlisted in the order they were drawn.

## Attendance

Fusion Charter operates on the TUSD traditional school calendar and is in session for 180 days during the regular school year. **Students must complete school assignments every day.**

Fusion's philosophy is a flexible schedule with maximum access to activities while meeting required instructional minutes for independent study under the supervision of a certificated teacher. Fusion students have the opportunity to attend daily with opportunities for extracurricular activities and access to all curriculum off site for extended learning. In order to maintain a safe school environment, individual student needs will determine scheduling.



**There are no excused absences in independent study.** If possible, personal and medical appointments should be made at other times. Regular meeting attendance is critical to the quality education that Fusion students deserve.

Students are expected to complete assigned work each day that is equivalent to a full-time compulsory education, either in person/online/via phone with teacher support (Synchronous) or off-site through individual study (Asynchronous). In general a high school student will be assigned a minimum of six modules per week in the Edmentum curriculum in order to complete graduation requirements on time, adjusted for individual needs and credit deficiency. Junior high students have daily coursework.

A student who is not completing assignments at least 90% of the time, who misses more than 50% of scheduled on-campus activities, or is off-track for graduation, requires an intervention to support success. **Tiered Re-engagement Procedures** are set in place, beginning with phone calls and moving to written notices and a meeting between the teacher, student and parent to discuss obstacles to work completion to help get the student back on track.

Education Code Section 51747(b) requires an evaluation to determine whether or not a student should remain in independent study. A Student Study Team (SST) may include the student, parent, administrator, teacher and counselor. The SST recommendations will be monitored and the student will receive support to be successful in independent study. If the student continues with chronic absences and incomplete work, the district of residence will be notified. Minor students may be subject to truancy laws and restrictions such as delay of driving privileges and loss of work permits. **Students over age 18 will be referred to programs for adult students.**

### Contemporaneous Log

Fusion Charter students complete a daily checklist called the "Contemporaneous Log" indicating the subjects they worked on each day. A student must engage in assigned school work every day on the 180-day school calendar in order to meet compulsory education attendance requirements for charter school independent study programs. Please contact your student's teacher for any questions related to assigned independent school work.

## An Educated Person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

(Adapted from the Fusion Charter Document authorized by TUSD in 2014 and renewed in 2017)

Fusion Charter believes an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be prepared to move from school to career. The following learning goals will be the foundation of the educational program:

- **Communication Skills:** A focus on the ability to effectively communicate their needs, emotions, thoughts, and information. Coursework in all curricular areas will support the enhancement of communication skills.
- **Collaboration:** Students will learn to work with others to solve problems, develop strategies, and test hypotheses through work with their peers.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students will use Common Core Strategies to approach learning. Students will learn to think critically about school content as well as life situations they encounter.
- **Creativity:** Students will be encouraged to problem solve and think creatively to find multiple innovative ways to solve real life problems.
- **Comprehensive curriculum:** All students will be provided through direct instruction and online opportunities a comprehensive curriculum where communication skills, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity are planned for and encouraged in the student work product.

**Individualized Instruction:** Individualized Instruction through on-line coursework with a certified teacher as a coach is best suited for the students at Fusion Charter. Each student will complete the coursework necessary for high school graduation, post-secondary training and/or college entrance as quickly or slowly as necessary to meet their personalized learning needs.

**Small Group Instruction:** Problems or scenarios are proposed for students to investigate. Knowledge is built from experience and process, especially social based experience. It is the belief that through real-life problems posed for student investigation that the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking are learned and implemented.

**Inquiry-based Instruction:** Inquiry learning encourages students to examine content as well as discipline-specific reasoning skills and practices by collaboratively engaging in investigations. Students are cognitively engaged in using sense making, developing evidence-based explanations, and communicating their ideas. Students expand and clarify their ideas with the help of the teacher who facilitates the process and guides students to content knowledge. This type of inquiry learning requires written and oral expression, extended research, analysis and synthesis of information, planning, perseverance, and organization. All of these skills are needed for success in college and the world beyond.

Projects will also link the curriculum content with students' real world experiences, making learning relevant and valuable to their lives outside of school. Twenty-first century skills will be applied in student processes and products. Research on authentic instruction indicates the importance of connections between classroom curriculum and the world beyond the classroom.

## Curriculum and Access

Fusion Charter combines highly-respected online curriculum with teacher-directed support.

**Connectivity:** Fusion Charter provides a device and internet connectivity for each student who requires access to curriculum off campus. Please let your teacher know your needs.

**Logins and Email Accounts:** Each student receives a **fusioncharter.org** email account through Google for Education. The login and account may be accessed both on campus and off site and is subject to monitoring by Fusion personnel. A technology agreement must be signed annually.



Students use Edmentum Courseware's PLATO Learning Environment for both credit recovery and initial course instruction, as approved by the University of California's "a-g" admissions process.



Fusion uses the instructional content Platform "Newsela" ([newsela.com](https://newsela.com)) with differentiated instruction for multiple reading levels for each text in both English and Spanish. Texts are assigned at least weekly, including academic and social-emotional learning materials

**Personalized Learning Plan:** Each student develops a learning plan with a Fusion teacher or mentor that is regularly updated. Students identify goals for completion of the High School curriculum. Specific courses will be selected to develop a graduation plan and a career path or college plan, including an explanation of how UC "a-g" courses meet university requirements.

### Academic Integrity for a-g Courses for College Admissions

Students in Grades 9-12 who are seeking a-g designation will complete course final examinations under the supervision of a Fusion staff member or designee in order to maintain academic integrity with cell phones in a secure location as directed during the examination.

### Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated and will result in the repetition of a test, assignment, paper, or project, and may require the proctoring of all work on site. Parents are notified in writing of incidents involving cheating.

# Graduation Requirements for Fusion Charter Class of 2023-2024

## Accreditation

Fusion is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). With WASC accreditation and UC/CSU course approval, Fusion coursework is recognized by other high schools, by California and out of state universities and colleges and by the admissions committees of the UC/CSU system, as well as the US Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force.)



Each student who meets Fusion’s graduation requirements earns a California state-certified standard high school diploma.

Required Subjects	Credits	
ENGLISH	40*	<i>*Fusion Charter requires a total of 200 credits for high school graduation, except for students eligible for legally-mandated reduced graduation requirements of 130 credits for youth in foster care (AB 167), the juvenile justice system (AB 216), and students experiencing homelessness (AB 1806) after Grade 10. These students, with parental permission if under 18, may opt to graduate with only 130 “core” credits. The English course requirement is reduced from 40 to 30 credits and all 60 elective credits are waived.</i>
SCIENCE (To include life and physical)	20	
ALGEBRA/Integrated Math 1	10	
MATH	10	
SOCIAL SCIENCE		
World History	10	
U.S History	10	
American Government	5	
Economics	5	
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	20	
VAPA** Visual and Performing Arts/Foreign Language/Career Technical Education (CTE)	10	
TECHNOLOGY	5/0*	
HEALTH	5/0*	
Electives	50*	
<b>Total Credits for Graduation</b>	<b>200*</b>	<b>**Per Education Code, TUSD has elected to allow CTE courses to satisfy Visual and Performing Arts or Foreign Language graduation requirements.</b>

## Graduation Ceremony



**Graduation will be held Wednesday, May 29, 2024.** In order to walk the stage a student must be within 10 credits of completion of all graduation requirements by noon, Wednesday, May 15, 2024 unless a written appeal for an extension is submitted and approved by the principal. Graduation gowns are provided free of charge to students for use during the ceremony. Students may keep graduation caps, pins, awards, transcripts and diplomas.

## Credits

### Semester Credit Cap and Appeal Process

In order to stay on track for graduation with 200 credits, a student should complete a minimum of 25 academic credits per semester in grades 9 through 12. A student who enrolls at Fusion Charter with fewer than this minimum must increase the number of academic credits earned each semester while in credit recovery. Fusion Charter recognizes the need to cap the credits earned at a maximum to promote mastery and retention of course content.

- Grade 9--Maximum of 35 credits per semester
- Grade 10--Maximum of 40 credits per semester
- Grade 11--Maximum of 45 credits per semester
- Grade 12--Maximum of 50 credits per semester



### Summer School Cap

All students are limited to a maximum of 10 academic credits during each summer session.

### Appeal Process

A student who requests permission to earn more than 50 academic credits in a semester must file a written appeal with the teacher of record and the principal. The decision to grant the appeal for excess credit recovery to a Fusion Charter student is at the principal's discretion and includes consideration of work habits and the student's projected graduation date.

### Physical Education Credits

Fusion Charter students record daily physical activity on a log submitted monthly. For each 15 hours of activity a student earns one non-academic credit. The maximum number of credits granted for any monthly learning period is two, the equivalent of 30 hours of physical activity. The graduation requirement is 20 credits. A student may earn up to 20 additional elective credits of physical education.

### Dual Enrollment College Credit

Supplementary credit earned at a community college or university is not subject to these semester limitations. Examples are MJC courses Introduction to College and Healthful Living. For more information on earning college credit while enrolled in high school, please see the **Fusion Charter Policy for Dual Enrollment Credit**.

### College Bound Plan

While at Fusion Charter the student will meet with the Guidance Counselor to set a plan that would allow attendance at a college or university of their choice. This may include completing the necessary high school requirements, identifying an appropriate course of study, locating a college of choice, and completing admission requirements and applications. Fusion Charter provides opportunities each year for students to tour colleges and universities and/or to meet with representatives from post-high school educational and vocational training options. These events are free of charge and require parent permission if travel off campus is included.

## Fusion Charter Policy for Dual Enrollment Credit

According to California *Education Code (EC)* Section 48800 a school governing board may authorize certain advanced students, upon recommendation from their principal and with parental consent, to attend a California community college as a special part-time student. A Fusion student may enroll in one or more courses at the community college level, including online courses, earning both high school and college credit concurrently. A Fusion student must meet all eligibility requirements as outlined on the appropriate college permission form, such as the Modesto Junior College (MJC) Special Part-Time Petition for Advanced Admission or the Merced College (MC) Permit for Special K-12 Students. The decision to grant advanced permission to a Fusion Charter student is at the principal's discretion and includes consideration of academic readiness, work habits and maturity.

The award of high school credit is subject to these additional qualifications:

1. Prior to or during the first term of enrollment in community college classes, a Fusion student must complete an Introduction to College Course.
2. A Fusion student may receive high school credit for only those college courses and specific course sessions with prior approval from the principal or counselor.
3. One semester of a non-remedial college course with a grade of C- or higher is equivalent to one year of high school coursework, following this formula: For less than three (3) college credits, triple the value of the course. A two (2) credit college course is equivalent to six (6) high school credits. For a non-remedial college course of three credits to five credits, ten (10) high school credits will be granted.
4. Any UC-transferable college course listed on the community college's University of California a-g course list as an HONORS course and earns an extra GPA point. A grade of D or F is not granted an extra point according to UC admissions policy.
5. College courses satisfy high school graduation requirements based on categorization on the community college's UC a-g course list for the year the course was completed.
6. A Fusion student in good standing in both high school and college coursework, including completing all coursework with a C- or higher, may request in writing that Fusion pay associated student and textbook fees. The granting of this request depends upon funds available and the timeliness of the request. Requests made less than two weeks before the beginning of a class are unlikely to be granted.

For more information about dual enrollment, visit these sites:

University of California admissions policies:

[University of California Admissions](#)

University of California ag course lists:

[University of California AG Course List](#)

Modesto Junior College Special Advanced Admission for High School Students:

[Application Information - MJC](#)

Merced College Special Admission for High School Students:

[Merced College - K-12 Students](#)

## **Fusion Courses for Elective Credit**

### **Advanced Placement Computer Science--AP CSa, AP CSb**

AP Computer Science is a college-preparatory elective course for students in Grades 10 through 12. The course will be submitted to the University of California for approval in 2022 and will culminate in the AP Computer Science examination in the Spring of 2023 and thereafter.

The student will earn five (5) credits for the first semester and five (5) credits for the second semester. A student with a qualifying grade on the AP exam may receive college credit upon enrollment at a 4-year university (Presented to the Aspiranet Governing Board on 6/24/2022)

### **Agriscience, Years 1 and 2**

#### **1. Agriculture--A Life Skills Approach--Ag LSAa, AG LSAb**

Agriculture--A Life Skills Approach is an Agriscience Credit/No Credit elective course for students in Grades 10 and 11, developed at Fusion Charter with the Specialized Secondary Program (SSP) grant for new Career Technical Education (CTE) courses.

During the first year of implementation in 2021-2022, the student may earn non-core academic credit by participation in coursework and projects related to building a school greenhouse and establishing raised beds for a school garden. The student will earn five (5) ungraded credits for the first semester and five (5) ungraded credits for the second semester. (Approved by the Aspiranet Governing Board on 8/20/2021)

#### **2. Principles of Integrated Agriculture and Social Science--Ag PIAa, AG PIAb**

Principles of Integrated Agriculture and Social Science is an Agriscience Credit/No Credit elective course for students in Grades 11 and 12, developed at Fusion Charter with the Specialized Secondary Program (SSP) grant for new Career Technical Education (CTE) courses.

The student may earn non-core academic credit by participation in coursework and projects related to the school agriscience projects. The student will earn five (5) ungraded credits for the first semester and five (5) ungraded credits for the second semester. (Approved by the Aspiranet Governing Board on 6/24/2022)

### **Fusion Charter Advisory--Advisory 9a/b, Advisory 10a/b, Advisory 11a/b, Advisory 12a/b**

Advisory is a mandatory Credit/No Credit independent study course for all Fusion students in Grades 9-11. A student may earn non-core academic credit by completing assignments from a menu of activities designed by the Fusion faculty to promote college and career readiness and community engagement. Activities vary by grade level and include: the creation of a portfolio with resume, letters of reference and sample job applications; attendance at Friday events and activities outside the regular classroom session; reflections and follow-up assignments related to school visitors and community presentations. A student will earn one credit for the equivalent of 15 documented hours of activities approved by the teacher of record, up to a maximum of 2.5 credits per semester. (Approved by the Aspiranet Governing Board on 8/19/2016; Approved revision on 6/30/2023 for a reduction in credits from 5 to 2.5 per semester.)

## **Fusion Charter Individualized Reading and Writing (IRW)--IRWa, IRWb, IRWc, IRWd**

IRW is a Credit/No Credit independent study course for Fusion students in Grades 9-12. A student may earn non-core academic credit by completing supplementary reading and writing assignments from a menu of activities designed to promote reading comprehension and writing fluency and skills. Activities vary by grade level and include individual reading recorded on a reading log with written reflections and summaries as assigned by the teacher of record based on individual student needs. Students will also receive credit for participation in reading comprehension and writing activities in class and through the Instructional Content Platform “Newsela” and other comparable programs, which may supplement but not supplant Edmentum English coursework. A student will earn one credit for the equivalent of 15 documented hours of activities approved by the teacher of record, up to a maximum of 2.5 credits per semester. The course may be repeated up to a maximum of 20 credits per student.

Note: TUSD requires 10 credits of reading class as a graduation requirement for a student reading below grade level. The IRW course is recommended for students returning to TUSD. (Approved by the Aspiranet Governing Board on 5/18/2018; Approved revision on 6/30/2023 for a reduction in credits from 5 to 2.5 per semester.)

Online Driver’s Ed--Fusion provides an online course for 2.5 credits of the Technology credit required for graduation. This course from Pacific High School is approved by the California Department of Motor Vehicles for a DMV Learner’s Permit for students aged 15.5 years and older. A student under age 17.5 years seeking a California Learner’s Permit needs a separate “behind the wheel” Driver Education practice course with a professional driving school. Fusion does not pay for this course. (Approved by the Aspiranet Governing Board on 11/10/2017)

## **Student Choice Mini Course Elective**

Each Mini is a Credit/No Credit project-based course for Fusion students in Grades 9-12.

A student may earn non-core elective credit by completing customized activities designed to stimulate the joy of learning, cultural literacy and life skills. Activities vary by course and include a project designed by a student or a group of students under the supervision of a Fusion Staff member and both approved and assigned by the teacher of record based on student interest and needs.

Student Choice Minis include examples such as:

- Art of the Comic Book
- Audio and Video Technology
- Aviation and Rocketry
- Comic Con
- Coding
- Culinary Exploration
- Digital Journalism
- Drone Club
- eSports
- History of Music
- Media Arts
- Robotics
- Student Leadership

A student will earn one credit for the equivalent of 15 documented hours of activities approved by the teacher of record, up to a maximum of five credits per year. Mini courses may total a maximum of 20 credits per student over four years of high school and are entirely voluntary. (Approved by the Aspiranet Board, November 15, 2019)

## Grading Policy

Class grades are determined by the individual teacher according to the grading criteria established by that course. Teachers explain the criteria at the beginning of the course. Report cards are mailed to parents approximately 10 days after the close of the grading period.

Letter grades will reflect the following:

A	Excellent
B	Above Average
C	Satisfactory
D	Passing
P or Cr*	Passing (P grades are not computed into G.P.A.)
INC or NM	Incomplete or No Mark – To be replaced by final mark later



Teachers include a student's **in-class participation** in determining the overall grade for grades 7 and 8 and for the number of credits assigned for Fusion high school electives such as Agriscience, Individualized Reading and Writing (IRW) and Advisory.

## Awards and Recognition

Students in Grades 7-8 are recognized at the end of the academic year. Each semester students in Grades 9-12 are recognized for an honor roll grade point average at one of two levels: a B average of 3.0 or higher or an A average of 3.5 or higher.

A student with outstanding citizenship and honor roll grades the final two years of high school and the completion of 200 graduation credits may be recommended to the Aspiranet Board of Directors by the Fusion Charter Principal for recognition as Fusion Charter Valedictorian.

## Monthly Character Traits

Fusion Charter participates in the Turlock Rotary Character Trait program. Throughout the school year, each Fusion teacher recognizes a student who has demonstrated one of the following character traits: **Achiever, Resiliency, Empathy, Focus, Futuristic, Includer, Kindness, Positivity, Responsibility, Self-Assurance**. Fusion students in all grades are honored for this recognition. Each month a high school junior or senior is selected to represent Fusion at the Rotary Luncheon and receives acknowledgment by the local news media.

## Work Permits

A Fusion student seeking employment in the community should contact Fusion Counselor Mark Evanoff for a work permit by calling the school office for an appointment at 209-667-9047.

A student with satisfactory completion of school work and progress toward graduation will be encouraged to reapply for the work permit throughout the school year and summer.

## Standardized Assessments

### California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Testing (CAASPP)

The **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System** was established on January 1, 2014. The CAASPP system replaced the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. All California students in grades 3-8 and 11 are required to take this test in the spring. The test helps improve learning by providing accurate and timely measures of student progress towards career and college readiness. It is part of a comprehensive plan for the state of California for high-quality teaching in every school to prepare our students for the challenges of the future. Testing includes the Smarter Balanced Assessments, computer based tests aligned with the state's rigorous new standards for English language arts/literacy and math. The Smarter Balanced Assessments are computer adaptive.

### Other State Assessments

All California public school students in grades 7 and 9 take the **California Fitness Test**. Students whose native language is not English are assessed each year with the **English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)** until reclassified as Proficient.

### Alternate Measures of Accountability

Fusion Charter has **California School Dashboard (Dashboard) Alternative School Status (DASS)** for schools in which at least 70 percent of students enrollment (upon first entry to the school) are identified as students at high risk of school dropout. Alternate measures of accountability appropriate for high-risk students include dropout rates, graduation rates, and measures of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

### NWEA MAP in Math and English Language Arts

Fusion students take the **NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)** test three times per year to provide information about academic growth and learning needs. Students in Grades 11 and 12 may take other college and career readiness exams such as the **CASAS** and **AVSAB**.

### Voluntary Assessments

Fusion students in grades 10, 11 and 12 may take the US Armed Forces assessment, the **ASVAB**, on one or more occasions throughout the year to help with career planning and qualification for military enlistment.

All students in schools receiving Title I federal funds are offered the **California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)**, an anonymous, confidential survey of school climate and safety, student wellness, and youth resiliency.



## Fusion Conduct Code

**An orderly and non-threatening atmosphere is essential if learning is to take place.**

**Fusion is open to all students grade 7-12 who wish to enroll.** The school is non-sectarian and non-discriminatory by gender, ethnicity, religion, national origin, ability or disability.

The goal of our educational program is to provide a school climate and atmosphere that encourages and provides for academic achievement, independence, responsibility, and physical and emotional well being for all of our students.

## Trauma-Responsive Parent-Student-School Agreement

Fusion Charter students will be treated with dignity and respect. The school environment will be positive and supportive of students, allowing them to attend school without experiencing fear and undue anxiety. It is the goal of Fusion Charter to provide an atmosphere where each student can develop the academic and social skills necessary for independence in a changing society. An appreciation for the value of learning and development of self-discipline and a positive self-image will be encouraged.

1. School Staff – The staff has the primary responsibility for providing a teaching/learning environment which contributes to an atmosphere of trust and respect. The school staff is responsible for modeling and teaching students the behavioral standards that exist in the classroom and throughout the school as a whole. The staff enforces the rules in the school and supports the administration in carrying out Fusion Charter policy.
2. Parents/Guardians – Parents/Guardians are responsible for enforcing their student’s behaviors consistent with the Parent/Student Handbook/Conduct Code and Fusion Charter policy. Parents/Guardians are in partnership with the school staff regarding decisions affecting the student and the wellbeing of the school as a whole. Parents/Guardians are responsible for attending meetings and actively following up on health-related and substance abuse counseling referrals.
3. Students – Students are responsible for following school rules and procedures established in the Fusion Charter Conduct Code, and elsewhere. Respecting the rights of others and demonstrating self-discipline are primary requirements for a positive school climate.

**Fusion needs your current phone number!** All parents with students under 18 sign Master Agreements for each new school year and continue to receive information via Parent Square, text message or voicemail about the importance of daily school attendance for students to stay on track for graduation. Always keep your phone number and emergency contact information up to date. Call 209-667-9047 to report any changes.



## SPARTAN Norms

**S** Speak and listen appropriately

**P** Purposeful collaboration

**A** All technology is for learning

**R** Respect others' time

**T** Test with integrity

**A** Active participation

**N** Never give up

## Student Routines and Procedures

1. One voice at a time
2. Listen actively
3. Do not interrupt others
4. Provide positive feedback
5. Use kind words
6. Disagree respectfully
7. Use an inside voice
8. Do not gossip or spread rumors
9. Follow seating directions
10. Work with your assigned group
11. Take turns
12. Give all members a chance to share ideas
13. Use chromebooks for schoolwork, tests, and teacher approved activities
14. Use all technology in view of an adult
15. Keep headphone volume low
16. No food or drinks near technology
17. Be on time
18. Use every minute wisely
19. Zero distractions
20. Study until you know the material
21. Prepare and bring notes
22. Take tests silently while proctored by teachers
23. Set goals
24. Keep your head up and your eyes open
25. Join discussions
26. Make productive comments
27. Do your share of problem solving
28. Expect to make mistakes and revise work
29. Reflect on your learning process
30. Remember that struggle is good



## **Teaching Healthy Behavior and Social-Emotional Skills**

As Fusion develops the positive, non-punitive approach of a trauma-informed school, all stakeholders: students, parents, faculty, staff and community members will be asked to evaluate and contribute to an evolving Parent/Student Handbook that truly reflects the principles and practices that make Fusion successful with our students.

Both Aspiranet and authorizing district TUSD refer students to Fusion because of truancy and challenging behaviors that make it difficult to function in a traditional school setting. Fusion staff expect to serve students with a high number of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) which interfere with learning and lead to behaviors associated with health and social problems throughout the lifespan. Most students who enroll at Fusion have multiple indicators of risk and a history of decreasing engagement with traditional schooling. Many exhibit anxiety and have challenges with impulse control, distractibility, and frustration in the classroom setting. While Fusion cannot change the past or alter the current home environment, Fusion supports students by whatever means are within the school's capacity to promote success in designing the school schedule, preparing curriculum, interventions, and enrichment activities.

## **Nonpunitive Trauma-Responsive Practices and Restorative Justice**

Fusion maintains that the school's role in reaching disengaged students is to effectively address those school-based factors that result in a lack of connectedness to school personnel, chronic absence and school dropout. This approach led to the introduction of the *Paper Tigers* film to the entire staff and the school-wide adoption of Trauma-Responsive practices, transportation services, and expanded computer access to support students. As a Trauma-Responsive school, Fusion Charter is nonpunitive. Instead of traditional suspension and detention, students are taught to redirect and calm their emotions so they can focus, behave appropriately and not feel rejected. Fusion students participate in weekly Restorative Justice Circles on campus or online.

Please note that Fusion had no expellable offenses and no suspensions from 2016-2023 due to the school's commitment to alternatives to suspension and mindfulness of trauma-responsive practices with at-risk youth, many of whom have a history of suspensions and problem behavior.

## **Mastery Learning and Trusting Relationships**

At Fusion, academic engagement, credit recovery and self-regulation at school are promoted by a Mastery Learning approach where students work at an individualized pace on no more than three courses at any one time. Students in Grades 9-12 use PLATO online curriculum published by Edmentum. Students in grades 7-8 may also complete academic projects, concept units and academic focus areas through the Summit Learning Platform. Although Fusion is considered a non-classroom based school by the California Department of Education, daily sessions in either the morning or the afternoon offer students access to technology and support from one or two credentialed teachers instead of the six to eight teachers at a traditional site. Limiting the number of transitions and adults with whom each student interacts is designed to build trusting relationships between students and teachers.

## **Personalized Learning Plan and Student Study Team Support**

The Fusion Student Support Advocate provides students with options to develop and implement individualized approaches through the Personalized Learning Plan. Students who need more intense intervention are served through an SST, or Student Support Team meeting. The SST team reviews previous attendance and grades, home environment, family relationships, school resources, and past interventions in order to create an action plan. Parents are included in these collaborative team meetings, with translators as needed, along with the student, teacher, administrator and counselor. Follow-up sessions are scheduled to track progress.

To ensure that all students have the same opportunity at success and access to resources, as required by federal law, Fusion Charter holds regular IEPs (Individualized Education Program) for each student with an identified disability who qualifies for Special Education services; these meetings include the educational rights holder, who is generally the parent, an administrator and both general and special education teachers. They may also include the student, translators, district representatives, counselors, and psychologists. The team meets to discuss assessment results and obtain an update as to students progress. The team sets individual goals and determines appropriate services for the student who works directly with the resource teacher. Similar to IEP meetings, 504 meetings are held to address student's specific behavioral or health needs in the General Education setting.

## **School and Community Resources**

The statistically-average Fusion student is a 16-year-old male who has missed a lot of school and scores in the lowest band on California standardized tests, neither of which is very meaningful to him. He has a hard time focusing on schoolwork and has been labeled "at-risk of dropout." He may have an IEP or live in a residential treatment home or both. He may be discouraged and feel hopeless and has likely used alcohol or other substances this month.



He has a cell phone but wants a better one. He dreams about a car but does not even own a used bicycle. He certainly wants a job that he enjoys and that pays enough to support him. He knows that to reach his goals, he must earn a high school diploma. This may be the first school where he feels welcome because at Fusion Charter he is seen as an individual and not as a statistic. This may be the first time that he recognizes that adults truly do care about him as a person and support his hopes and goals for the future.

Current efforts to foster safety, support students' social-emotional needs and prevent dropout include school access, scheduling, counseling and referrals to community agencies. Fusion students have access to a full-time counselor who provides appropriate support and referrals for additional assistance, consultation and collaboration. Referral services are available to eligible students and families through Aspiranet and community mental health professionals and volunteers. Additional behavior support to help students make positive choices and develop new habits are provided through the Stanislaus County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Aggression Reduction Training (ART) program.

## Closed Campus, School Hours and Expectations

Fusion Charter maintains a closed campus – once students arrive on campus, they must stay for their scheduled session or activity. **Students are considered to be on campus once they arrive at school even if they do not enter through the gates.**

**Start/Dismissal Time:** Students must be in their classrooms at or before the appointed start time and may not leave until dismissed by a teacher or other school personnel.

**Early Departure:** If a student needs to leave school during regular school hours, a parent must sign out that student in the office. Students are strongly discouraged from missing school. School staff will call the parent if a student is sick and must be picked up.

Whenever there is a need to leave school for any reason, students must check out through the Fusion Office. Students should not send a text for a ride home in the middle of a session without permission from the teacher, but may request for the office to phone their home.

**Health:** Personal hygiene items, including menstrual period supplies, are available at no cost in the front office upon request.

Students are to immediately report all illness and health issues to their teacher. **Students are not allowed to carry medication and self-administer during the school day.** This includes over-the-counter medications such as cough drops, cold or allergy medication or pain relief.

Asthma medication may be carried by the student and used during the day with written authorization by a physician and parent/guardian, and approval from the school office. Asthma medication may pose serious side effects. Please discuss your student's needs with the school.

**Computer use:** Computers and Chromebooks are available on campus for study, research and writing. Students must have a signed "Internet Contract" on file to use the computers on campus or to check out a Chromebook for use at home. Fusion expects careful handling of all equipment and uses an Internet filtering system to block inappropriate websites.

**School Photo ID Cards:** One photo ID card is issued free of charge during each school year.

**Visitors:** Fusion students are not allowed to have visitors at Fusion. Visitors who have called the office for permission to tour the school must report to the office upon arrival.

**Parent/Family Visits:** When parents or students need a transcript or other paperwork, it is always helpful to call in advance stating what is needed and when it is needed. Arriving unannounced with a request may require a longer wait time since the office staff have other activities requiring their immediate attention.

If parents are interested in meeting with a teacher or other staff member, an appointment shall be arranged in advance within five (5) days of a request. Parents and visitors must check in at the front office before entering any classroom. A class considered in session will not be interrupted unless for an emergency.

**Kitchen Use:** Students do not have access to the refrigerator or microwave without permission. For sanitation reasons, the kitchen is “off limits” to students unless accompanied and supervised by an appropriate school staff member.

**Tables: Please do not stand or sit on the tops of picnic tables outside. Keep them clean!**

### **Restitution for Damaged, Defaced, Destroyed, or Lost School Property**

Any student, who defaces, destroys, damages, or loses equipment or instructional materials entrusted to him/her is responsible for those items. This includes, but is not limited to, books, science equipment, physical education equipment, Chromebooks, tablets, computers, computer software, and camera/video equipment. Legal procedures may be taken for restitution.

**Littering is always unacceptable.** Students are expected to pick up trash and keep the campus and our community clean. This includes special care for our school greenhouse and gardens. Volunteers are needed to keep our campus beautiful. Contact the front office to help.

**Respect for Animals:** Fusion Charter benefits from therapy dogs in training. Students may interact gently and respectfully with permission of a faculty member. **When eating outside, make sure that you carefully discard all wrappings and uneaten food to protect the health of dogs like Pablo.**



If you have concerns or questions about dogs on campus, please contact the office.

Fusion Charter is in a rural area with neighboring farm animals. Students are to stay away from the back fences and are not to disturb or feed animals. On occasion, animals may be on campus for educational purposes. All interactions with animals will be supervised by staff.

### **Driving**

For permission to drive on campus, a student must complete the appropriate form available in the school office. All drivers of motorized vehicles are to observe all existing vehicle code provisions, school regulations, and common sense while operating their vehicles. Any driver who endangers the lives of others in the parking lot or road adjacent to the school by speeding or reckless driving is subject to citation by local police as well as disciplinary action.

### **All Vehicles Subject To Search**

(CA Vehicle Code Sect. 21113(A) By entering the Fusion parking lot, the person driving any vehicle is deemed to consent to a complete search of the vehicle – all its compartments and contents – by school officials or law enforcement personnel for reasonable suspicion. This applies to all vehicles of any type and is in force 24 hours a day.

## Phone Use

Cell phone and headphone use will be permitted at the discretion of the teacher in the classroom. Our vision is to teach our students responsible cell phone use that will serve them beyond their time here at Fusion. Fusion staff respects the privacy of all students, but holds the right to secure the phone in the classroom or office until the school day is over. Envelopes are available for individual phones.



**Families: Please do not call or text your student. If you need to contact your student during a class session, please call the school office at 209-667-9047.**

## Security Cameras

Fusion Charter is under 24-hour video surveillance. Video cameras monitor campus security in common areas and parking lots. Restrooms and other private areas are excluded and audio capability is disabled to prevent the recording of sounds. Students will be held responsible for any violations of school discipline rules or illegal activity caught by the cameras. Any release or viewing of such records is confidential and shall be in accordance with current law.

## Locked Doors and Keys

For safety reasons, all classroom, gym, restroom and office doors are locked and require keys which are available to staff only. Students should not prop open doors. Request assistance with entry through gates and doors.

## Backpacks

Students are not to bring backpacks or other bags to school. All school supplies are provided on site. Any student who brings a backpack, such as for a special event or field trip, must store it in a locked closet and must agree to a search of the bag prior to entering campus.

## Field Trips

Fusion Charter offers field trips throughout the year to universities, colleges, science, technology, arts, sports and career exploration opportunities. All field trips must be approved by the principal and field trip permission slips issued. Parental consent signatures are required in advance of all field trips. All school rules, eligibility and dress code apply to field trips.



## Fusion School Colors

Fusion Charter's mascot is the Spartan and school colors are orange and black. Students are permitted to wear sports jerseys or other items of clothing related to Fusion's school sports.

For safety purposes, other sports team apparel or masks/face coverings, including professional and collegiate teams, are not permitted at Fusion, with the exception of local colleges and universities. Alternate items/plain masks will be available in the office.

## Alcohol and Drugs--Use/Possession

Students are prohibited from using any drugs, consuming any alcohol, and being under the influence of any drugs or alcohol or intoxicant of any kind while on school property, during school-sponsored activities and under school jurisdiction. Possession of drugs, alcohol and/or intoxicants of any kind is also expressly prohibited. **Students may be referred for Substance Abuse counseling as an alternative to disciplinary action.**

## Smoking

Smoking in California is illegal for all individuals under the age of 21. Parents and other visitors may not smoke on school premises or on areas adjacent to campus at any time, including the normal school day as well as at school sponsored activities. This includes nicotine, cannabis and vapes.



## Crisis Intervention

Fusion staff are **mandated reporters** of suspected abuse and/or neglect of children under 18.

**Wellness and Mental Health:** Fusion Charter takes seriously all threats of suicide or signs of severe emotional distress in anyone of any age, whether a family member, a friend, or **YOU**.

**Contact a Fusion staff member or call 988 or 1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-SUICIDE to speak with a counselor to prevent suicide. Help is available.**

**For the 24/7 Crisis Text Line any time, text “Talk” to 741-741.** (Any word that you enter will receive a free, confidential response.) **For non-crisis help, contact Stanislaus County Behavioral Health at 888-376-6246.**

**The Trevor Project for LGBTQ Teens (24/7) Call 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678678.**



**HoneyBee, Fusion’s first therapy dog in training**



## Dress Code

The following sections outline a dress code that is a teaching tool to help students understand what proper dress means. The dress code does not contain every possible description of proper or improper dress. The dress code is part of Fusion Charter school culture and is in effect while students are at school, riding to school on public transportation to and from school, and/or participating in any school-related activity or field trip. Therefore, it is expected that all staff enforce and all students follow the **intent of the dress code** at all times.

### Regular Daily Dress Code

Students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to clothes that are suitable for the school activities in which they participate. Students' clothing must not interfere with the educational process. **For this reason, predominantly red and blue clothing and other gang-related articles or styles of dress are not permitted at Fusion Charter.**

The following **General Dress Code Rules** apply to all regular school activities. Field trips and special events may have alternate dress codes that will be distributed with permission forms.

### Condition, Wear and Safety of Clothing

- No clothing or items deemed by Fusion personnel to be a health or safety issue

### Shirts/Tops

- No exposed undergarments or revealing clothing
- Tops must cover the upper and middle torso at all times
- Inappropriate tops must be covered with shirts, sweatshirts or jackets

### Pants/Shorts/Skirts

- No exposed undergarments or sagging pants or shorts
- Pants/shorts/skirts must cover lower torso with no skin showing at the waist
- Shorts, skirts and dresses must be at least mid-thigh in length
- No single rolled up pant leg or unfastened overalls

### Footwear and Accessories

- Wear proper footwear at all times (such as athletic shoes for sports activities)
- No gang-related colors on hats and accessories
- No hanging chains, spiked or studded accessories
- No decorative teeth covering or removable grills

### Language/Illustrations on Clothing

- No obscene, vulgar, profane, or derogatory language or illustrations
- No demeaning or sexual overtones
- No promotion of alcohol, drugs, cannabis, tobacco, gang membership, or violence
- No altered insignias or graffiti in/on personal belongings symbolizing an identified gang

### Dress Code Violation

The student must correct any clothing violation, prior to returning to his/her class schedule or use of school facilities. Refusal to change clothes may result in being sent home.

## Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Bullying, and Terrorist Threat

No student shall engage in harassing behavior, sexual or otherwise, toward another student or staff member. Harassment includes willful engagement in unwelcome verbal or physical behavior that creates a hostile environment for another person or group of people. Included, but not limited to: words, touching, gestures, notes, pictures, signs, posturing, or any other behavior that creates a hostile or threatening environment including through social networking such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat.

### ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. A safe and respectful environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.
2. "Harassment or bullying" is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – e.g. internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), or wireless hand-held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle.
3. "Harassment" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
  - is directed at one or more pupils;
  - substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;
  - adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the pupil, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and,
  - is based on a pupil's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.
4. "Bullying" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:
  - is directed at one or more pupils;
  - substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;
  - adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the
  - pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,
  - is based on a pupil's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristics, or is based on a pupil's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristics, or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

5. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and visitors.
6. The best discipline is self-imposed; it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities for helping students learn to assume responsibility and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline.
7. Since bystander support of harassment or bullying can support these behaviors, both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying is prohibited. The staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.
8. Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying is prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.
9. False accusation of another as a means of harassment or bullying is prohibited.
10. Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance.
11. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior; and protect the victim of the act.
12. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

### **Changes Mid Year**

New laws and policies and updates to practices will be distributed to Fusion staff, students and families throughout the year as they are enacted, especially with regard to COVID-19 testing, tracking, vaccination and all public health measures.



## **Rights of Students at Fusion Charter**

### **Dignity and Respect**

Every student is entitled to be treated with civility and respect at Fusion Charter. Each student should expect the same from members of the staff and fellow students. Preserving the dignity of students is important to all staff and faculty of Fusion Charter.

### **Complaints and Appeals**

Students and/or their parents are entitled to make complaints against any member of the school staff and to appeal the decisions made by members of the staff. Complaints can also be made against administrators or other school employees. The appropriate procedure is to first request to meet with that person in private. Most complaints are the result of misunderstanding and can usually be resolved by the two persons meeting in private to discuss the problem. If such a meeting fails to resolve the problem, a student may wish to bring it to the attention of the Principal in a written letter, detailing the reasons behind the complaint. A student who is dissatisfied with the administrator's response, may request a meeting with the Division Director.

Students or parents can appeal a grade for a class, but no one can order a teacher to change a grade unless it can be proven that either incompetence or miscalculation caused an error.

A student who has a complaint should request to meet in private with that teacher or administrator to discuss it. A student may also consult with his/her counselor before meeting with the teacher or administrator. The student's counselor will participate in the meeting in the manner the student chooses. Whatever the complaint, a student should proceed through the appropriate channels as described above.

### **Please Support Our School**

Fusion Charter is always in need of city bus passes for student transportation as well as gift certificates and gift cards in small denominations (\$5 and up) for weekly attendance drawings. If you are interested in making a donation of these items or any other gift, please contact the school office at **209-667-9047**.

Parents and family members are invited to the School Site Council held monthly during afternoon or after school hours. Parent representatives will be elected at Back to School night.

**Fusion Charter is a public school of choice. Thank you for enrolling and supporting your student and your school.**